



TEXTS ADOPTED

P8_TA(2015)0261

Guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States *

European Parliament legislative resolution of 8 July 2015 on the proposal for a Council decision on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States (COM(2015)0098 – C8-0075/2015 – 2015/0051(NLE))

(Consultation)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission proposal to the Council (COM(2015)0098),
 - having regard to Article 148(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, pursuant to which the Council consulted Parliament (C8-0075/2015),
 - having regard to Rule 59 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (A8-0205/2015),
1. Approves the Commission proposal as amended;
 2. Calls on the Commission to alter its proposal accordingly, in accordance with Article 293(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union;
 3. Calls on the Council to notify Parliament if it intends to depart from the text approved by Parliament;
 4. Asks the Council to consult Parliament again if it intends to substantially amend the Commission proposal;
 5. Instructs its President to forward its position to the Council and the Commission.

Amendment 1

Proposal for a decision

Recital 1

Text proposed by the Commission

(1) Member States and the Union should work towards developing **a** coordinated strategy for employment **and particularly** for promoting a skilled, trained **and adaptable** workforce and labour markets responsive to economic change **and** with a view to achieving the full employment and social progress objectives set out in Article 3 of the Treaty on European Union. Member States, having regard to national practices related to the responsibilities of management and labour, are to regard promoting employment as a matter of common concern and coordinate their action in this respect within the Council.

Amendment

(1) Member States and the Union should work towards developing ***an effective and coordinated strategy for employment, designed to counter the serious effects of unemployment,*** for promoting a skilled, trained workforce and labour markets responsive to economic, ***social and environmental*** change, ***notably through the targeted promotion of training in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics sectors and through the adaptation of the education systems,*** with a view to achieving the full employment and social progress objectives set out in Article 3 of the Treaty on European Union. ***Particular efforts should be made to increase the employment of workers with very low levels of schooling or skills and of those who are unable to acquire training or skills rapidly, and to reduce ever increasing large-scale and long-term unemployment, with particular focus on regions which are lagging behind.*** Member States, having regard to national practices related to the responsibilities of management and labour, are to regard promoting employment as ***a priority and*** a matter of common concern and coordinate their action in this respect within the Council. ***The Union should accompany those efforts with policy proposals to achieve the Treaty objectives and to ensure an inclusive, integrated labour market as well as decent working conditions across the Union, including adequate wages, also achieved by way of collective bargaining.***

Amendment 2

Proposal for a decision
Recital 1 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(1a) According to Eurostat estimates,

there were 23 815 000 unemployed people in the Union in January 2015, 18 059 000 of whom were in the euro area.

Amendment 3

Proposal for a decision Recital 1 b (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(1b) It is now essential to establish reliable indicators for the condition of poverty in which many Union citizens find themselves, with respect to the previous figures contained in Council Decision 2010/707/EU^{1a} which identified the need to lift at least 20 million people out of the risk of poverty and exclusion.

^{1a} Council Decision 2010/707/EU of 21 October 2010 on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States (OJ L 308, 24.11.2010, p. 46).

Amendment 4

Proposal for a decision Recital 2

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(2) The Union must combat social exclusion *and* discrimination, ensure equal access to fundamental rights, and promote social justice and protection. In defining and implementing its policies and activities, the Union should take into account requirements linked to the guarantee of adequate social protection *and* the fight against social exclusion and a high level of education and training.

(2) The Union must combat social exclusion, *all forms of poverty as well as* discrimination, ensure equal access to fundamental rights, and promote social justice and protection. *This overall objective should not be endangered by side effects of other legislation or policies.* In defining and implementing its policies and activities, the Union should take into account requirements linked to the guarantee of adequate social protection, the fight against social exclusion, and a high level of education and training.

Amendment 6

Proposal for a decision Recital 4

Text proposed by the Commission

(4) Member States should regard their economic policies as a matter of common concern and coordinate them within the Council. Employment guidelines and broad economic policy guidelines should be adopted by the Council to guide Member States' and Union policies.

Amendment

(4) Member States should regard their economic policies, ***together with their social policies***, as a matter of common concern and coordinate them within the Council. Employment guidelines and broad economic policy guidelines should be adopted by the Council to guide Member States' and Union policies.

