



THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

Committee on Regional Development

2011/2067(INI)

18.7.2011

OPINION

of the Committee on Regional Development

for the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

on the agenda for new skills and jobs
(2011/2067(INI))

Rapporteur: Monika Smolková

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Regional Development calls on the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Welcomes the agenda for new skills and jobs as part of the EU 2020 strategy, pointing to the need for increasingly high skills, as only a workforce that is skilled is of fundamental importance for the development of a competitive, sustainable and innovative economy, and considers that development policies should be created geared to upgrading the system for science and innovation, promoting improved employability, growth and social cohesion so that the agenda for new skills and jobs will adapt to the post-crisis period and prevent the recurrence of such a crisis in the future; in this context, underlines the importance of concrete and consistent measures for the training of the workforce;
2. Supports the promotion of integrated approaches involving the main players at national, regional and local level; in this context highlights the importance of the regional dimension in implementing the agenda for new skills and jobs; takes the view that the participation of the European regions will help to make the agenda a genuine success and calls for this dimension to be strengthened;
3. Stresses the need to improve and diversify employment services for both jobseekers and employers and, in particular, to develop personalised public employment services for the unemployed, young people and vulnerable groups;
4. Calls for greater attention to be paid to the issue of reducing unemployment among young people, many of whom are very well educated and highly qualified but are unable to find jobs owing to factors such as a lack of experience, and calls for real and effective action to be taken towards this end; points out that this situation could result in long-term distortion of the EU labour market;
5. In view of the ageing of Europe's population, calls on Member States to create a set of instruments to facilitate labour market access for older people, and calls both for promotion of, and wide support for, guidance and activation of older people in the light of the innovation partnership Active and Healthy Ageing as well as for incentives for employers, given that business is less interested in older workers; stresses the importance of such persons' receiving further training and gaining new qualifications that will enable them to re-enter the labour market; in this context, stresses the importance of making use of the knowledge and experience of older people, e.g. through coaching projects;
6. Draws attention to the fact that female unemployment is rising, affecting even women who are highly qualified and highly skilled, and calls on the Commission to seek to ensure that women and men have equal opportunities on the labour market;
7. Highlights the need to ensure the more effective use of funds for the development of new skills and greater participation by national governments in boosting the creation of new jobs, including in the burgeoning 'green economy'; stresses that the social economy can be used as a means of creating jobs for the less-favoured social groups, which involves

principally a mobilisation of funds and programmes: the European Social Fund (ESF), the European Regional Development Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and the Lifelong Learning, Progress and INTERREG programmes;

8. Stresses the importance of synergies between the various European funds and underlines the importance of a decentralised approach when using these funds in order to respond to labour market requirements; believes that there is also a need to give individuals and enterprises suitable incentives to invest in training; in this regard, highlights the contribution of cohesion policy to the resource-efficient Europe flagship initiative and calls for its potential for sustainable growth to be considered;
9. Welcomes the launch of the pilot project 'First job - EURES', aimed at young jobseekers in the 27; believes that this project should involve local authorities and organisations responsible for young people's integration, irrespective of their social or geographical origins;
10. Agrees with enhancing the impact of the cohesion policy instruments, including the ESF, by focusing on concentrating financial resources on a smaller number of priorities, strengthening conditionality for institutional reforms, reinforcing the partnership principle, emphasising clear and measurable targets and establishing development and partnership investment contracts between the Commission and the Member States;
11. Supports policies designed to promote job creation taking into account - as a priority - the needs of small and medium-sized enterprises, which provide two thirds of all jobs in the private sector, and takes the view that training mechanisms, to which the private sector should also contribute and which are tailored to their needs, should be created; advocates innovative measures for creating new skills, especially in the context of SMEs;
12. Calls on the Commission to review the existing framework of EU direct enterprise support schemes and to study the possibility of allocating the lion's share of the support to job creation in enterprises, developing workers' skills and implementing further training programmes;
13. Attaches vital importance to effective incentives and cost-sharing schemes with the aim of increasing public and private investment in the systematic training of workers and in Lifelong Learning focusing on ICT and digital literacy, to language learning and to developing planning, analysis, organisational, problem-solving and communication skills and the ability to adapt to new situations; underlines the importance of improving people's access to ICT irrespective of their place of residence and social situation;
14. Believes that support for private enterprise in the R&D context will generate new jobs and enable the development of new skills in response to market needs;
15. Stresses that the exchange of experience and best practices and the creation of networks and coordination mechanisms at national and EU-wide level between higher education institutions, research establishments and business centres is essential for raising skill levels and adapting to the needs of the labour market; emphasises the need to consolidate employers' networks and encourage exchanges of best practices among them; insists on

the importance of a stable supply/demand balance between employers and training institutions; calls on local and regional authorities to promote the European Eco-Management & Audit Scheme (EMAS) and to encourage all economic sectors to strive to achieve EMAS registration;

16. Welcomes the Commission's proposal to promote European centres of excellence within new academic specialisations for tomorrow's jobs; underlines that, especially in urban areas, regional and local authorities are the best placed and most capable of creating the conditions necessary for the growth of clusters of innovative enterprises; points out that such clustering can act as a decisive spur to local economic development and can create new jobs in regions;
17. Points out that the main responsibility for achieving the aims of the agenda for new skills and jobs lies with the Member States and their regions, and that it is therefore essential for the Commission to ensure that the aims of the agenda are adopted by each Member State;
18. Calls on the Commission to adopt measures to remove administrative and legal obstacles in order to increase labour mobility, by means both of the recognition of qualifications and of the portability of supplementary pension rights; stresses the need to boost workforce mobility between EU Member States as a potential means of reducing regional imbalances and fulfilling the objectives of cohesion policy; welcomes the Commission's initiative to reform the European Employment Services (EURES) network in order to improve services for mobile workers and jobseekers, particularly in border regions;
19. Calls for national, regional and local actors to be involved in the processes of assessing, adapting and defining changes in the agenda's implementation;

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	12.7.2011
Result of final vote	+: 42 -: 3 0: 1
Members present for the final vote	François Alfonsi, Luís Paulo Alves, Charalampos Angourakis, Catherine Bearder, Victor Boştinaru, Zuzana Brzobohatá, John Bufton, Alain Cadec, Francesco De Angelis, Tamás Deutsch, Rosa Estaràs Ferragut, Elie Hoarau, Brice Hortefeux, Danuta Maria Hübner, Juozas Imbrasas, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska, María Irigoyen Pérez, Seán Kelly, Mojca Kleva, Petru Constantin Luhan, Riikka Manner, Iosif Matula, Erminia Mazzoni, Miroslav Mikolášik, Lambert van Nistelrooij, Franz Obermayr, Jan Olbrycht, Markus Pieper, Monika Smolková, Georgios Stavrakakis, Nuno Teixeira, Michael Theurer, Michail Tremopoulos, , Oldřich Vlasák, Kerstin Westphal, Hermann Winkler, Joachim Zeller
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Andrea Cozzolino, Karima Delli, Ivars Godmanis, Karin Kadenbach, Marek Henryk Migalski, Vilja Savisaar-Toomast, Elisabeth Schroedter, Derek Vaughan
Substitute(s) under Rule 187(2) present for the final vote	Norica Nicolai