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TEXTS ADOPTED

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**P9\_TA(2021)0272**

**European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) 2021-2027 \*\*\*II**

**European Parliament legislative resolution of 8 June 2021 on the Council position at first reading with a view to the adoption of a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1296/2013 (06980/2/2021 – C9-0195/2021 – 2018/0206(COD))**

**(Ordinary legislative procedure: second reading)**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the Council position at first reading (06980/2/2021 – C9-0195/2021),
- having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee of 17 October 2018<sup>1</sup>,
- having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions of 5 December 2018<sup>2</sup>,
- having regard to its position at first reading<sup>3</sup> on the Commission proposal to Parliament and the Council (COM(2018)0382),
- having regard to the amended Commission proposal (COM(2020)0447),
- having regard to Article 294(7) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
- having regard to the provisional agreement approved by the committee responsible under Rule 74(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- having regard to Rule 67 of its Rules of Procedure,
- having regard to the recommendation for second reading of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (A9-0197/2021),

1. Approves the Council position at first reading;

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 62, 15.2.2019, p. 165.

<sup>2</sup> OJ C 86, 7.3.2019, p. 84.

<sup>3</sup> Texts adopted of 4.4.2019, P8\_TA(2019)0350.

2. Takes note of the Commission statements annexed to this resolution;
3. Notes that the act is adopted in accordance with the Council position;
4. Instructs its President to sign the act with the President of the Council, in accordance with Article 297(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union;
5. Instructs its Secretary-General to sign the act, once it has been verified that all the procedures have been duly completed, and, in agreement with the Secretary-General of the Council, to arrange for its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*;
6. Instructs its President to forward its position to the Council, the Commission and the national parliaments.

## **ANNEX TO THE LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION**

### **Commission statement on ESF+ investments to combat child poverty**

In 2019, there were 18 million children at risk of poverty and social exclusion in the EU with very high numbers in some Member States. The COVID-19 outbreak and its socio-economic consequences have exacerbated inequalities and poverty with a more pronounced effect on them. Child poverty is consistently present in all Member States and continues to be higher than for working-age adults.

The Commission therefore welcomes the balanced agreement making the ESF+ a decisive tool to address the challenge of child poverty. The agreement recognises the urgency to invest in children in all Member States.

On 24 March 2021, the Commission adopted a proposal for a Council Recommendation establishing a European Child Guarantee with the aim to tackle the challenge structurally. When programming the ESF+, the Commission will do its utmost to ensure that Member States dedicate appropriate ESF+ funding to contribute to implementing the European Child Guarantee. Moreover, it will encourage Member States to also use other EU funding instruments and national resources available to support adequate investments in this area.

### **Commission statement on ESF+ investments in youth employment**

The Commission underlines that young people have been disproportionately hit by the socio-economic crisis following the COVID-19 outbreak. From December 2019 to December 2020 youth unemployment has increased by 3 percentage points in the EU, bringing the number of unemployed young persons to over 3.1 million. The Commission also recalls that youth unemployment has been consistently and significantly higher than that of the adult population with the latest figures showing a difference of over 10 percentage points (17.8% compared to 6.6% in December 2020).

The Commission welcomes the agreement reached by the co-legislators which recognises the challenge across all Member States. The ESF+ is the most important EU funding instrument to implement the recently adopted reinforced Youth Guarantee as well as other relevant measures under the Youth Employment Support initiative.

When programming the ESF+, the Commission will do its utmost to ensure that Member States

dedicate appropriate ESF+ funding to implement the reinforced Youth Guarantee. Moreover, it will encourage Member States to use also other EU funding instruments and national resources available to support adequate investments in this area.