

Employment: Community incentive measures

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In accordance with provisions set out in the “Employment Incentives Measures” or EIM Decision, the Commission is expected to prepare a final report on activities carried out under the programme. To recall, the purpose of the EIM programme is to offer support to the Member States in the field of employment and the labour market.

Over the whole period, more than 150 projects have been funded. Activities can be grouped into: statistical work and support for the development of indicators; analysis and research, analysis of trends and challenges including forward-looking issues; policy assessment and evaluation; exchange of best practice and cooperation between Member States at all levels; exchange of best practices between the Member States; Information and awareness raising; the European Year of Workers Mobility 2006; promoting Local Employment Development (LED); and evaluation of the EIM programme.

Statistical work and development of indicators: statistical instruments, used for the EES, were developed throughout the entire programme period. Most of the statistical work concerning the labour market (LM) was carried out by Eurostat. Financial support was granted to national statistical offices and other EU institutions. This allowed two main objectives to be met: it has improved the quality of LM statistics through the development of existing databases and surveys; and it has made data available in domains where previously they were unavailable. Since the adoption of the EIM Decision, the Commission has become a leading data provider.

Analysis and research: analysis has focused on conditions for creating more and better jobs as well as the EU’s employment potential. Prospective analysis and studies were carried out in order to help understand the functioning of the European LM and in order to underpin the long-term development of the European Employment Strategy (EES) by identifying potential new issues and challenges. Such issues include: Active Labour Market Policies (ALMP) and making work pay; health and quality in work; skills and human capital; disadvantaged groups; enlargement; restructuring; migration; and business dynamics and employment performance.

Exchange of best practice: the Mutual Learning Programme (MLP), which was launched in 2004 in order to make better use of exchanging good practice, builds on the Peer Review Programme from 1999 by focusing on priority themes. Under the EIM best practice concentrated on promoting “Public Employment Services” (PES), which resulted in an improved quality of service for job seekers and employers as well as tackling skills bottlenecks on the European LMs.

Information and awareness-raising: there was a strong emphasis on the need to implement an active and transparent information policy in order to raise the profile of the EES across Europe. EIM initiatives, mostly studies, were given considerable support. As from 2003 annual Calls for Proposals were launched in order to promote joint information actions in support of EES dissemination and awareness-raising initiatives. These initiatives provided general information on the EES as well as highlighting the interplay between European policies and employment policies at national, regional and local levels. In addition several seminars, workshops, conferences and other major events were organised in order to disseminate EIM activity results.

European Year of Workers’ Mobility (EWYM): in 2006, the year of European Workers’ Mobility, over 2000 awareness events were organised. One of the most notable events included the first European job fair. This drew around 200 000 participants to 230 European cities where employers, workers and jobseekers could be in direct contact with each other.

Local Employment Development (LED): creating jobs at a local level was supported by the EIM programme and partnerships encouraged.

Participation of non-EU countries: the Commission helped support the candidate countries to streamline their employment policies with those of the EU's Lisbon Agenda. A gradual participation of all candidate countries in EIM activities took place as from 2003, including participation on the EIM committee, seminars and conferences. This has allowed the new Member States to fully integrate into the EES.