Employment and Social Solidarity: Progress Programme 2007-2013

2009/0091(COD) - 11/02/2010 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 511 votes to 95, with 11 abstentions, a legislative resolution approving, under the first reading of the ordinary legislative procedure, the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Decision No 1672/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity – Progress.

To recall, this proposal aims to finance the "European Microfinance Facility – Progress" which was adopted in parallel in December 2009 by the European Parliament. This instrument shall provide Community resources with a view to facilitating access to microcredit for persons who have lost or are at risk of losing their job.

Although the Commission had proposed that the facility be financed by the Progress Programme, Members of the Employment and Social Affairs Committee preferred to opt for a new budget line. They refused to approve the present amending proposal of the Progress financial envelope.

The compromise reached in plenary provides, on the contrary, for the reallocation of EUR 60 million from the Progress Programme and EUR 40 million from unallocated margins of the EU budget. This would result in EUR 100 million for the new European microfinance facility over a period of four years.

The main amendments adopted in Plenary, following the Commission statement on the Financing of the European Microfinance Facility which is annexed to this resolution, can be summarised as follows:

- the amount of EUR 60 million should be reallocated from the Progress Programme in line with the Interinstitutional Agreement of 17 May 2006 on budgetary discipline and sound financial management;

- as a consequence, the financial envelope for implementing the Community activities referred to in this Decision for the period from 1 January 2007 to 31 December 2013 is amended and is hereby set at **EUR 683 250 000**.