Guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States

2017/0305(NLE) - 19/04/2018 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 452 votes to 156, with 39 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a Council decision on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States.

Members called for a coordinated employment strategy to promote inclusive labour markets responsive to economic, social, technological and environmental realities and changes, with a skilled, trained and adaptable workforce and for safeguarding the well-being of all workers in order to achieve the objectives of a social market economy.

The Union should also combat poverty, social exclusion and discrimination in all their forms, in all areas.

The **integrated guidelines and the European social rights pillar** should form the basis for well-targeted country-specific recommendations that the Council addresses to the Member States.

The European Parliament approved the Commission proposal subject to the following amendments:

Guideline 5: Boosting the demand for labour

- facilitate and invest in the creation of **sustainable, accessible and quality jobs** in all sectors, regions and skill levels, in particular by fully developing the potential of sectors of the future, such as the green economy, the circular economy, healthcare and digital;
- enable everyone to **reconcile private and professional life** and to ensure that workplaces are adapted for people with disabilities and older workers, facilitate the hiring process and promote responsible entrepreneurship and self-employment;
- create quality employment opportunities for all in a responsible manner, taking into account the development of new information and communication technologies and ensure that they fully respect Union law, national legislation and employment practices as well as with industrial relation systems;
- reduce unnecessary red tape to alleviate the administrative burden on small and medium-sized enterprises;
- gradually reduce the tax burden on labour and increase it on other sources of taxation while ensuring that tax shifts do not jeopardise the sustainability of the welfare state.

Guideline 6: Enhancing labour supply and improving access to employment, skills and competences

- promote the **long-term wellbeing** and productivity of their workforce through targeted promotion of training in science, technology, engineering and mathematics;
- invest in lifelong learning by addressing the specific needs of people with disabilities, members of ethnic and national minorities, immigrants and refugees;
- avoid skills mismatches and market needs;
- develop and strengthen **basic skills**, promoting the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills and facilitating study and training leave, vocational training and lifelong learning;
- promote the long-term well-being and productivity of the workforce by fostering personal development, social cohesion, intercultural understanding and active citizenship;
- combat **long-term unemployment** and long-term inactivity through a coordinated approach to social services and employment;

- implement wage transparency policies and wage audits with a view to closing the **pay gap** between women and men; setting effective, proportionate and dissuasive penalties on employers paying a different wage for the same job, depending on whether it is performed by a man or by a woman;
- ensure that parents have access to quality and affordable long-term care, early childhood education and care, and systems such as teleworking or mobile work.

Guideline 7: Enhancing the functioning of labour markets and the effectiveness of social dialogue

- encourage and empower people who are able to access the labour market to participate, through individual support and integrated services as part of a broader active inclusion approach;
- through individual support and integrated services within a broader active inclusion approach
- provide unemployed persons with **adequate unemployment benefits** for a sufficient period of time to allow them to find quality employment;
- ensure the **mobility** of learners and workers, as a fundamental freedom, in order to enhance their skills and exploit full potential of the European labour market;
- enable workers with atypical employment contracts and self-employed workers to exercise their right to organise and to bargain collectively.

Guideline No 8: Promoting equality and equal opportunities and non-discrimination for all, fostering social inclusion and combatting poverty

- implement, in cooperation with regional and local authorities, effective measures to **fight all forms of discrimination** and to promote equal opportunities for all to participate in society, as well as specific measures to support those in vulnerable situations, they should be supported by adequate funding;
- improve social protection systems, including for the self-employed;
- promote the active participation of NGOs specialised in the fight against poverty and of organisations of people experiencing poverty in the development of policies;
- ensure access to health care, free education and childcare, decent housing and proper nutrition for **children** living in poverty;
- urgently secure the sustainability and adequacy of **pension systems** to enable all to live in dignity and aim to ensure an adequate income for older people that is at least above the poverty line.

To ensure a more democratic decision-making process in the context of the Integrated Guidelines, which affect people and labour markets across the Union, Members called on the Council to take into account the position of the European Parliament.