

# European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion (2010)

2007/0278(COD) - 06/05/2008

The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs adopted the report by Marie **PANAYOTOPOULOS-CASSIOTOU** ((EPP-ED, EL) approving, under 1st reading of the codecision procedure, the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion (2010).

The main amendments adopted by the committee can be summarised as follows:

**Review of objectives:** MEPs emphasise the objectives and guiding principles that must underlie the implementation of the European Year; they stress, in particular, the values to be taken into consideration when meeting the objectives of the European Year, focusing on social exclusion and:

- the recognition of rights in light of respecting fundamental rights, by paying particular attention to vulnerable groups;
- shared responsibility and partnership by increasing public ownership of social inclusion policies and actions, emphasising both collective and individual responsibility in the fight against poverty and social exclusion and promoting the involvement of all public and private actors, inter alia through pro-active partnerships;
- participation by creating opportunities for contributions by all citizens, in particular people with direct or indirect experience of poverty;
- cohesion by emphasising the quality of skills and employment, the well-being of children, social well-being and equal opportunities for all (with a view to indicating the multidimensional aspects of poverty);
- commitment by reiterating the strong political commitment of the EU and the Member States to eradicate poverty and social exclusion and by promoting this commitment through concrete actions at all levels of governance.

All of these objectives shall be reflected in the implementation priorities set out in the annexes.

**Types of action to take:** MEPs readjust the content of the actions set out in the framework of the European Year and envisage 3 main types of action by highlighting the need to act at national, regional and European level:

- meetings and events at Community and national level;
- information, promotional and educational campaigns at Community and national level;
- surveys and studies based on gender-disaggregated data collection on a Community or nationwide scale, as well as the development of multi-dimensional comparable indicators.

**Consideration of specific risks:** MEPs ask that the European Year take into account the different risks and dimensions of poverty and social exclusion experienced by women and men, specifically in single-parent families which are particularly exposed to the risk of social exclusion and that gender be taken into consideration in the implementation of its activities.

**Involvement of persons confronted with poverty and of the relevant organisations:** MEPs call on stakeholders working with people living in poverty to contribute to the implementation of the European Year. The involvement of civil society organisations and organisations defending or representing the

interests of those who experience poverty should take place when drawing up the national programme of the European Year.

Implementation: MEPs call on the national implementing bodies to provide opportunities for pre-financing and co-financing to facilitate the participation of small and medium-sized non-governmental organisations, in particular. In general, the committee also asks that the results of previous European Years be taken into account in order to prevent a doubling of projects and that national, regional and local authorities work together with all relevant actors, as well as the Member States, when discussing and implementing the various actions of the European Year.

Report: MEPs also call for the report envisaged by the Decision to contain information concerning the upholding of the principle of equality between the sexes in the course of the European Year, as well as an assessment of the way in which the European Year has been of benefit to vulnerable groups.

Financial envelope: MEPs confirm the envelope proposed by the Commission of EUR 17 000 000 (EUR 6 500 000 of which shall be for 2009).

Annexes: lastly, MEPs align the amendments proposed in the body of the text with the content of the annexes by specifying, for example: (i) the involvement of partner charities; (ii) the link with the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); (iii) the protection of fundamental rights that are the result of serious poverty (in particular, by promoting a study on this issue); (iv) the mainstreaming of multi-dimensional aspects of poverty in the policies envisaged in the framework of the European Year (by including, for example, early school leavers and the long-term unemployed, by tackling job insecurity, and seeking to offer equal access to education and lifelong learning including access to ICTs, social protection systems, the quality of social and health services as well as housing,...); (v) certain rates of funding.