



# **Funding priorities for 2012 Annual Work Plan**

## **European Union Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity – PROGRESS**

Committee for the implementation of Progress 2007-13

## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Policy priorities in the employment and social solidarity fields .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Progress's general operational objectives .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Designing evidence-based EU policy and legislation.....	5
Effective information-sharing/learning.....	6
Promoting high-quality, participatory policy debate at EU and national level .....	7
Greater capacity networks to promote and develop policies and objectives relating to Progress policy areas .....	8
Better integration of cross-cutting issues.....	8
<b>Annual financial appropriations.....</b>	<b>10</b>
Operating expenditure .....	10
Administrative expenditure.....	11
Activities by policy section and breakdown of budget allocation by Progress immediate outcome.....	11

## Introduction

The EU Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity – Progress<sup>1</sup> – was established to support the implementation of EU policy in the areas of employment, social protection and social inclusion, working conditions, non-discrimination and gender equality.

It is implemented through annual work plans, established in consultation with the relevant policy committees and presented to the Progress committee for approval. The 2012 Work Plan sets out the policy priorities that will guide next year's funding priorities in accordance with the Decision establishing the programme.

The overall policy framework is the Europe 2020 Strategy, which seeks to turn the European Union into a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy with high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion, and puts forward three mutually reinforcing priorities:

- **smart growth:** developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation;
- **sustainable growth:** promoting a more resource-efficient, greener and more competitive economy;
- **inclusive growth:** fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion.

The key role of employment and social policy is reflected in particular in three of the Strategy's five headline targets which relate to employment, the fight against poverty and social exclusion, and efforts to reduce the early school-leaving rate.

Furthermore, three of the seven flagship initiatives – An Agenda for New Skills and Jobs, the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion and Youth on the Move – relate directly to these policy areas.

In this context, Progress plays a key role in terms of evidence-gathering, analysis, information-sharing, mutual learning and improving the policy debate. The 2012 Work Plan is based on the need to take emerging policy priorities into account while ensuring the continuity and consistency of its activities.

In accordance with Article 8 of the Progress Decision, actions to be implemented under the 2012 Work Plan will ensure that the gender and disability dimensions are mainstreamed.

As part of the Work Plan's implementation, efforts will also be made to improve the programme's performance in the light of the main operational conclusions of the [2010 Annual Performance Monitoring Report](#). The latter recommends *inter alia* that the communication and dissemination of policy research, analysis and advice outputs be improved.

In addition, the Work Plan takes account of the views expressed by stakeholders during a series of consultations of the relevant policy committees<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Decision No 1672/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 establishing a Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity – Progress, OJ L 315, 15.11.2006, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Policy committees consulted were the Employment Committee, the Social Protection Committee, the Advisory Committee on Safety, Hygiene and Health Protection at Work, the General Directors on Industrial Relations, Non-discrimination Governmental Expert Group, High Level Group on Disability and High-Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming.

The total budget for 2012 (comprising both operating and administrative expenditure and including EFTA-EEA contributions), amounts to **€99.207 million**. The details of the total financing are given in Chapter 3.

Lastly, in 2012 the candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia will continue to participate on an equal footing with the Member States and EFTA/EEA countries, while Serbia will take part in certain actions.

## Policy priorities in the employment and social solidarity fields

The main responsibility for developing labour-market and social policy lies with the Member States. Nonetheless, the main challenges for the future are largely the same for all Member States. The EU's role is to act as a catalyst for reform, as a facilitator and as an enabler between key governmental and non-governmental bodies and between public and private actors:

Delivering on the Europe 2020 goals will involve:

- modernising labour markets to increase the rate employment of women and men, young people, older workers, low-skilled workers and legal migrants;
- fighting poverty, promoting social inclusion and justice, and modernising social protection systems;
- adapting the legislative framework to evolving work patterns and new risks to health and safety at work;
- combating discrimination and promoting equal opportunities for all;
- promoting gender mainstreaming in all policies and implementing the new strategy for equality between women and men.

To that end, the Commission supports the Member States in their efforts to deliver on the Europe 2020 Strategy goals by:

- shaping the EU policy agenda in response to the most pressing EU challenges, concerns and expectations;
- developing common EU legal standards;
- supporting, monitoring and reporting on Member States' progress towards achieving their EU objectives within the open method of coordination or towards meeting their EU legal commitments;
- rallying support and promoting the involvement of key EU and national stakeholders, by actively encouraging a culture of social dialogue and partnership.

## Progress's general operational objectives

Priority activities in 2012 will help the Member States to modernise their labour markets and increase their rates of employment, in particular among young people. Other important tasks will involve supporting job creation, promoting a highly skilled workforce and enhancing geographical mobility. Demographic issues will be high up the agenda with activities relating to the European Year on Active Ageing, including in the field of pensions and care. Lastly, achieving equality between women and men and combating discrimination, including against ethnic minorities, will also be necessary to achieve the EU's objectives in terms of growth, employment and social cohesion.

Many of the strategic challenges spelt out in previous work plans are still relevant. Certain actions planned for 2012 are linked to the social impact of the crisis, the implementation of exit strategies and the preparation of the post-crisis economy. Others focus on adjusting social and employment policy to deal with key challenges like population change against a background of strained public finances.

The 2012 Work Plan includes a large number of new activities (in particular in the field of evidence-based activities) as well as continuing activities set in motion in previous years (for example, maintaining data sources and continued support for EU-level networks). The following chapters summarise activities planned for 2012 in each of the five areas of immediate outcome throughout the five policy sections.

## Designing evidence-based EU policy and legislation

Progress's activities help to ensure that policy and legislation are based on sound, relevant data and analysis. Evidence gathered through studies, analysis and statistics will be used to shape policy development under the open method of coordination in the fields of employment (European Employment Strategy (EES)) and social protection and social inclusion (SPSI) and the other policy areas covered by the programme.

### 2012 funding priorities:

With planned expenditure amounting to more than €20 million, or close to 22% of the appropriations, evidence-based policy is the second-largest item in the 2012 Progress Work Plan. This reflects information needs in Europe 2020's implementation phase. Evidence-based policy is a priority in almost all policy sections.

Key issues addressed are labour market policy (increasing employment, supporting job creation, and promoting a highly skilled workforce) and social inclusion (relating in particular to the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion), demographic developments, pensions, and occupational safety and health issues. Special attention will also be paid to the ex-post evaluation of existing EU legislation, including in the occupational health and safety, gender equality and anti-discrimination areas. All activities planned seek to gather relevant, credible, accurate information on conditions, needs, concerns and expectations at EU and Member State level.

New activities make up a large percentage throughout and in particular in the **employment section**, where they support the implementation of the flagship initiatives 'An Agenda for New Skills and Jobs' and 'Youth on the Move' and thus contribute to achieving the objectives of the European Employment Strategy.

These new initiatives will focus on employment growth rates, labour market segmentation and vacancy bottlenecks, conditions for job creation and self-employment, and the development of a quality framework for traineeships. Existing data collection and monitoring in the field of skills anticipation and job vacancies will continue, as will the maintenance of labour-market policy databases and the development of a multilingual taxonomy of occupations and skills.

The most important new activity in the **social protection/social inclusion section** concerns cooperation with the OECD on inequality. As in the case of recurring activities, the annual convention of the European Platform against Poverty and Social

Exclusion and analytical work on pensions, taxes and benefits will be given support. Further research will be carried out on Roma and other ethnic minorities.

Several new activities in the **working conditions** area focus on evaluation and research, and relate in particular to the implementation of the occupational health and safety directives and the impact of EU labour legislation. Current cooperation with Eurostat on accidents and work and work-related health problems will continue, as will work with international organisations in the area of health and safety at work.

All activities relating to evidence-based policy in the **anti-discrimination** strand are new. In particular they involve a Eurobarometer survey on perceived discrimination, studies on the social benefits of anti-discrimination policy, and identification of best practice and partnerships.

Two new activities in the **gender equality** strand will deal with the collection of data relating to legal aspects of gender equality and the development of indicators and gender statistics. The database on women and men in decision-making will be maintained.

## Effective information-sharing/learning

The information and knowledge gathered will need to be disseminated and used in an efficient and timely manner. Progress will continue to support exchanges of good practice, mutual-learning activities and the transfer of knowledge at both national and EU level.

### 2012 funding priorities:

Activities under the heading "information sharing/learning" are by far the biggest item of expenditure in the 2012 work programme and amount to some €40 million, or about 43% of total operating expenditure. Progress will finance activities aimed in particular at supporting EU and national policy/decision-makers and stakeholders and identifying good practice to promote high-quality policy-making and policy implementation.

Most of the activities planned are recurring in nature. Peer reviews and mutual-learning exercises will continue to focus on employment and social inclusion/social protection issues.

Progress will also continue to foster clarity and consistency of rights and obligations under EU law and knowledge of the policies it supports through the provision of guidance and information. To that end, as in previous years, finance will be provided for training relating to social inclusion and social protection policy, and non-discrimination (for legal and policy practitioners, civil society and the social partners) and gender equality law (targeted at legal practitioners). Support will also be given for administrative cooperation between national authorities (i.e. exchanges of national labour inspectors).