Amendment 7

Proposal for a decision Recital 4 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(4a) To ensure a more democratic decision-making on the integrated guidelines, which affect the citizens and labour markets across the Union, it is important that both the employment guidelines and the broad economic guidelines are decided upon by the European Parliament and the Council. The integrated guidelines must allow Member States, as a priority, to adopt sustainable and integrated economic models at Union, national and local level.

Amendment 8

Proposal for a decision Recital 5

Text proposed by the Commission

(5) In accordance with the Treaty provisions, the Union has developed and implemented policy coordination instruments for fiscal policy and macro-structural policies. The European Semester combines the different instruments in an overarching framework for integrated

Amendment

(5) In accordance with the Treaty, the Union has developed and implemented policy coordination instruments for fiscal policy and macro-structural policies ***which have a strong impact on the social and employment situation in the Union. Those policies may result in a trend of***

multilateral economic *and* budgetary *surveillance*. The streamlining and strengthening of the European Semester as set out in the Commission's 2015 Annual Growth Survey *will* further improve its functioning.

stagnation and deflation in some parts of the Union, which could discourage growth and employment. In that regard, it is vital to take into consideration the new social indicators and the asymmetric shocks that certain Member States have experienced as a result of the financial and economic crisis. The European Semester combines the different instruments in an overarching framework for integrated multilateral *surveillance of economic, budgetary, employment and social policies, and should be better geared to delivering the EU2020 targets.* The streamlining and strengthening of the European Semester as set out in the Commission's 2015 Annual Growth Survey *may* further improve its functioning, *but that instrument has not yet improved the economic situation in the Member States worst affected by the crisis.*

Amendment 9

Proposal for a decision Recital 5 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(5a) According to the European Social Observatory, 26 Member States already have income support and social protection schemes.^{1a} The Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, Marianne Thyssen, stated that “if [she] could decide what happens in all Member States in Europe, then there would be a minimum income in all countries in Europe”.

^{1a} http://www.eesc.europa.eu/resources/docs/revenu-minimum_-etude-ose_-vfinale_en--2.pdf

Amendment 10

Proposal for a decision Recital 5 b (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(5b) There is no regulatory competence at Union level for the creation of a regulatory framework for a Union minimum wage.

Amendment 47

Proposal for a decision

Recital 6

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(6) The financial and economic crisis revealed and emphasised ***important*** weaknesses in the ***economy*** of the ***Union and its Member States***. It has also underscored the close interdependence of the Member States' economies and labour markets. Moving the Union to a state of strong, sustainable and inclusive growth and job creation is the key challenge faced today. This requires coordinated ***and ambitious*** policy action both on Union and national level, in line with the provisions of the Treaty and the Union economic governance. Combining supply and demand side measures, these actions should encompass a boost to investment, ***a*** renewed commitment to structural reforms and exercising fiscal responsibility.

(6) The financial and economic crisis revealed and emphasised ***serious*** weaknesses in the ***economies of the Member States and in the Union's coordination mechanisms***. It has also underscored the close interdependence of the Member States' economies and labour markets. Moving the Union to a state of strong, sustainable and inclusive growth and job creation, ***which involves putting a stop to the large pockets of unemployment that have arisen in certain parts of its territory***, is the key challenge faced today. This requires ***firm, coordinated, ambitious, but, above all, effective*** policy action both on Union and national level, in line with the provisions of the Treaty and the Union economic governance. Combining supply and demand side measures, these actions should encompass a boost to investment, ***particularly investment aiming to develop small and medium-sized enterprises, microenterprises, innovative start-ups and businesses promoting green employment and*** renewed commitment to structural reforms and exercising fiscal responsibility. ***Those actions should also encompass the creation of a more inclusive rights-based labour market, flanked by adequate social protection. They should also include social protection measures, such as guaranteed minimum income, to be introduced in accordance with national practices, with the goal of fighting extreme poverty and social***

exclusion.

Amendment 12

Proposal for a decision

Recital 7

Text proposed by the Commission

(7) Member States and the Union should also address the social impact of the crisis and aim **at building a cohesive** society in which people are empowered to anticipate and manage change, and can actively participate in society and the economy. Access and opportunities for all should be ensured and poverty and social exclusion reduced, in particular by ensuring an effective functioning of labour markets and social welfare systems and removing barriers to labour market participation. Member States should also make sure that the benefits of economic growth reach all citizens and all regions.

Amendment

(7) Member States and the Union should also address the social impact of the crisis **by providing more reliable figures on extreme poverty**, and aim **to build an inclusive and more just** society in which people are empowered to anticipate and manage change, and can actively participate in society and the economy. **Non-discriminatory** access and opportunities for all should be ensured and poverty and social exclusion reduced **substantially**, in particular by ensuring an effective functioning of labour markets and **adequate** social welfare systems and removing **unnecessary administrative barriers and** barriers to labour market participation, **in particular those affecting people with disabilities**. Member States should also make sure that the benefits of economic growth reach all citizens and all **regional and local entities**. **The scoreboard of key employment and social indicators within the Joint Employment Report is a particularly useful tool in this respect by helping to detect key employment and social problems and divergences in a timely way and identify areas where policy response is most needed. However, further editions of the scoreboard should include also gender disaggregated data.**

Amendment 13

Proposal for a decision

Recital 7 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(7a) The European Court of Auditors has identified three risks to the successful

implementation of the Youth Guarantee initiative: the adequacy of total funding, the definition of a 'good quality offer', and the way the Commission monitors and reports on the results of the scheme.

Amendment 14

Proposal for a decision Recital 7 b (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(7b) Council Decision 2010/707/EU set out the following goals: to raise the employment rate for women and men aged 20 to 64 to 75 % by 2020; to reduce the drop-out rates to less than 10 %; to increase the share of 30 to 34-year-olds completing tertiary or equivalent education to at least 40 %; and to promote social inclusion, in particular through the reduction of poverty by aiming to lift at least 20 million people out of the risk of poverty and exclusion. The realisation of the Europe 2020 strategy in the employment and social area remains a key objective of Member States' employment policy.

^{1a} Council Decision 2010/707/EU of 21 October 2010 on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States (OJ L 308, 24.11.2010, p. 46).

Amendment 15

Proposal for a decision Recital 8

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(8) Action in line with the guidelines is an important contribution to reaching the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy. The guidelines constitute an integrated set of European and national policies, which Member States and the Union should implement in order to achieve the positive

(8) Action in line with the guidelines is an important contribution to reaching the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy *which have not yet been achieved. The outcome of the 2014 public consultation on the Europe 2020 strategy clearly showed that the employment, poverty, social exclusion*

spill-over effects of coordinated **structural** reforms, an appropriate overall economic policy mix and a more consistent contribution from European policies to the Europe 2020 strategy's objectives.

and education targets of the strategy are still highly relevant, and are equally important, interdependent and mutually reinforcing. The guidelines constitute an integrated set of European and national policies, which Member States and the Union should implement in order to achieve the positive spill-over effects of coordinated reforms **aiming to reduce inequalities and increasing the well-being of citizens**, an appropriate overall economic policy mix and a more consistent contribution from European policies to the Europe 2020 strategy's objectives.

Amendment 16

Proposal for a decision

Recital 9

Text proposed by the Commission

(9) While these guidelines are addressed to Member States and the Union, they should be implemented in partnership with all national, regional and local authorities, **closely associating** parliaments, as well as social partners and representatives of civil society.

Amendment

(9) **When designing and implementing national policies, Member States should ensure effective governance.** While these guidelines are addressed to Member States and the Union, they should be implemented, **monitored and evaluated** in partnership with all national, regional and local authorities, parliaments, as well as social partners and representatives of civil society.

Amendment 17

Proposal for a decision

Recital 10

Text proposed by the Commission

(10) The broad guidelines for economic policies give guidance to the Member States on implementing reforms, **reflecting interdependence. They are in line with the Stability and Growth Pact. The guidelines** should form the basis for country-specific recommendations that the Council may address to the Member States.

Amendment

(10) The broad guidelines for economic policies **and the employment guidelines** give guidance to the Member States on implementing reforms **and** should form the basis for country-specific recommendations that the Council may address to the Member States. **Given the close interdependence of Member States' economies and labour markets, when adopting country-specific**

recommendations the Council should take into consideration the state of affairs in the neighbouring countries as well as in countries with which the respective Member State has clear connections following a trend in migration by workers or any other relevant indicator. In that respect, the Commission should have accurate and updated statistics and data available in case the country-specific recommendations need to be adjusted.

