



# ***PROGRESS***

## **The EU programme for employment and social solidarity 2007-2013**

Ensuring the Community can play its part to support Member States' commitments to create more and better jobs and offer equal opportunities for all



European Commission

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## BUILDING a social Europe

Europe needs all its citizens to play an active role in society. The diversity of its people, regions and finally EU Member States makes up much of its richness. Since its creation, the EU has linked social values with economic ones to ensure fair access to employment and equal treatment in life. All Member States share these values with governments intervening to create jobs, reduce poverty and social exclusion, provide social protection and promote equal opportunities.

Today, Europe faces major challenges if it is to continue to guarantee this European social model. Its population is ageing resulting in a shrinking workforce, which puts a higher pressure on social protection systems. Globalisation, technological changes, and the emergence of more flexible work patterns are other challenges impacting on job security and working conditions and transforming the labour market.



In addition, a record number of women are entering the job market – their employment rate now stands at 57%. But, despite this progress, they continue to earn on average of 15% less than men and often remain trapped in low paid and part-time jobs. The EU has worked for many years to end such pay and work discrimination and push for a labour market that has room for women and men to share equally the private and public sphere. Achieving gender equality remains a challenge for governments and individuals.

EU countries have to adapt and modernise their socio-economic model. Each will have to choose how they do it based on their level of prosperity, their traditions, and policy choices. The EU has an important role in helping governments, who are the main actors of change, by supporting, accompanying and coordinating their efforts to reshape their employment and social policies.



# Tackling the **CHALLENGES**

EU leaders reiterated in 2000 that economic growth must also deliver more and better jobs and equal opportunities for all. They placed these social goals at the heart of EU policy at their Lisbon European Council where they fixed the strategic target to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge based economy in the world.

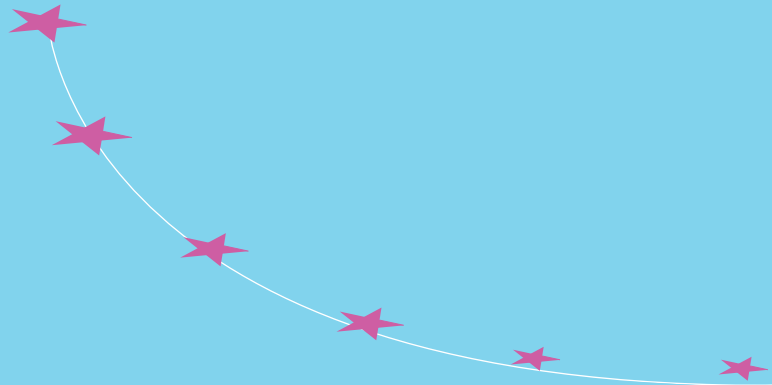
Member States have the main responsibility for employment and social policy. The EU's role is to be a catalyst for change and modernisation.

The EU budget in this area compared to national welfare budgets reflects this balance. For example, in 2003, Germany's social benefits expenditure alone totalled

€ 498 billion. France spent € 402 billion, Italy € 281

billion and the UK € 161 billion compared to the EU's

financial contribution of around € 10 billion a year.



In this catalyst role, the EU adopted in 2005 the Social Agenda, the EU's roadmap for employment and social actions. It reaffirms the necessary interaction between the economy and social and employment policies and sets out an ambitious action plan.

On employment, it asks governments, in partnership with employers and trade unions as well as civil society, to make work a real option for all, increase the quality and productivity of work and better anticipate and manage change.

To provide equal opportunities, it requests these actors to modernise social protection, combat poverty and promote social inclusion, diversity and non-discrimination.



# The **EU** making a **DIFFERENCE**

The EU is a key player in building a social Europe. To do this, it can:

- adopt legislation setting out minimum standards in employment law, working conditions, health and safety, non-discrimination and gender equality to ensure individuals throughout the EU enjoy a common level of protection;
- agree with Member States common EU objectives, supervise how they converge towards these objectives against commonly agreed indicators and benchmarks and foster the transfer of best practices;
- provide additional financial support for employment and inclusion policies through, for example, the European Social Fund (ESF) and other programmes;
- facilitate cooperation and dialogue with key actors, including social partners and organisations representing civil society.



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# Introducing *PROGRESS*

*PROGRESS* is the EU's new employment and social solidarity programme working alongside the ESF. Starting in 2007, it will run until 2013. This single programme replaces the four previous ones which ended in 2006 in a move to rationalise and streamline EU funding.

It is divided into five policy sections:

- Employment
- Social inclusion and social protection
- Working conditions
- Anti-discrimination
- Gender equality

Whereas the ESF invests in the implementation of employment and social inclusion policies in the Member States, *PROGRESS* will focus on activities with a strong European dimension to ensure an EU added value. These activities aim to ensure that the EU can, for example, monitor the uniform application of Community law in the Member States or supervise the extent to which national policies reflect EU objectives and policies. It will spend its budget of over € 700 million on analysing, networking and sharing of information to improve policy and practice and in campaigns to highlight key employment and social issues over its seven years of implementation.

