Guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States

2021/0137(NLE) - 16/09/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted a legislative resolution on the proposal for a Council decision on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States.

The proposal provides that the guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States, which are annexed to Council Decision (EU) 2020/1512, are maintained for 2021 and must be taken into account by the Member States in their employment policies and reform programmes.

Parliament approved the Commission's proposal subject to amendments highlighting the following points:

- the definition and implementation of EU policies and actions should take into account the requirements of promoting inclusive labour markets, a high level of employment, collective bargaining, decent wages, ensuring adequate social protection, combating poverty and social exclusion, with a particular focus on vulnerable groups, namely children, people with disabilities, lone parents, ethnic minorities, such as the Roma, LGBTQIA+ people, people living in remote areas and older people;

- the European Child Guarantee should be mainstreamed across all policy sectors and funding for children' s rights should be prioritised, while making full use of existing EU policies and funds;

- the European Semester should combine the different instruments in an overarching framework for integrated multilateral coordination and surveillance of economic, employment, social and environmental policies. It should contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular gender equality;

- the EU's and Member States' employment and economic policies should go hand in hand with Europe's transition to a climate neutral, socially inclusive, investing in youth and reducing poverty;

- there is an urgent need for sustainable and quality jobs, including initiatives on decent working conditions on teleworking, the right to disconnect, parental and care related leave, the rights of platform workers, a general legal framework on subcontracting, as well as health and safety and strengthening the role of collective bargaining;

- Member States should make full use of the potential of the general derogation clause in the Stability and Growth Pact to support businesses that are in difficulty or lacking liquidity, in particular micro, small and medium-sized enterprises;

- Member States should ensure fair mobility and the portability of rights and entitlements through better protection of mobile workers including cross-border and seasonal workers, more effective labour inspectorates and the introduction of effective digital solutions;

- with a view to ending homelessness by 2030, Members recalled the commitment to implement the housing first principle, promote homelessness prevention and provide homeless people with access to adequate, safe and affordable housing and support services, while putting in place the necessary policy measures, with adequate funding at national and EU level;

- Member States should strengthen the role of the social partners and promote the extension of the coverage of collective agreements to ensure an inclusive and socially just recovery;

- lastly, a thorough evaluation of national policies and support schemes that have been deployed to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic is needed in order to draw the necessary lessons and identify instruments for future use.