

Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) 2014-2020

2011/0270(COD) - 20/08/2012 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs adopted the report by Jutta STEINRUCK (S&D, DE) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on a European Union Programme for Social Change and Innovation.

The committee recommends that the position of the European Parliament adopted in first reading, following the ordinary legislative procedure, should amend the Commission proposal as follows:

Social progress and employment: Members propose to amend the title of the Regulation to stipulate that this Regulation establishes a European Union Programme for Social Progress, Innovation and Employment. This programme aims to contribute, including by means of innovative action, to the implementation of the Europe 2020 Strategy by providing financial support to promote a high level of quality and sustainable employment, as well as improving working conditions and enhancing the employment and educational situation of young people.

Clarifying the definitions: the report suggests clearly defining the terms ‘**social innovation**’ and ‘**social policy experimentation**’ by making explicit reference to the fight against poverty and social exclusion, finding a first job, access to a high level of quality employment, guaranteeing adequate and poverty-preventing social protection, guaranteeing access to health care for vulnerable people and improving working conditions, thereby contributing to social progress.

Programme’s structure: Members propose that the Programme should be made up of **four complementarity axes**:

1. **The Progress axis**, which shall support the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Union policy in the fields of employment, working conditions, social protection, social inclusion and combating poverty;
2. **The EURES axis**, which shall support activities carried out by the EURES network, together with the social partners : this axis, inter alia, should facilitate cross-border partnerships, as well as the provision of individual counselling and information for jobseekers, mobile workers and employers to promote voluntary geographical mobility for workers on a fair basis and to contribute to a high level of quality and sustainable employment;
3. **The Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship axis**, which shall promote access to, and increase the availability of, micro-financing for business start-ups, especially with regard to unemployed, socially excluded and other vulnerable people, as well as existing microenterprises and social enterprises;
4. **The new Youth Initiative axis**, which shall improve the employment and educational situation of young people, in particular those who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).

Partnership principle: stressing that a programme which supports employment and social policy should include **social partners** and civil society organisations at all levels, the report calls for the firm application of the partnership principle. It proposes to create, at European level, a **strategic advisory board**. Composed of representatives of the Commission, Member States and other participating countries, trade unions and NGOs, this board shall assist the Commission in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Programme.

Budget: pending agreement on the **Multiannual Financial Framework** for the period 2014-2020, Members have left open the exact amount of the financial envelope. However, in order to make the distribution of the percentages across the three sub-programmes comply with the new framework conditions, Members propose a minor redistribution and specific focuses. They propose 60% for the Progress axis and **18%** for the EURES axis (as opposed to 15% as proposed by the Commission). In order to make effective use of the funds and to enable them to be shifted between the axes in accordance with policy priorities, the remaining **2%** shall be apportioned among the axes on an annual basis without prejudice to the prerogatives of the budgetary authority in the annual budget.

In addition to the financial appropriations, funding, from within the MFF 2014-2020, shall be provided for the new **Youth Initiative axis**.

Thematic sections and financing: Members suggest that the breakdown of the allocation of appropriations between the different sections shall respect the following minimum percentages:

Progress:

- employment, within which at least 50% of the allocation to this section shall be spent to fight youth unemployment: 20%;
- social protection, social inclusion and the reduction and prevention of poverty: 50%;
- working conditions: 10%.

EURES:

- information services, counselling and job-matching for mobile workers and employers: 20%;
- targeted mobility schemes such as for young people: 20%;
- transnational, sectoral and cross-border cooperation: 40%.

Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship:

- microfinance for vulnerable groups and micro-enterprises: 45%;
- social entrepreneurship: 45%.

New Youth Initiative:

- preventing early-school leaving especially through reintegration into training: 30%;
- developing skills that are relevant to the labour market in order to bring together more closely the worlds of employment, education and training: 20%;
- supporting access to the labour market through obtaining a first job and on-the-job training in order to offer the opportunity to young people to acquire both relevant skills and work experience: 20%;
- improving quality of traineeships and apprenticeships: 20%.

Monitoring of the Brain Drain: in order to detect and prevent negative effects of geographical mobility on individual Member States or specific economic sectors, Members call on the Commission to **regularly monitor mobility patterns**, especially those of skilled workers. In the event of emerging labour market distortions, the Commission shall consider presenting proposals to the European Parliament and Council to counteract such developments.

Multiannual work plans and Annual work programmes: Members call for the Commission to be empowered to adopt delegated acts establishing multiannual work plans for the Programme.

Monitoring and evaluation: with a view to regular monitoring of the Programme and making any adjustments needed to its policy and funding priorities, the Commission shall draw up an initial

qualitative and quantitative monitoring report after one year and thereafter biennial qualitative and quantitative monitoring reports and send them to the European Parliament and the Council. The reports shall be made **available to the public** in order to enhance the Programme's transparency.