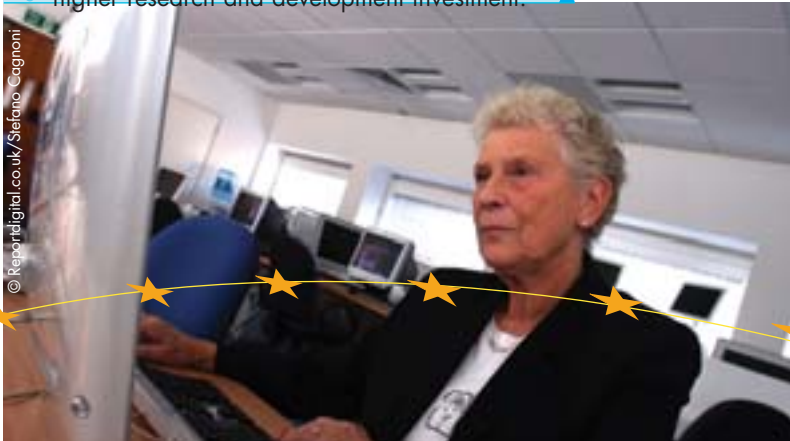
## THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND IN ACTION

The EU's largest financial tool for the implementation of employment and social affairs policies is the European Social Fund (ESF), which has an annual

budget of around € 10 billion. Some 8.5 million people a year across the EU directly benefit from ESF co-financed training and job creation schemes.

It can boost:

- a real increase in the share of people benefiting from lifelong learning;
- stimulating innovation and adaptability of workers and enterprises;
- success in bringing long-term unemployed back into the labour market through job finder schemes;
- reducing the number of school dropouts;
- improved childcare provision;
- promoting partnership between key stakeholders and opening up dialogue;
- higher research and development investment.

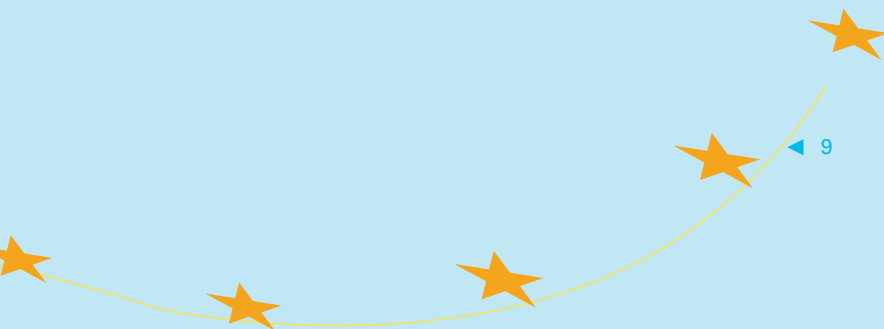


# How **PROGRESS** works

The Commission directly manages *PROGRESS*. A committee of Member States representatives assists the Commission. For example, this Committee approves the annual work plans and ensures that the programme delivers.

The Commission also relies on a network of partnerships involving national authorities, employers and workers organisations and NGOs.

*PROGRESS* is open to the 27 EU Member States, EU candidate and EFTA/EEA countries.



# PROGRESS – from vision to practice

## THE VISION

A European Community that can fully play its part in promoting more and better jobs and equal opportunities for all and whose positive contribution is recognised and valued

## THE MISSION

To effectively and efficiently fulfil the Treaty-delegated tasks and powers in employment and social solidarity to the benefit of European citizens by:

- shaping and focusing the EU policy agenda on the most EU pressing concerns;
- promoting the coordination and convergence of national policies towards EU objectives;
- ensuring maximum compliance with EU law;
- partnering with key stakeholders and getting support and ownership on all EU policies and objectives.

## GENERAL OBJECTIVES

- To improve the knowledge and understanding of the situations prevailing in the Member States
- To support the development of statistical tools, methods and common indicators
- To support and monitor the implementation of Community law and policy objectives in the Member States, and assess their effectiveness and impact
- To promote networking and mutual learning, identification and dissemination of good practice and innovative approaches at EU level
- To enhance the awareness of stakeholders and the general public about EU policies and objectives
- To boost the capacity of key EU networks to promote, support and further develop EU policies and objectives

## ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

- Analysis
- Mutual learning, awareness and dissemination
- Support to main actors

## EXAMPLES FOR FUNDING

- Europe-wide studies such as research on health and safety at work, collecting statistics on the number of workplace accidents and diseases or European Labour Force Surveys
- European observatories such as the European Employment Observatory (EEO), tracking employment policies and labour market trends
- Training of legal and policy practitioners
- Networks of national experts such as legal experts to exchange and discuss issues raised by EU employment law and its application
- EU networks of NGOs fighting social exclusion and discrimination on grounds of racial origin, age and disability or promoting gender equality
- Public awareness campaigns on EU social and employment policies and laws including EU Presidency Conferences or the Social Agenda Forum

# FURTHER INFORMATION

## The European Commission's Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal opportunities (DG EMPL)

[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/employment\\_social/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/employment_social/index_en.htm)

### Growth and jobs

[http://ec.europa.eu/growthandjobs/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/growthandjobs/index_en.htm)

### The Social Agenda

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/social\\_policy\\_agenda/social\\_pol\\_ag\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/social_policy_agenda/social_pol_ag_en.html)

### PROGRESS

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/progress/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/progress/index_en.html)

### and its policy areas:

- **Employment**  
[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/employment\\_strategy/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/employment_strategy/index_en.htm)
- **Social inclusion and protection**  
[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/social\\_inclusion/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/social_inclusion/index_en.htm)
- **Working conditions**  
[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/work\\_conditions/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/work_conditions/index_en.htm)
- **Anti-discrimination and diversity**  
[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/fundamental\\_rights/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/fundamental_rights/index_en.htm)
- **Gender equality**  
[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/gender\\_equality/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/gender_equality/index_en.html)

### The European Social Fund

<http://ec.europa.eu/esf>

### DG EMPL tenders and grants page

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/emplweb/tenders/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/emplweb/tenders/index_en.cfm)

### EU grants, funds and programmes

[http://ec.europa.eu/grants/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/grants/index_en.htm)

European Commission

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