Amendment 18

Proposal for a decision Annex – Guideline 5 – paragraph 1

Text proposed by the Commission

Member States should facilitate job creation, reduce barriers for business to hire people, promote entrepreneurship and in particular support the creation and growth of small enterprises in order to increase the employment rate of women and men. Member States should *also* actively promote the social economy and foster social innovation.

Amendment

Member States, *in cooperation with regional and local authorities*, should *effectively and promptly tackle the serious issue of unemployment*, and facilitate *and invest in sustainable and quality* job creation, *address accessibility for at-risk groups and* reduce barriers for business to hire people *across skill levels and labour market sectors, including by cutting red tape, whilst respecting labour and social standards*, promote *youth* entrepreneurship and in particular support the creation and growth of *micro, small and medium* enterprises in order to increase the employment rate of women and men. Member States should actively promote, *inter alia, green, white and blue-sector jobs and* the social economy and foster social innovation.

Amendment 19

Proposal for a decision Annex – Guideline 5 – paragraph 2

Text proposed by the Commission

The tax burden should be shifted away from labour to other sources of taxation that are less detrimental to employment and growth while protecting revenue for

Amendment

The tax burden should be shifted away from labour to other sources of taxation that are less detrimental to employment and growth while protecting revenue for

adequate social protection and **growth enhancing** expenditures. Reductions in labour taxation should be aimed at the relevant components of the tax burden and at removing barriers and disincentives to labour market participation, in particular for those furthest away from the labour market.

adequate social protection and expenditures **directed towards public investment, innovation and job creation**. Reductions in labour taxation should be aimed at the relevant components of the tax burden, **at tackling discrimination** and at removing barriers and disincentives to labour market participation, in particular for **people with disabilities and** those furthest away from the labour market, **while respecting existing labour standards**.

Amendment 20

Proposal for a decision Annex – Guideline 5 – paragraph 3

Text proposed by the Commission

Member States should, together with the social partners, encourage wage-setting mechanisms allowing for a responsiveness of wages to productivity developments. In this respect, differences in skills and local labour market conditions **as well as divergences in economic performance across regions, sectors and companies** should be **taken into account**. When setting minimum wages, Member States and social partners should consider their impact on in-work poverty, job creation and competitiveness.

Amendment

Policies to ensure that wages allow an adequate living income remain important to create employment and decrease poverty in the Union. Member States should **therefore**, together with the social partners, **respect and** encourage wage-setting mechanisms allowing for a responsiveness of **real** wages to productivity developments **helping to correct past divergence without fuelling deflationary pressure**. **Those mechanisms should ensure sufficient resources to satisfy basic needs, taking account poverty indicators specific to each Member State**. In this respect, differences in skills and local labour market conditions should be **properly evaluated with the aim of ensuring a decent living wage across the Union**. When setting minimum wages **in accordance with national legislation and practices**, Member States and social partners should **ensure their adequacy as well as** consider their impact on in-work poverty, **household income, aggregate demand**, job creation and competitiveness.

Amendment 21

Proposal for a decision Annex – Guideline 5 – paragraph 3 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

Member States should cut red tape in order to ease the burden on small and medium-sized enterprises, as they contribute significantly to job creation.

Amendment 22

Proposal for a decision

Annex – Guideline 6 – paragraph 1

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

Member States should promote productivity and employability through an appropriate supply of relevant knowledge and skills. Member States should make ***the necessary*** investments in education and vocational training systems while improving their effectiveness and efficiency to raise the skill level of the workforce, allowing it to better anticipate and meet the rapidly changing needs of dynamic labour markets in an increasingly digital economy. ***Member States should step up efforts to improve access to quality adult learning for all and implement active ageing strategies to enable longer working lives.***

Member States should promote ***sustainable*** productivity and ***quality*** employability through an appropriate supply of relevant knowledge and skills ***made available and accessible to all. There should be particular focus on health care, social services and transport services which are facing or will face staff shortages in the medium term.*** Member States should make ***effective*** investments in ***high-quality and inclusive*** education ***from an early age*** and vocational training systems while improving their effectiveness and efficiency to raise the ***knowhow and*** skill level of the workforce, ***while increasing the diversity of skills***, allowing it to better anticipate and meet the rapidly changing needs of dynamic labour markets in an increasingly digital economy. ***To that end, the fact that "soft skills" such as communication are becoming more important for a large number of occupations should be taken into account.***

