



Active Inclusion

The fight against poverty and social exclusion relies heavily on the integration of people furthest from the labour market.

Persistence of large numbers of people at risk of poverty and excluded from the labour market represents an inescapable challenge to the objective of social cohesion enshrined in the European Union treaty. The goals of the Lisbon strategy cannot be realised if we do not make the best use of the human resources present in our societies.

To promote the integration of the most disadvantaged people a comprehensive active inclusion strategy, entailing the provision of an adequate level of income support with a link to the labour market and a better access to services, is needed. This is to ensure that social protection policies effectively contribute to mobilising people who are capable of working while achieving the wider objective of providing a decent living standard to those who are and will remain outside the labour market.

The contribution of the European Union in this field is manifold. The European Social Fund will continue to promote training and the integration into employment for disadvantaged people. Through the Open Method of Coordination on Social Protection and Social Inclusion, the European Union has the potential to add value to efforts by Member States by providing guidance as well as a common analytical framework against which individual achievements and policy instruments can be compared and assessed.

The Commission called in 2007 for a renewed commitment to social justice by proposing a new, holistic approach to tackling poverty and promoting inclusion of people furthest from the labour market. While the EU strategy for growth and jobs is showing good results, Europe needs to do more to realise its full potential and achieve greater social justice and economic cohesion.

In a Recommendation adopted in 2008, the Commission is encouraging Member States to take action for the active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market. To this end, the Commission recommends that the Member States draw up and implement an integrated comprehensive strategy. The strategy should be composed of the following three strands:

- sufficient income support;
- inclusive labour markets;
- access to quality services.

Key documents

Official documents

- Commission Recommendation [2008/867/EC](#) of 3 October 2008 on the **active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market** [Official Journal L 307 of 18.11.2008].
- Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of 17 October 2007 entitled "**Modernising social protection for greater social justice and economic cohesion: taking forward the active inclusion of people furthest from the labour market**" [[COM\(2007\) 620](#) final, not published in the Official Journal].

Best practice (link to the Peer Review website)

- [The social economy from the perspective of active inclusion \(Belgium - 2008\)](#)
- [Initiatives by the social partners for improving labour market access of disadvantaged groups \(Austria - 2008\)](#)
- [The Social Inclusion Forum \(Ireland - 2007\)](#)
- [Socio-Community Development - Mobilising all relevant bodies and promoting the participation of people suffering exclusion](#)