



Public consultation on a possible successor instrument to the EU programme for employment and social solidarity

Progress 2007 - 2013





Table of Contents

About this consultation	4
1. What is the purpose of the consultation?	4
2. Context of the consultation	4
3. What is covered by the consultation?	5
4. Who can respond to the consultation?	5
5. How can I contribute?	6
6. What will the next steps be?	6
About Progress	7
1. Purpose of a successor instrument to Progress	7
2. Objectives and activities of the programme	7
3. Delivery and implementation	9
4. Budget	10
Public consultation questionnaire	11
Section 1: About you	11
Section 2: Your experience of the present Progress programme	12
Section 3: Need for a future EU financial instrument for employment and social affairs..	13
Section 4: Design of a future EU financial instrument for employment and social affairs.	14
Section 5: Activities to be covered by a future EU financial instrument for employment and social affairs	16
Section 6: Delivery of a future EU financial instrument for employment and social affairs	17
Section 7: Budget for a future EU financial instrument for employment and social affairs	17
Section 8: Final questions	18



This document does not represent an official position of the European Commission. It is a tool to explore the views of interested parties. The suggestions contained in this document do not prejudge the form or content of any future proposal by the European Commission.



About this consultation

1. What is the purpose of the consultation?

In the employment and social fields, the European Union faces considerable challenges, many of which have been exacerbated by the recent crisis. In particular the Union is faced with:

- Limited labour market participation especially for women and high structural unemployment;
- Shortcomings in skill levels of Europe's workforce and low labour mobility;
- Persistently high levels of poverty and social exclusion;
- Population ageing;
- Evolving work patterns and new risks for health and safety at work.

Such challenges are largely common to all the Member States and coordinated EU action is needed to effectively tackle them. While the main responsibility for developing labour market and social policies lies with the Member States, the EU brings added value to their actions by acting as a catalyst and facilitator to trigger national reforms in support of the EU common objectives and priorities as laid down in the Europe 2020 Strategy. This new strategy sets out a vision to achieve high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion in the context of a low carbon economy, to be implemented through concrete actions at EU and national levels.

To fulfil this role, the Commission needs to promote innovative and effective EU policies and legislation (when applicable); until 2013 such efforts of the Commission are supported by several financial instruments, such as the current [Progress programme](#). The object of this consultation is a possible successor instrument which would be active from 2014 onwards.

This public consultation is part of the reflection process on the need for and design of such a possible successor instrument. It gives stakeholders the opportunity to present their views about how well the current Progress programme performs and how it can be further improved to meet future needs more effectively and efficiently as well as bring more European added value.

2. Context of the consultation

On 19 October 2010, the Commission launched a review of the EU budget¹, which is a key instrument for shaping and delivering EU policies for citizens and economic and social actors. The purpose of the review is to ensure that the EU budget is used as effectively as possible to secure the Union's objectives. The Budget Review is grounded in a series of core principles that should underpin long-term budget reforms and are highly relevant for design of future EU financial instruments. The implications for a new instrument are:

- First and foremost, the objectives must be carefully prioritised and aligned with Europe 2020 goals. The instrument should also be precise as to what it wants to achieve. The Budget Review points out those EU financial instruments should complement each other and allow for "smart specialisation".

¹ The Communication from the Commission "EU Budget Review" is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/reform/library/communication/com_2010_700_en.pdf



- The Budget Review stresses that the effectiveness of the financial programmes needs to be put at the top of the agenda. Actions need to be carefully targeted to ensure that efforts are concentrated where they can bring results.
- The instrument needs to demonstrate its clear added value in terms of the return on spending at EU level compared with national level.
- The Budget Review places much emphasis on a results-driven approach. The current programme is already implemented through results-based management approach, which allows for measuring the achievement of the objectives and helps to demonstrate the programme's relevance and added value.
- The implementation procedures and rules need to be better harmonised and simplified to allow for more integrated delivery of EU policies on the ground.

In a nutshell, the Commission needs to design a smart, integrated, simple and flexible instrument which will deliver its objectives in a more efficient and effective way. This will enable it to respond to the new political context of Europe 2020 and the continuing socio-economic impact of the economic crisis and recovery in the EU and the Member States.