Amendment 23

Proposal for a decision

Annex – Guideline 6 – paragraph 1 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

Member States should promote entrepreneurship among young people inter alia by introducing optional entrepreneurship courses and

encouraging the creation of student enterprises in high schools and colleges. Member States, in cooperation with local and regional authorities, should step up efforts to prevent young people from dropping out of school and to ensure a smoother transition from education and training to professional life, to improve access and remove barriers to high-quality adult learning for all with particular focus on high-risk groups and their needs, by offering retraining of skills when job losses and changes in the labour market necessitate active reintegration. Simultaneously Member States should implement active ageing strategies to enable healthy working up to the real retirement age.

Amendment 24

Proposal for a decision

Annex – Guideline 6 – paragraph 1 b (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

While ensuring the necessary skills level requested by a continuously changing labour market and supporting education and training alongside programmes for adult learning, Member States should take into account that low-skills jobs are also needed and that employment opportunities are better for the high-skilled than for the medium- and low-skilled.

Amendment 25

Proposal for a decision

Annex – Guideline 6 – paragraph 1 c (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

Access to affordable, high-quality, early childhood education and care should be a priority for comprehensive policies and investment coupled with family and parenting support and reconciliation measures helping parents to balance work

and family life, as a contribution to preventing early school-leaving and increasing young people's chances on the labour market.

Amendment 26

Proposal for a decision Annex – Guideline 6 – paragraph 2

Text proposed by the Commission

High unemployment should be tackled and long-term unemployment prevented. The number of long-term unemployed should be ***significantly reduced*** by means of comprehensive and mutually reinforcing strategies, including the provision of ***specific*** active support to long-term unemployed to return to the labour market. The youth unemployment needs to be comprehensively addressed, ***including*** by equipping the relevant ***institutions*** with the necessary means to fully and consistently implement their national Youth Guarantee Implementation Plans.

Amendment

The issue of unemployment, in particular long-term unemployment and regional high unemployment should be resolved effectively and promptly, as well as prevented through a mix of demand and supply-side measures. The number of long-term unemployed ***and the problem of skills mismatch and skill obsolescence*** should be ***addressed*** by means of comprehensive and mutually reinforcing strategies, including the provision of ***personalised needs-based*** active support ***and appropriate social protection schemes*** to long-term unemployed to return to the labour market ***in an informed and responsible manner.*** The youth unemployment needs to be comprehensively addressed, ***through an overall youth employment strategy. This includes investing in sectors that can create quality jobs for young people and by equipping the relevant actors such as youth support services, education and training providers, youth organisations and public employment services*** with the necessary means to fully and consistently implement their national Youth Guarantee Implementation Plans, ***but also by the rapid take-up of resources by Member States. Access to funding for those who choose to start a business should be facilitated by means of a wider availability of information, a reduction in excessive bureaucracy and possibilities to convert several months' unemployment benefits into an upfront start-up grant after presentation of a business plan and in compliance with national legislation.***

Amendment 27

Proposal for a decision

Annex – Guideline 6 – paragraph 2 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

Member States should take into consideration local and regional disparities in drawing up and carrying out measures against unemployment and should work together with local employment services.

Amendment 28

Proposal for a decision

Annex – Guideline 6 – paragraph 3

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

Structural weaknesses in education and training systems should be addressed to ensure quality learning outcomes and prevent and tackle early school leaving. Member States should increase educational attainment ***and consider*** dual learning systems ***and*** upgrading professional training ***while at the same time increase opportunities for recognising skills acquired outside the formal education system.***

Structural weaknesses in education and training systems should be addressed to ensure high-quality learning outcomes and prevent and tackle early school leaving, ***and promote an all-embracing, high-quality education from the most basic level onwards. This requires flexible educational systems with a focus on practice.*** Member States, ***in cooperation with local and regional authorities,*** should increase ***the quality of*** educational attainment ***by making it accessible to all, set up and improve*** dual learning systems, ***adapted to their needs,*** by upgrading professional training ***and existing frameworks such as europass,*** while ***ensuring, where necessary, appropriate retraining of skills and recognition of those acquired outside of the formal education system. Links between education and labour market should be strengthened, while ensuring that education is sufficiently broad to provide people with a solid basis for life-long employability.***

Amendment 29

Proposal for a decision

Annex – Guideline 6 – paragraph 3 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

Member States should gear their training systems more closely to the labour market with a view to better transition from training to employment. In particular in the context of digitisation, and in terms of new technologies, green jobs and health care are essential.

Amendment 30

Proposal for a decision

Annex – Guideline 6 – paragraph 4

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

Barriers to labour market participation should be reduced, especially for women, older workers, young people, ***the disabled*** and legal migrants. Gender equality including equal pay must be ensured in the labour market as well as access to affordable quality early childhood education and care.

Discrimination on the labour market as well as with regard to access to the labour market need to be further reduced, especially for ***groups that face discrimination or exclusion, such as women, older workers, young people, people with disabilities*** and legal migrants. Gender equality including equal pay must be ensured in the labour market as well as access to affordable, high-quality early childhood education and care ***as well as the flexibility necessary to prevent the exclusion of those with breaks in their careers due to family responsibilities such as family carers. In this sense, the Women on Board Directive should be unblocked by the Member States.***

Amendment 31

Proposal for a decision

Annex – Guideline 6 – paragraph 4 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

In this respect, Member States should take into account the fact that the rates of young persons not in employment, education or training (NEET) are higher for women than for men and that the NEET phenomenon is primarily due to an

increase in youth unemployment but also to non-education linked inactivity.

Amendment 32

Proposal for a decision Annex – Guideline 6 – paragraph 5

Text proposed by the Commission

Member States should make a full use of European Social Fund and other Union funds support in order to improve employment, social inclusion, education **and** public administration.

Amendment

Member States should make a full, **effective and efficient** use of European Social Fund and other Union funds support in order to **combat poverty**, improve **quality** employment, social inclusion, education, public administration **and public services. The European Fund for Strategic Investments and its investment platforms should also be mobilised to ensure that quality jobs are created and workers are equipped with skills needed for the Union's transition towards a sustainable growth model.**

Amendment 33

Proposal for a decision Annex – Guideline 7 – paragraph 1

Text proposed by the Commission

Member States should reduce labour market segmentation. Employment protection rules and institutions should provide a suitable environment for recruitment while offering adequate levels of protection to those in employment and those seeking employment or employed on temporary contracts or independent work contracts. Quality employment should be ensured in terms of socio-economic security, education and training opportunities, **working conditions (including health and safety)** and work-life balance.

Amendment

Member States should reduce labour market segmentation **by tackling precarious employment, underemployment, undeclared labour and zero-hour contracts.** Employment protection rules and institutions should provide a suitable environment for recruitment while offering adequate levels of protection to those in employment and those seeking employment or employed on temporary, **part-time, atypical** contracts or independent work contracts, **by actively involving the social partners and by promoting collective bargaining.** Quality employment should be ensured **for all** in terms of socio-economic security, **durability, adequate wages, rights at work, decent workplace conditions (including health and safety), social security**

protection, gender equality, education and training opportunities. Therefore it is necessary to promote the entry of young people into the labour market, the reintegration of long-term unemployed and work-life balance, providing affordable care and modernising work organisation. Upward convergence in working conditions should be promoted across the Union.

Amendment 34

Proposal for a decision

Annex – Guideline 7 – paragraph 1 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

Access to the labour market should facilitate entrepreneurship, sustainable job creation in all sectors, including green employment, and social care and innovation, in order to make the best use of people's skills, foster their lifelong development and encourage employee-driven innovation.

Amendment 35

Proposal for a decision

Annex – Guideline 7 – paragraph 2

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

Member States should closely involve **National Parliaments and** social partners in the design and implementation of relevant reforms and policies, in line with national practices, while supporting the improvement of the functioning and effectiveness of social dialogue at national level.