In addition, Progress will encourage the effective transfer to policy/decision-makers and other stakeholders of knowledge relating to the implementation and impact of EU law and policy in the employment and social areas. To that end, support will be given

to networks of independent legal and policy experts representing the participating countries with a view to providing monitoring and assessment reports on the implementation and impact of EU law and policy.

Lastly, Progress will continue to communicate on EU law and policy in a way that is responsive to the needs of the various target audiences. The 2012 Work Plan will include a number of communication activities aimed at promoting better understanding and ownership of EU objectives and priorities. Progress will in particular continue to support employment seminars, national awareness-raising activities in the non-discrimination field and gender mainstreaming in national policy and programmes.

New activities under the **employment section** mainly concern wage formation and income inequality, skills development, and partnerships between employment services. New projects involving social inclusion/social protection will support debate on pension reform and develop best practice with regard to private pension schemes, and promotion of capacity-building for social experimentation.

New activities in the **gender-equality** section focus on improving the gender equality dimension of national policy and awareness-raising on the gender balance in decision-making. A new project will aim to improve knowledge and facilitate the implementation of the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities and related provisions in EU legislation.

## Promoting high-quality, participatory policy debate at EU and national level

Progress aims to foster a shared understanding of, and consensus among stakeholders on, problem identification and policy options or solutions that respond to real needs. EU policy initiatives need broad-based support at both EU and national level. Progress helps to create such an enabling environment by providing for high-quality, inclusive, participatory policy debates.

### 2012 funding priorities:

Activities under the heading "promoting high-quality, participatory policy debate" account for about 15% of total operating expenditure in 2012. They play a particularly important role in the gender-equality section, which plans to spend around 33% of its resources in this area.

Progress will finance activities to mobilise key EU and national policy/decision-makers and stakeholders to provide information on and influence the development of EU law, policy and objectives with a view to creating a critical support base for meeting EU objectives and priorities. In particular, it will support presidency conferences and various EU-level events, such as:

- presidency events on employment issues in connection with the Europe 2020 Strategy;
- Restructuring Forums;
- event on cooperation between employment services;
- labour law conferences;
- conferences on health and safety at work;
- presidency events on social inclusion and social protection;
- gender equality dialogue and Equal Pay Day;

- the Equality Summit;
- the European Day of People with Disabilities.

## **Greater capacity networks to promote and develop policies and objectives relating to Progress policy areas**

Progress has a key role to play in promoting the involvement of civil society, in particular through financial support for key EU-level networks. It aims to strengthen their capacity to participate in and influence policy-making and policy implementation at EU and national level in support of EU objectives and priorities. Furthermore, such involvement fosters accountability and transparency, and increases the relevance of policy responses.

### **2012 funding priorities:**

The 2012 Work Plan provides for financial support amounting to about €18 million for EU-level networks. For the social protection/social inclusion section, this is a large spending item (around 55%) and reflects the importance of participation by the stakeholders, including people experiencing poverty and social exclusion, in the relevant policy areas.

Progress will continue to finance the activities of various EU-level networks active in the following fields:

- the fight against discrimination on grounds of racial or ethnic origin, disability, age or sexual orientation;
- integration of people with disabilities;
- inclusion and defence of the rights of Roma people;
- prevention of and the fight against poverty and social exclusion;
- promotion of active inclusion (network of local authorities/observatories);
- promotion of gender equality;
- promotion of women in decision-making;
- promotion of non-discrimination law and policy (network of national equality bodies).

## **Better integration of cross-cutting issues**

Progress allows subjects that cut across several sections, like gender equality, non-discrimination and the fight against poverty, to be dealt with, which is important in such multidimensional areas as employment, social affairs and equal opportunities.

Gender mainstreaming, which is one of Progress's fundamental principles, will continue to be a feature of the design and implementation of all Progress activities. In particular, it will call for the collection of disaggregated data broken down by gender. Due account will be taken of accessibility requirements, including for people with disabilities.

### **2012 funding priorities:**

At around €1.4 million, this area of the 2012 Work Plan will be the smallest in terms of spending. A commitment to results-based management is built into Progress's legislative framework, and this requires yearly assessments to be carried out of the



programme's outcomes as a way of continually improving performance by assessing the extent to which its objectives are achieved.

In 2012 a new service contract will be in place for the monitoring of Progress's performance and the drawing-up of future annual performance monitoring reports. Funds will also be allocated for an ex-post evaluation covering the whole programming period.

