



European  
Commission

# Year at a glance **PROGRESS** in **2011**

*The European Union programme for employment and social solidarity — Progress (2007–13) is a key instrument to support the modern, effective and innovative EU employment, social and equality policies. The programme helps the Commission to fulfil its tasks both in the fields of: (a) law-making, to ensure that evidence-based legislation meets all the principles of smart regulation; and (b) policy coordination among the Member States, where the Commission serves a critical role of the facilitator and the broker. Progress focuses on transnational aspects of the EU employment, social and equality policies, the promotion of which requires a concerted action across all Member States, and actively supports collective and mutually reinforcing actions of Member States which consolidate EU cooperation and bring mutual learning and social innovations.*

In 2011 the core of analytical, mutual learning, awareness and dissemination activities funded by Progress focused on the contribution to the Europe 2020 strategy. The produced deliverables (such as studies and reports, conferences and seminars, statistics and similar) were driven by the inclusive growth objective of the Europe 2020 strategy and related headline targets, and also of the flagship initiatives on youth, new skills and jobs, and the European platform against poverty and social exclusion. They were also highly appreciated by the surveyed relevant stakeholders (national officials, social partners, NGOs and others) across Europe (the extensive list of deliverables produced in 2011 is provided in the annex to the annual performance report).

**MORE SPECIFICALLY, IN 2011 PROGRESS CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF EU GOALS BY ...**

### ... MAINTAINING AND DEVELOPING A ROBUST EVIDENCE BASE NECESSARY FOR THE EU EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL AND EQUALITY POLICIES

Progress assisted the Commission in its commitment to ensure **better compliance and more effective application of EU law in Member States**. It supported studies aimed at analysing the application of EU law, monitoring the transposition of EU directives into national law and their implementation, and relevant legal developments in Member States. It also produced non-binding good practice guides as practical, easy-to-understand tools to be used in specific work environments.

*For example, the Non-binding guide to good practice for understanding and implementing Directive 92/57/EEC — ‘Construction sites’ was helpful to more than three fifths of the stakeholders responding to the annual survey.*

Progress also helped **the decision-makers across the EU to be better informed on new challenges and possible solutions** by providing thorough situation analyses and policy response alternatives to current challenges. Over four fifths of the stakeholders across the EU responding to the annual survey were of the opinion that the EU social, employment and equality policies are grounded in a thorough analysis of the current situation. Specific examples of policy evidence

produced by the programme in 2011 which were assessed to be the most helpful in various Progress policy fields include those listed below.

In 2011 Progress also supported selected social policy experimentation projects to develop, test and disseminate innovative solutions and approaches to delivering social policy priorities (social inclusion of vulnerable groups, quality of childcare services, active and healthy ageing, and the transition from education to work for youths) in the context of the Europe 2020 strategy. While the first results of these projects on policy-making are still to materialise, the importance of social policy experimentation and innovation projects in the programme is steadily increasing as each year the number of projects funded and the Member States involved is growing..

### ... SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE INFORMATION SHARING AND LEARNING ON EU LAW AND POLICY

Progress-funded information sharing and (mutual) learning practices serve as a means to transfer knowledge and provide guidance at both national and European levels so as to make policy-making and policy implementation effective and in line with common EU objectives, policies and laws. More than 7 500 participants have attended Progress-funded conferences, seminars,

**Employment:** *‘Labour mobility within the EU — The impact of enlargement and the functioning of the transitional arrangements’ (about 80 % of the respondents saw this study as helpful).*

**Social inclusion and social protection:** *Missoc database: comparative tables on social protection covering 31 countries and 12 main areas of social protection (over 85 % of the respondents saw it as helpful).*

**Non-discrimination:** *How to present a discrimination claim — Handbook on seeking remedies under the EU non-discrimination directives (about 70 % of the respondents saw this as helpful).*

**Gender equality:** *Database on women and men in decision-making: data covering 34 countries on the numbers of men and women in key decision-making positions in politics, public administration, the judiciary and various other key areas of the economy (almost 90 % of the respondents saw it as helpful).*

peer reviews and other learning events which were commissioned directly by the Commission; another estimated 30 000 people have been reached by the beneficiaries of actions' grants.