Member States should closely involve **national parliaments**, social partners, **civil society organisations, regional and local authorities** in the design and implementation of relevant reforms and policies, in line with **the partnership principle and** national practices, while supporting the improvement of the functioning and effectiveness of social dialogue at national level, **especially in those countries with major problems of wage devaluation caused by recent deregulation of labour markets and weakness of collective bargaining.**

Amendment 36

Proposal for a decision

Annex – Guideline 7 – paragraph 3

Text proposed by the Commission

Member States should **strengthen** active labour market policies by **increasing** their targeting, outreach, coverage and interplay with **passive** measures. These policies should aim at improving labour market **matching** and support sustainable transitions on the labour market, with public employment services delivering individualised support and implementing performance measurement systems. Member States should also ensure that their social protection systems effectively activate and enable those who can participate in the labour market, protect those (temporarily) excluded from the labour markets and/or unable to participate in it, and prepare individuals for potential risks, by investing in human capital. Member States should promote inclusive labour markets open to all and also put in place effective anti-discrimination measures.

Amendment 37

Proposal for a decision

Annex – Guideline 7 – paragraph 4

Text proposed by the Commission

Mobility of workers should be ensured with an aim of exploiting the full potential of the European labour market, including

Amendment

Member States should **ensure basic standards of quality of** active labour market policies by **improving** their targeting, outreach, coverage and interplay with **supporting** measures **such as social security**. These policies should aim at improving labour market **access, strengthening collective bargaining and social dialogue** and support sustainable transitions on the labour market, with **highly qualified** public employment services delivering individualised support and implementing performance measurement systems. Member States should also ensure that their social protection systems effectively activate and enable those who can participate in the labour market, protect those (temporarily) excluded from the labour markets and/or unable to participate in it, and prepare individuals for potential risks **and changing economic and social conditions**, by investing in human capital. **Member States should introduce, as one of the possible measures to reduce poverty and in accordance with national practice, a minimum income proportionate to their specific socio-economic situation.** Member States should promote inclusive labour markets open to all and also put in place effective anti-discrimination measures.

Amendment

Mobility of workers should be ensured **as a fundamental right and as a matter of free choice**, with an aim of exploiting the full

by enhancing the portability of pensions and the recognition of qualifications. Member States should at the same time *guard against abuses of the existing rules.*

potential of the European labour market, including by enhancing the portability of pensions and the *effective* recognition of qualifications *and skills and the elimination of red tape and other existing barriers*. Member States should at the same time *tackle the language barriers, improving training systems in this matter. Member States should also make an appropriate use of the EURES network in order to encourage worker mobility. Investment in regions experiencing labour outflows should be promoted to mitigate brain drain and encourage mobile workers to return.*

Amendment 38

Proposal for a decision Annex – Guideline 7 a (new) – title

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

Improving the quality and performance of education and training systems at all levels

Amendment 39

Proposal for a decision Annex – Guideline 7 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

Member States should make access to care and to affordable quality early childhood education a priority as both are important support measures for labour market actors and contribute to increasing the overall employment rate while supporting the individuals in their responsibilities. Member States should set up the comprehensive policies and investment needed to improve family and parenting support and reconciliation measures helping parents to balance work and family life, as a contribution to preventing early school leaving and increasing young people's chances on the labour market.

Amendment 40

Proposal for a decision Annex – Guideline 8 – title

Text proposed by the Commission

Ensuring *fairness*, combatting poverty and promoting equal opportunities

Amendment

Ensuring *social justice*, combatting poverty and promoting equal opportunities

Amendment 41

Proposal for a decision Annex – Guideline 8 – paragraph 1

Text proposed by the Commission

Member States should *modernise* their social protection systems to provide effective, efficient, *and adequate* protection throughout all stages of an individual's life, ensuring fairness and addressing inequalities. There is a need for simplified *and* better targeted social policies *complemented* by affordable quality childcare and education, training and job assistance, housing support and *accessible* health care, access to basic services such as bank *account* and Internet and for action to prevent early school leaving and fight social exclusion.

Amendment

Member States, *in cooperation with local and regional authorities*, should *improve* their social protection systems *by ensuring basic standards* to provide effective, efficient *and sustainable* protection throughout all stages of an individual's life, ensuring *life in dignity, solidarity, access to social protection, full respect of social rights*, fairness and addressing inequalities *as well as ensuring inclusion in order to eliminate poverty, in particular for people excluded from the labour market and for the more vulnerable groups*. There is a need for simplified, better targeted *and more ambitious* social policies *including* by affordable, high-quality childcare and education, *effective* training and job assistance, housing support and *high-quality* health care *accessible to all*, access to basic services such as bank *accounts* and *the* Internet and for action to prevent early school leaving and fight *extreme poverty*, social exclusion, *and more generally all forms of poverty. Child poverty in particular must be decisively tackled*.