In response to findings presented in the annual performance monitoring reports on the dissemination and communication of Progress's outcomes, the 2012 Work Plan includes the publication of easily accessible and user-friendly information (including on the Programme's website) on the results of projects supported.

Lastly, many of the activities listed under other headings in the Work Plan provide input for several policy priorities, and are thus cross-cutting in nature, although they are not referred to as such in the Work Plan.

## Annual financial appropriations

The total cost of the 2012 Work Plan, comprising both operating and administrative expenditure (including EFTA-EEA contributions), amounts to **€99.207 million**.

### Operating expenditure

Total operating expenditure for 2012 (including EFTA-EEA contributions) amounts to **€94.81 million**.

#### Allocation of operating expenditure by policy section (in € million)

Policy section	2011 budget (€ million)	2012 budget	Change from 2011 to 2012
<b>Employment</b> Budget heading 04.040101	20.26	21.10	+4.1%
<b>Social inclusion and protection</b> Budget heading 04.040102	28.42	29.23	+2.9%
<b>Working conditions</b> Budget heading 04.040103	8.63	8.75	+1.4%
<b>Anti-discrimination</b> Budget heading 04.040104	20.62	21.55	+4.5%
<b>Gender equality</b> Budget heading 04.040105	12.07	12.78	+5.9%
<b>Support for implementation</b> Budget heading 04.040106	1.39	1.40	+0.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91.39</b>	<b>94.81</b>	<b>+3.7%</b>

#### Allocation of operating expenditure by policy section (in %)

Policy section	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Average 2007-12	Progress Decision
<b>Employment</b> Budget heading 04.040101	21.92	21.82	22.35	22.19	22.17	<b>22.25</b>	22.12	23
<b>Social inclusion and protection</b> Budget heading 04.040102	30.7	29.40	30.72	30.78	31.13	<b>30.83</b>	30.59	30
<b>Working conditions</b> Budget heading 04.040103	11.18	12.96	10.31	9.79	9.44	<b>9.23</b>	10.48	10
<b>Anti-discrimination</b> Budget heading 04.040104	22.49	25.09	22.71	22.81	22.56	<b>22.73</b>	23.06	23
<b>Gender equality</b> Budget heading 04.040105	11.75	9.24	12.11	12.78	13.21	<b>13.48</b>	12.09	12
<b>Support for implementation</b> Budget heading 04.040106	1.91	1.47	1.76	1.66	1.52	<b>1.48</b>	1.63	2

## Administrative expenditure

Administrative expenditure for 2012 amounts to **€4.397 million** (including EFTA-EEA contributions) compared to **€4.48 million** in 2011.

### Breakdown of administrative expenditure (€ million)

Administrative expenditure	2011 budget	2012 budget
Evaluation	0.1	0.1
Experts meetings and technical assistance (Employment, anti-discrimination, working conditions and support Sections)	1.662	1.55
Translations	0.42	0.35
Information and publication	2.1	2.247
Audit	0.1	0.15
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.48</b>	<b>4.397</b>

### Activities by policy section and breakdown of budget allocation by Progress immediate outcome

The 2012 Work Plan includes 115 activities, compared to 111 in 2011. The breakdown per section is as follows.

Policy section	Number of activities (2011)	Number of activities (2012)
<b>Employment</b> Budget heading 04.040101	32	38
<b>Social inclusion and protection</b> Budget heading 04.040102	21	21
<b>Working conditions</b> Budget heading 04.040103	24	17
<b>Anti-discrimination</b> Budget heading 04.040104	17	21
<b>Gender equality</b> Budget heading 04.040105	13	12
<b>Support for implementation</b> Budget heading 04.040106	4	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>112</b>

37 calls are to be issued in 2012 (9 calls for proposals and 28 calls for tenders).

### Breakdown of budget allocation by Progress immediate outcome

<b>Progress immediate outcome</b>	<b>Total 2011 (€ million)</b>	<b>% 2011</b>	<b>Total 2012 (€ million)</b>	<b>% 2012</b>
<b>Evidence-based policy</b>	21.29	23.30%	20.31	21.42%
<b>Information-sharing/learning</b>	40.18	43.96%	40.75	42.99%
<b>Cross-cutting policy and consistency</b>	1.39	1.52%	1.40	1.47%
<b>Greater capacity of key EU networks</b>	18.35	20.08%	17.91	18.89%
<b>High-quality participatory policy debate</b>	10.18	11.14%	14.44	15.23%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91.39</b>		<b>94.81</b>	