The Commission will be presenting a legislative proposal for a new instrument as part of new Multiannual Financial Framework. The proposal is expected to be adopted by the Commission by the end of 2011 and will then be submitted to the European Parliament and the Council (co-decision procedure).

3. What is covered by the consultation?

The key issues to be addressed in this public consultation are: designing the successor instrument to fit the [Europe 2020 Strategy](#), targeting the actions to maximise added value, improving delivery mechanisms, and ensuring complementarity and coordination with other policies and instruments. It is also important to address issues relating to the promotion of gender equality and anti-discrimination in the employment and social inclusion policies, as these two policy areas [have become the responsibility of the Directorate General Justice](#). In order to help the Member States meet the Europe 2020 goals, in particular the employment and the poverty reduction/social inclusion targets, the new instrument should cover actions in the fields of gender equality and anti-discrimination linked to the employment and social inclusion objectives.

4. Who can respond to the consultation?

The consultation targets national, regional and local authorities responsible for employment, social affairs and equal opportunities issues; experts, social partners and specialised bodies provided for under Union law; public employment services, NGOs and networks at both EU and national levels; members of relevant policy committees and of the Progress Committee, as well as any other institutions or individuals following EU policy debate in employment and social areas. The consultation seeks contributions from stakeholders in the EU Member States, EFTA/EEA countries, candidate countries as well as one potential candidate country (Serbia).



5. How can I contribute?

The consultation will be published on the Commission consultation website "Your Voice in Europe". It will be open **between 4 April and 27 May 2011**.

Responding to the consultation should normally be done online. Not all the questions are compulsory so that you can choose to respond only to the questions relating to your activities, experience or expertise. Your response must be completed in one session; it is not possible to save your comments to change or finalise your response later. Also please note that you will be automatically disconnected from the online questionnaire after 90 minutes of inactivity. We recommend that you prepare your response offline and submit it online once it is final. To help you prepare your response the list of questions is included in this document.

6. What will the next steps be?

A report summarising the main outcomes of the public consultation will be made available on the Commission's website. Publication will be regarded as an acknowledgment of receipt of your contribution by the Commission. Alongside the summary report, the website will also enable access to the database used for the analysis of consultation responses, so that stakeholders can view how findings from responses have been included in the summary. The results of the consultation will feed into the Commission's legislative proposals for a new financial instrument.

Since the launching of the Register for Interest Representatives (lobbyists) in June 2008 as part of the European Transparency Initiative, organisations have been invited to use this Register to provide the European Commission and the public at large with information about their objectives, funding and structures. It is Commission policy that submissions from organisations will be redisplayed as individual contributions unless the organisations have registered. If authors object to the publication of their personal data on the grounds that such publication would harm their legitimate interests, they may indicate in the questionnaire that they wish for their contributions to be published anonymously.



About Progress

1. Purpose of a successor instrument to Progress

The Commission proposal for a new instrument would build on the experience gained with the current programme. The latter was originally established by the Decision No. 672/2006/EC of Parliament and the Council “to support financially the implementation of the objectives of the European Union in the fields of employment and social affairs”², which recently have been reinforced as a part of the EU 2020 strategy.

The current Progress programme is a catalyst and facilitator: it aims to support the policy process at the EU level but also in Member States. This means informing and influencing how decisions are made and executed at EU and national levels. Its success is judged against its capacity to engage valuable partners, first and foremost the Member States, to facilitate consensus and to inform on best possible courses of action.

Working alongside the European Social Fund, Progress supports the development and implementation of policies and legislation (when applicable) in five different, yet closely interrelated policy areas, namely:

- **Employment** (supports the implementation of the European Employment Strategy);
- **Social protection and social inclusion** (supports the implementation of the Open Method of Coordination in the field of social protection and inclusion);
- **Working conditions**, including restructuring (supports the improvement of the working environment and working conditions, including health and safety at work and reconciling work and family life);
- **Anti-discrimination and diversity** (supports the effective implementation of the principle of non-discrimination and promotes its mainstreaming in all EU policies);
- **Gender equality** (supports the effective implementation of the principle of gender equality and promotes gender mainstreaming in all EU policies).

Progress participating countries are the 27 EU Member States, EFTA/EEA countries, candidate countries (Croatia, FYROM and Turkey), and one potential candidate country (Serbia).

The successor instrument would continue to support the formulation and implementation of policies in the areas of employment, social protection and social inclusion, and working conditions. In this context, the public consultation will aim at collecting stakeholders' opinions on the added value of a Progress-type financial instrument. Namely, this means identifying:

- How Progress is specific and differs from other financial instruments;
- How it complements other financial instruments (creates synergies);
- How added value is created by addressing employment and social inclusion at the EU level.

2. Objectives and activities of the programme

To support the implementation of the objectives of the European Union in the fields of employment and social affairs as recently reinforced by the EU 2020 strategy, the current

² OJ L 315, 15.11.2006.



programme follows an intervention logic specifying its objectives (desired end results) at short, medium and long-term (immediate and intermediate objectives).

Intermediate objectives of the current programme are:

- **Effective application of EU law** at national, regional and local levels;
- **Shared understanding and ownership of EU objectives** among key EU and national policy- and decision-makers and stakeholders;
- **Effective partnerships** among EU and national stakeholders to build consensus and motivate change in support of EU objectives and priorities.

Immediate objectives of the current programme are:

- **Effective information sharing and learning:** identifying best practice and assessment tools to help EU and national policy- and decision-makers and stakeholders improve policy-making and implementation processes and outcomes;
- **Evidence-based EU policies and legislation:** high-quality and influential comparative policy research and analysis, statistical tools, methods and common indicators to ensure that EU policies and legislation are based on evidence and are relevant to the needs of, and challenges faced by, the Member States;
- **Integration of cross-cutting issues into and consistency among EU policies,** including gender equality and accessibility for disabled persons in all policy areas;
- **Greater capacity of national and EU networks** to participate in and influence decision-making and policy implementation at both EU and national level;
- **High-quality and participatory policy debate** at EU and national levels on law, policies and objectives relating to Progress; all partners need to be able to have their say and feed into public policy debate in an effective way.

In each of the five policy areas, the programme finances three main types of activities:

- **Analytical activities** (e.g. studies, analyses and surveys; impact assessments and evaluations; collection, development and dissemination of data and statistics where appropriate broken down by gender and age group; development of indicators); examples include:
 - 30-40 studies a year, such as "Indirect measurement methods for undeclared work in the EU", "Evaluation of the effectiveness of the current legal framework on equal pay for equal work or work of equal value in tackling the gender pay gap" or "Innovative approaches towards successful integration of Migrants in the labour market";
 - support to 5-7 statistical tools, such as Labour Force Survey 2009 ad-hoc module "Entry of young persons into the labour market", EU-SILC or the Database to monitor the numbers of men and women in key decision-making positions in order to provide reliable statistics.
- **Mutual learning, awareness and dissemination activities** (e.g. exchanges of good practices, innovative approaches, organisation of seminars and information campaigns); examples include 8 Peer reviews on Social Protection and Social Inclusion and 8 Mutual Learning events in the field of employment every year, over 20 of annual meetings (such as European Round Table on Poverty and Social exclusion, Restructuring Forum or Pensions Forum), variety of Presidency conferences and other initiatives (such as Mutual Learning on Financial Inclusion).



- **Support to main actors** (e.g. funding of experts' networks; support to key European level NGOs and collaboration with international organisations); examples include maintaining of 12 experts network (such as the European Employment Observatory, European Labour Law Network or Academic Network of European Disability Experts), operational support to over 20 key EU NGOs and networks of civil society organisations (such as FEANTSA, European Disability Forum or European Anti Poverty Network).

The successor of Progress would be part of the EU-level financial instruments supporting the implementation of the Europe 2020 objectives. Therefore in this public consultation the Commission seeks stakeholders' views about the priorities of the successor instrument, as well as suggestions for activities which would lead to implementation of these priorities. It is very important that the successor instrument better addresses the needs of various stakeholders, therefore respondents are invited to provide their opinion about the relevance of this type of financial instrument to the needs in the field they and their organisations are active in.

3. Delivery and implementation

The current programme is directly managed by the European Commission assisted by a committee made of the Member States' representatives.

The Commission selects the projects to fund either through [calls for tenders](#) (services bought by the Commission) or [calls for proposals](#) (grants awarded by the Commission). In the later case, it provides a maximum of 80% co-financing with some exceptions. Unlike the European Social Fund, there is no earmarked funding for each participating country. Throughout its implementation, Progress respects the following cross-cutting principles:

- The principle of the promotion of gender equality and anti-discrimination must be integrated in all sections of and activities under the Programme;
- Information about results achieved in the Programme sections and activities must be disseminated to those involved and to the public as appropriate.

Participating countries are expected to make all possible efforts to ensure consistency and complementarity between activities under the Programme and those carried out at national, regional and local levels. However, there are still areas for improvement particularly as regards synergies on the ground with the European Social Fund.

Progress concentrates, in its results-focused approach, on the outcomes of public expenditures so as to make clear the benefits of every euro spent. Therefore, monitoring and evaluation take centre stage to ensure that management and budgeting is linked to results. More information about the monitoring and evaluation of Progress can be found on the [programme's website](#).

The successor instrument would continue to pursue a results-focused approach. While the various options for implementation and delivery are being discussed, it is crucially important to collect stakeholder opinions on how the outputs of the programme can best feed in to policy and policy advocacy across the EU.



4. Budget

The current Progress programme has a global budget of € 683.25 million for seven years (2007-2013)³. It is distributed as follows:

- Employment 23 %,
- Social protection and inclusion 30 %,
- Working conditions 10 %,
- Antidiscrimination and diversity 23 %,
- Gender equality 12 %,
- Support 2%.

Following the adoption of the Communication on the Budget Review, the Commission needs to reflect on how to design a flexible financial tool allowing for possible adaptation of the funding priorities to changing circumstances and new policy needs. It must also increase the profile of the Progress Programme as a genuine policy-driven instrument. In addition to this, the Commission will need to propose an appropriate level of funding for the new instrument to secure the delivery of its objectives.

The online consultation will therefore seek stakeholders' views about the new instrument's budget.

³ The programme's initial budget amounting to 743.25 million euro was reduced to 683.25 million euro following reallocation of 60 million euro to a new European Microfinance Facility. See Decision No 284/2010/EU modifying Decision No. 1672/2006/EC.



Public consultation questionnaire

Note: all questions are compulsory except where it is indicated that they are optional.

Section 1: About you

To help us analyse the answers to this consultation, please provide the following information about you or your organisation. Your name will only be displayed with your response if you give your consent.

1.1 In which capacity are you participating in this consultation?

- As an individual
- As an organisation

1.2 Please state the name of your organisation [if applicable]

1.3 Please state your name

Title	First name	Last name
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

1.4 Please indicate the country where you reside / where your organisation is located

1.5 We would like to be able to display your name/the name of your organisation with your response after the consultation, when responses will be published online by DG Employment, Social affairs and Inclusion. May we display your name/the name of your organisation along with your response?

- Yes
- No

1.6 Please indicate which of the following options best describes your organisation

Public authority:

- Local authority
- Regional authority
- National authority
- EU institution
- Specialised implementing body (e.g. statistical, employment office)
- Association of public authorities

Social partner:

- Employers organisation
- Trade union organisation
- Other

Civil society:

- NGO
- Network



Other

Other:

Research and/ or education institution

Grassroots organisation

Private company

Other

Not applicable (responding as an individual)

1.7 Which of the following options best describes the level at which your organisation is active?

EU

National

Sub-national

Not applicable (responding as an individual)

Section 2: Your experience of the present Progress programme

Progress 2007-2013 is the EU employment and social solidarity programme. Its core mission is to strengthen EU support to the Member States to achieve the objectives of the European Union in employment, social affairs and equal opportunities. To fulfil this objective, the present programme delivers analysis and advice on relevant issues in employment and social affairs. It also supports monitoring of the implementation of EU legislation and policies in the Member States. It supports the involvement of social partners, civil society organisations and other stakeholders into policy debate to make sure that their concerns and expectations are voiced and heard. The programme also promotes policy exchanges and mutual learning processes between and within the Member States in the employment and social area.

2.1 Progress covers a range of policy areas in the fields of employment, social affairs and equal opportunities. Could you please list more specific policy fields which are of principal interest to you/your organisation?

2.2 Has your organisation ever received funding from the Progress programme (e.g. an action grant or an operating grant?)

Yes

No

Don't know / Not applicable

2.3 Has your organisation ever participated in other Progress-funded activities (e.g. took part in conferences, seminars, mutual learning events, networks of experts)?

Yes

No

Don't know / Not applicable



2.4 [optional] Focusing on the Progress activities you are familiar with, how would you evaluate these activities in terms of their relevance for your work?

Please select a value between 1 and 5. 1 = not helpful at all; 5 = very helpful.
 Please write N/A if you cannot comment on a specific activity.

a)	peer review, mutual learning events, identification and dissemination of good practice	
b)	identification of innovative approaches and experiences	
c)	studies, analysis, surveys and reports (including reports by networks of independent legal or academic experts)	
d)	statistics, common indicators and methodologies	
e)	impact assessments and evaluations	
f)	conferences (including Presidency conferences), seminars, workshops, round tables	
g)	exchange of personnel between national administration	
h)	trainings for legal and policy practitioners	
i)	funding of European level observatories	
j)	grants to beneficiaries to support concrete actions or finance their operating costs	
k)	cooperation with international organisations	
l)	other information and communication activities	

Section 3: Need for a future EU financial instrument for employment and social affairs

The current Progress programme will run until the end of 2013. The European Commission is currently assessing the need for a specific EU financial instrument for the implementation of the European Union’s employment and social solidarity objectives in the future. The key building blocks of an effective implementation of Europe 2020 strategy are to ensure that stakeholders at EU and national levels have strong partnerships, a common understanding of challenges and objectives, and shared knowledge about policy solutions to ensure inclusive policy processes.

3.1 What are the main justifications for a successor instrument in the employment and social solidarity fields? Please indicate to what extent you believe these objectives are relevant?

Preliminary objectives of the successor instrument...

a) to develop a Europe-wide platform for policy exchange and mutual learning processes to trigger new policy developments and encourage national reforms

- Very relevant Not very relevant Don't know
 Relevant Not at all relevant

b) to build a stronger knowledge base, develop common indicators and statistics to ensure that EU policies and legislation are based on robust evidence and are relevant to the needs of, and challenges faced by the Member States

- Very relevant Not very relevant Don't know
 Relevant Not at all relevant



c) to finance measures aimed at improving compliance with EU rules on the protection of workers' and citizens' rights as well as providing systematic review of the EU legislation application across the Member States

- Very relevant Not very relevant Don't know
 Relevant Not at all relevant

d) to support information sharing, EU-wide awareness raising, dissemination of innovative approaches to help EU and national policy- and decision-makers and stakeholders improve policy-making and implementation

- Very relevant Not very relevant Don't know
 Relevant Not at all relevant

e) to support the involvement of social partners and non-governmental actors in policymaking process and contribute to the development of the capacity of European and national NGOs to promote and further develop the Union social policy goals

- Very relevant Not very relevant Don't know
 Relevant Not at all relevant

f) to foster pan-European and transnational partnerships between public and private actors

- Very relevant Not very relevant Don't know
 Relevant Not at all relevant

3.2 [optional] If you would like to, you can elaborate on your responses to the previous question:

3.3 [optional] If you can see any other relevant reasons for establishing a successor instrument in the employment and social solidarity fields, please specify:

Section 4: Design of a future EU financial instrument for employment and social affairs

Europe 2020, the new strategy for jobs and smart, sustainable and inclusive growth constitutes a comprehensive policy framework for the Union to mobilise all its instruments and policies and for the Member States to take enhanced coordinated action. It promotes the delivery of structural reforms, and puts the emphasis on implementation and monitoring.

4.1 In light of Europe 2020, what should the thematic scope of the new instrument be? Please indicate how relevant you believe each option to be.



a) Support to the European Employment Strategy, including:

▪ *self-employment and entrepreneurship as a means to job creation*

- Very relevant Not very relevant Don't know
 Relevant Not at all relevant

▪ *intra-EU mobility of workers*

- Very relevant Not very relevant Don't know
 Relevant Not at all relevant

b) Support to the Open Method of Co-ordination in the area of social protection and social inclusion, including:

▪ *social innovation and experimentation*

- Very relevant Not very relevant Don't know
 Relevant Not at all relevant

c) Support to the improvement of the working environment and working conditions, including:

▪ *health and safety at work*

- Very relevant Not very relevant Don't know
 Relevant Not at all relevant

▪ *reconciling work and family life*

- Very relevant Not very relevant Don't know
 Relevant Not at all relevant

d) Support both actions in the fields of gender equality and anti-discrimination linked to the employment and social inclusion objectives as well as gender and anti-discrimination mainstreaming

- Very relevant Not very relevant Don't know
 Relevant Not at all relevant

4.2 Do you have any suggestions for other specific policy fields in which a future instrument should operate in order to bring European added value?