Amendment 42

Proposal for a decision

Annex – Guideline 8 – paragraph 2

Text proposed by the Commission

For that purpose a variety of instruments should be used in a complementary manner, including labour activation enabling services and income support, targeted at individual needs. Social protection systems should be designed in a way that facilitate take up of all persons **entitled**, support investment in human capital, and help prevent, reduce and protect against poverty.

Amendment

For that purpose a variety of instruments should be used in a complementary manner, including labour activation enabling services and income support, targeted at individual needs. ***In this respect, it is up to each Member State to set levels of minimum income in accordance with national practice and proportionate to the specific socio-economic situation in the Member State in question.*** Social protection systems should be designed in a way that facilitate ***access and*** take up of all persons ***in a non-discriminatory way***, support investment in human capital, and help prevent, reduce and protect against poverty ***and social exclusion as well as against other risks such as loss of health or employment.*** ***There should be a particular focus on children in poverty due to their parents' long-term unemployment.***

Amendment 43

Proposal for a decision

Annex – Guideline 8 – paragraph 3

Text proposed by the Commission

The pension systems should be ***reformed in order to secure*** their sustainability and adequacy for women and men ***in a context of increasing longevity and demographic change, including by linking statutory retirement ages to life expectancy, by increasing effective retirement ages, and by developing complementary retirement savings.***

Amendment

The pension systems should be ***structured in a way that*** their sustainability, ***safety*** and adequacy for women and men ***is ensured by strengthening*** retirement schemes, ***aiming at a decent retirement income at least above the poverty level.*** ***The pension systems should provide for consolidation, further development and improvement of the three pillars of retirement saving systems. Linking retirement age to life expectancy is not the only instrument by means of which to tackle the challenge of aging. Reforms of pension systems should also, inter alia, reflect labour market trends, birth rate, demographic situation, health and wealth situation, working conditions and the***

economic dependency ratio. The best way to tackle the challenge of ageing is to increase the overall employment rate, building, inter alia, on social investments in active ageing.

Amendment 44

Proposal for a decision Annex – Guideline 8 – paragraph 4

Text proposed by the Commission

Member States should improve the accessibility, efficiency and effectiveness of healthcare and long term care systems, while safeguarding *fiscal* sustainability.

Amendment

Member States should improve the *quality, affordability*, accessibility, efficiency and effectiveness of healthcare and long term care systems *and welfare services as well as decent working conditions in the related sectors*, while safeguarding *the financial* sustainability *of these systems by improving the solidarity-based financing*.

Amendment 45

Proposal for a decision Annex – Guideline 8 – paragraph 4 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Member States should make a full use of European Social Fund and other Union funds support in order to fight poverty, social exclusion and discrimination, improve accessibility for people with disabilities to promote equality between women and men and improve public administration.

Amendment

Member States should make a full use of European Social Fund and other Union funds support in order to fight poverty, social exclusion and discrimination, improve accessibility for people with disabilities to promote equality between women and men and improve public administration.

Amendment 46

Proposal for a decision Annex – Guideline 8 – paragraph 4 b (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

The Europe 2020 headline targets, on the basis of which Member States set their national targets, taking into account their relative starting positions and national circumstances, aims to raise the

Amendment

The Europe 2020 headline targets, on the basis of which Member States set their national targets, taking into account their relative starting positions and national circumstances, aims to raise the

employment rate for women and men aged 20 to 64 to 75% by 2020; to reduce the drop-out rate to less than 10 %; to increase the share of 30 to 34-year-olds completing tertiary or equivalent education to at least 40 %; and to promote social inclusion, in particular through the reduction of poverty by aiming to lift at least 20 million people out of the risk of poverty and exclusion^{1a}.

^{1a} Population is defined as the number of people who are at risk of poverty and exclusion according to three indicators (at risk of poverty; material deprivation; jobless household), leaving Member States free to set their national targets on the basis of the most appropriate indicators, taking into account their national circumstances and priorities.