*Albeit with varying levels of intensity, in 2011 all Progress participating countries have been involved in 39 mutual learning and transnational exchanges of good practice organised as a part of a mutual learning programme in the employment field, social protection and social inclusion peer reviews, and good practice exchange seminars on anti-discrimination and gender equality.*

Over four fifths of responding participants indicated that in their attended Progress-funded conferences, seminars, peer reviews and other similar events they gained better understanding of EU policy objectives, and also that they gave an opportunity to align their policy activity with EU objectives. The representatives of national authorities noted that the events they participated in presented them with policy practices and tools which can be transferable and/or in demonstrating results. Over 80 % of the responding national actors confirmed that they intend to use knowledge acquired during the Progress-funded events for policy-making or policy advocacy at national settings, mentioning such uses as discussions about policy improvements, developing new social services or elaborating the need to initiate a systematic statistical data collection.

### **... PROMOTING HIGH-QUALITY AND PARTICIPATORY POLICY DEBATE AT EU AND NATIONAL LEVELS**

In 2011 Progress supported the Hungarian and Polish presidencies in steering towards common goals, in making coordinated efforts by all Member States and the European institutions,

and in involving all relevant stakeholders in an inclusive policy debate. To ensure that EU employment, social and equality policies are inclusive and fair, these have to take into account the impact on and meet the needs of all people directly or indirectly affected by them. As a result, the close involvement and mobilisation of all key stakeholders — from public authorities to social partners and NGOs representing civil society at large — and growing partnership becomes crucial for the development of EU objectives, policies and law.

In 2011, 35 high-level events attracted more than 5 000 participating stakeholders; the events included both the presidency conferences and high-profile regular events such as the annual EU Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty, the European Equality Summit, the biannual meetings of the European Platform for Roma Inclusion, and restructuring forums. Almost 9 in 10 of the responding participants positively assessed the clarity of issues presented for the debate and the involvement of all relevant actors and stakeholders.

Progress also helped to build more effective, inclusive and stronger partnerships around EU objectives and priorities. Over 90 % of officials working in national, regional or local government institutions who responded to the annual survey reported the sense of positive collaboration and partnership between the Member States and the Commission (an increase compared to 2009 and 2010). The contribution of Progress to strengthening of partnership among the Member States and their authorities was equally acknowledged. Progress-funded annual meetings of public employment services, of the Senior Labour Inspectors' Committee (SLIC), occasional workshops of the European Employment Observatory, of the Mutual Information System on Social Protection (Missoc) network meetings and similar initiatives played an important role here.

### ... BRINGING GREATER CAPACITY OF NATIONAL AND PAN-EUROPEAN NETWORKS

As the Progress programme has a key role in promoting the involvement of civil society through financial support to key EU-level networks, it contributed to strengthening their capacity to participate in and influence policy-making and policy implementation at EU and national levels. In 2011 Progress supported the operation of 32 EU-level NGOs and networks active in the fields of the fight against discrimination on grounds of racial or ethnic origin, disability or age; the integration of people with disabilities; the promotion of gender equality, women in decision-making, active inclusion, and non-discrimination law and policies. The number of such Progress-supported NGOs has increased (from 24 in 2010 to 32 in 2011).

Progress-supported EU-level networks and NGOs were instrumental in disseminating the messages agreed at EU level to Member States through their national organisations, as well as other network structures. The supported NGOs also organised national campaigns to raise public awareness about common European challenges, and advocated solutions to the systemic social injustices. The results of the annual survey indicate that the Progress-supported EU-level NGOs are perceived as an important source of information for policy-making and advocacy, although non-governmental stakeholders share somewhat more positive views on that than the representatives of the national and regional authorities. Importantly, similar

surveys in the previous year revealed that the most prominent EU-level NGOs are known by the stakeholders across the EU to the same extent as the EU agencies active in the field (such as Eurofound, in Dublin, or the European Agency for Fundamental Rights, in Vienna).

The *Progress annual performance report 2011* gives a full account of the programme's contribution to the achievement of its mission, overviews the deliverables produced in 2011 and their use by and benefits for policy-makers, social partners, NGOs and other stakeholders across the EU. The graph below summarises the variety and key types of deliverables (presented as a share in total commitment appropriations, which amounted to EUR 91.37 million in 2011) produced by Progress:

