**SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE procedure – First reading**

**Follow up to the European Parliament legislative resolution on the proposal for a Council decision on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States**

**1. Rapporteur:** Lucia ĎURIŠ NICHOLSONOVÁ (Renew / SK)

**2. Reference numbers:** 2021/0137 (NLE) / A9-0262/2021 / P9\_TA-PROV(2021)0384

**3. Date of adoption of the resolution:** 15 September 2021

**4. Legal basis:** Article 148(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

**5. Competent Parliamentary Committee:** Committee on employment and social affairs (EMPL)

**6. Commission's position:** Accepts some amendments.

The Commission regards the current wording of the proposal for a Council decision on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States as balanced and appropriate.

After a thorough review of the amendments by the European Parliament, the Commission is of the opinion that **many of them** stress issues that are already part of the Employment Guidelines (notably as regards revising the Employment Guidelines in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and its social and employment consequences in order to better respond to the crisis) or are referred to in other recitals. The 2020 Guidelines already include policy guidance aimed at mitigating the employment and social consequences of the COVID-19 crisis.

Several amendments call for the adoption of new (legislative) initiatives, for instance in the areas of parental leave, platform work and health and safety, which falls outside the scope of this proposal and the text of the recitals. The suggested text on the ‘general escape clause’ is rather an element for the Broad Economic Policy Guidelines.

In light of this, the Commission could accept wording from the following amendments:

* The Commission could accept the following addition (in bold) in recital 5: “The Union’s and Member States’ employment and economic policies should go hand in hand with Europe’s transition to a climate neutral, environmentally sustainable and digital economy, improving competitiveness, ensuring adequate working conditions **and robust welfare systems**, fostering innovation, promoting social justice and equal opportunities, as well as tackling inequalities and regional disparities” as this reflects a significant challenge to European economies and societies due to demographic ageing and the impact of the crisis.
* The Commission could accept in recital 6 the addition of a reference to the European Pillar of Social Rights (in bold): “Climate change and environmental related challenges, globalisation, digitalisation, artificial intelligence, teleworking, the platform economy and demographic change will transform European economies and societies. […] This requires a coordinated, ambitious and effective policy action at both Union and national levels, in accordance with the TFEU, **the European Pillar of Social Rights** and the Union’s provisions on economic governance”. Such addition emphasises the relevance of the European Pillar of Social Rights in strengthening the Union's drive towards a digital, green and fair transition and towards addressing the demographic challenges, in line with the Porto declaration of 8 May 2021.
* The Commission could accept in recital 10 the addition of a reference to the European Child Guarantee, using part of the amendment proposed by the European Parliament, for instance: **“Measures set out in the Council Recommendation establishing a European Child Guarantee should be mainstreamed across all relevant policy areas, making full use of existing Union funds for concrete actions that contribute to eradicating child poverty and social exclusion”.** Such a text would put further emphasis on the need to tackle child poverty, discussed earlier in the recital, by supporting a swift implementation of the Child Guarantee as well as full use of existing funds.
* The Commission could accept in recital 12 the addition of: “**Member States should also make full use of the revised European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Displaced Workers established by Regulation (EU) 2021/691 of the European Parliament and of the Council (…) to support workers made redundant as a result of the COVID-19 crisis**”, as a reference to the revised Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Displaced Workers, which would complement the list of EU funds already mentioned in the recital (i.e. REACT-EU, the European Social Fund+, the Recovery and Resilience Facility, the Just Transition Fund and InvestEU). As such, it would be a pertinent and factually correct addition.