4.3 In your view, how should the successor instrument be designed to effectively support these different thematic objectives? Please explain your answer.



Section 5: Activities to be covered by a future EU financial instrument for employment and social affairs

The present programme focuses on activities with a strong European dimension to guarantee that added value is secured at the EU level. Its activities are essentially designed to support policy making and implementation.

5.1 In your view, what kind of activities should be priorities in the successor instrument to create the highest EU added-value and ensure significant support to the Member States' efforts to make progress on agreed objectives?

Please select a value between 1 and 5. 1 = not helpful at all; 5 = very helpful.
 Please write N/A if you cannot comment on a specific activity.

a)	peer review, mutual learning events, identification and dissemination of good practice	
b)	identification of innovative approaches and experiences	
c)	studies, analysis, surveys and reports (including reports by networks of independent legal or academic experts)	
d)	statistics, common indicators and methodologies	
e)	impact assessments and evaluations	
f)	conferences (including Presidency conferences), seminars, workshops, round tables	
g)	exchange of personnel between national administration	
h)	trainings for legal and policy practitioners	
j)	funding of European level observatories	
i)	grants to beneficiaries to support concrete actions or finance their operating costs	
k)	cooperation with international organisations	
l)	other information and communication activities	

5.2 [optional] If you would like to, you can elaborate on your responses to the previous question here:

5.3 [optional] In light of Europe 2020 initiatives and targets, is there a need for any innovative approaches to complement existing tools and activities? Please explain your answer.



5.4 It is important to make sure that the future EU financial instrument for employment and social affairs does not duplicate efforts of other EU and national financial instruments. Could you provide suggestions as to how the successor instrument can add value to other EU financing instruments (in particular the European Social Fund)?

Section 6: Delivery of a future EU financial instrument for employment and social affairs

Wide dissemination of the programme results is necessary to optimise the value of its realisation, strengthen its impact, transfer knowledge and best practices to other contexts. The results of Progress annual performance monitoring show that even if the programme's key results (studies, indicators, outputs of peer reviews activities) are known and used by European and national actors, there is still scope for improving the dissemination and utilisation of programme's results, in particular those obtained by Progress beneficiaries.

6.1 Could you provide suggestions as to how the outputs of the programme can be better disseminated and used for policymaking in the participating countries?

Section 7: Budget for a future EU financial instrument for employment and social affairs

The current programme budget is 683.25 million EUR, making it around 90 million EUR per year. 30% of the funds are devoted to social inclusion, 23% to the areas of employment and anti-discrimination respectively, 12% to gender equality, and 10% to working conditions (a further 2% is spent on the support to the implementation).



7.1 In your view, how substantial should the annual budget of a future EU financial instrument for employment and social affairs be compared to the current Progress programme?

- Higher
- Equivalent
- Lower
- Don't know

7.2 [optional] Please indicate why you believe this should be the case:

Section 8: Final questions

In this final section we would like to ask you a few additional questions about yourself and/or your organisation.

8.1 Are you listed in the Register of Interest Representatives?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know / Not applicable
- Not an interest representative

8.2 [optional] Could you indicate which stage(s) of policy development you are involved in?

- Stage of policy development
- Agenda setting
- Policy formulation
- Policy implementation
- Policy monitoring and evaluation

8.3 [optional] Please indicate your gender (will be used only for statistics)

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say

8.4 [optional] Please indicate what age range you are in (will be used only for statistics)

- Up to 25
- 26-45
- 46-60
- 61 and above

8.5 Please provide your email address (it will not be displayed and will only be used in case we need to clarify any of your responses)



8.6 [optional] Please provide the web URL of your organisation