

Procedure file

Basic information		
COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	2002/2051(COS)	Procedure completed
Social cohesion: poverty and social exclusion, joint report on social inclusion		
Subject 4.10.05 Social inclusion, poverty, minimum income		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	EMPL Employment and Social Affairs		23/10/2001
		GUE/NGL FIGUEIREDO Ilda	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	CULT Culture, Youth, Education, Media and Sport		12/12/2001
		GUE/NGL ALYSSANDRAKIS Konstantinos	
	FEMM Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities		22/01/2002
		PSE SWIEBEL Joke	
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs2454		08/10/2002
European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner	
	Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion		

Key events			
10/10/2001	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2001)0565	Summary
11/03/2002	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
23/04/2002	Vote in committee		Summary
23/04/2002	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0158/2002	
10/06/2002	Debate in Parliament		
11/06/2002	Decision by Parliament	T5-0295/2002	Summary
11/06/2002	End of procedure in Parliament		
08/10/2002	Debate in Council	2454	Summary
30/10/2003	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2002/2051(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 142
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	EMPL/5/15974

Documentation gateway					
Non-legislative basic document		COM(2001)0565	10/10/2001	EC	Summary
Committee of the Regions: opinion		CDR0393/2001 OJ C 192 12.08.2002, p. 0005	13/03/2002	CofR	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A5-0158/2002	23/04/2002	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T5-0295/2002 OJ C 261 30.10.2003, p. 0031-0136 E	11/06/2002	EP	Summary

Social cohesion: poverty and social exclusion, joint report on social inclusion

PURPOSE : to present the communication from the Commission concerning the draft Joint Report on Social Inclusion. **CONTENT :** it is the first time that the European Commission presents a policy document on poverty and social exclusion. By documenting and analysing the situation across all Member States and by identifying the key challenges for the future this draft joint report on Social Inclusion contributes to strengthening the European social model. It is this a significant advance towards the achievement of the EU's strategic goal of greater social cohesion in the Union between 2001-2010. This report gives a concrete reality to the open method of co-ordination on Social Inclusion. This new process is an important recognition of the key role that social policy has to play alongside economic and employment policies in reducing inequalities and promoting social cohesion, as well as the need to ensure effective links between these policies in the future. This report also marks a significant advance in the process of developing common indicators to measure poverty and social exclusion across and within all Member States. On the other hand, this report does not evaluate the effectiveness of the systems already in place in different Member States. Rather it concentrates on analysing the different approaches that have been adopted by Member States in their National Action Plans against poverty and social exclusion in response to the common objectives on poverty and social cohesion agreed by the EU at Nice in December 2000. The report documents a wide range of policies and initiatives in place or proposed in Member States. These will provide a good basis for co-operation and exchange of learning between Member States in the future. However, it has not been possible to identify examples of good practice, as at present there is a general lack of rigorous evaluation of policies and programmes in Member States. The report thus identifies that an important challenge for the next phase of the social inclusion process will be introduce more through analysis of the cost effectiveness and efficiency of policies to tackle poverty and social inclusion. In addition, the present report aims at highlighting the role of social policy and of other equally important policy areas for social cohesion (education, housing, health) in the forthcoming Synthesis Report that the Commission will prepare for the European Council in spring 2002.?

Social cohesion: poverty and social exclusion, joint report on social inclusion

The Commission adopted the report by Ilda Figueiredo (GUE/NGL, P) on the Commission's communication. Members welcomed the first joint report on social cohesion. They concentrated on certain aspects of the exclusion phenomenon and made proposals for future activities. They restated the principle that the promotion of high levels of employment and social protection must be a priority of the EU. The mechanisms for redistributing opportunities and resources within society (such as the employment market and the social protection, education and training systems, etc.) needed to be improved to meet the needs of those most exposed to the risks of poverty and social exclusion. The committee felt it essential that political action to improve social integration should be implemented as close to the citizen as possible and should be backed by the necessary budget appropriations. Civil society should be able to be more intensely involved in the drafting and evaluation of national plans. The report called upon the Member States to provide all children with accessible, free and compulsory education for a minimum of 12 years to all children. The Commission and the Member States were called upon to reinforce the pilot projects geared to combating illiteracy and ensuring full command of each child's mother tongue and the learning of foreign languages. The Commission should support the establishment of 'second chance' schools and special teaching programmes for immigrants. Finally, particular attention should be paid to the situation of women with children. ?

Social cohesion: poverty and social exclusion, joint report on social inclusion

The European Parliament adopted its resolution based on the report by Ilda FIGUEIREDO (GUE/NGL, Portugal) on social cohesion. (Please refer to the document dated 23/04/02.) Parliament stated that high levels of employment and social protection, an increase in living standards and the quality of life and economic and social cohesion must be a priority for the EU and are fundamental in reducing and preventing poverty and social exclusion. All forms of employment are to be encouraged, including temporary work. Member States should provide accessible and compulsory education for a minimum of 12 years to all children, and strengthen the institution of "second chance" schools, given that many young people who drop out are unemployed. Parliament stressed the importance of modernising the social security systems to enable them to cope with traditional and new risks of poverty and of designing measures, including in the form of social benefits, for single parents to boost their earning capacity. The open method of coordination must embrace greater openness by involving local and regional authorities, labour and management and by ensuring a broad public debate at national level to achieve a genuine exchange of best practice. Parliament should be fully involved in open coordination. Member States, whatever their national political and administrative set-up, must ensure that policies are put into place as close as possible to the individual, and clear lines of responsibility drawn between the different levels of competence. Parliament called for greater attention to the structural changes currently taking place, including the accession of the candidate countries, which could engender new forms of poverty, stemming from industrial restructuring and the switch to social systems characteristic of a competition-driven economy. There needs to be particular focus on the long term unemployed, workers who have retired on a bridging pension, and persons who have no opportunity to enter the labour market. A relevant strategy to combat social exclusion should pay particular attention to women and children. Finally, Parliament felt that particular attention must be paid to all the risk factors identified by the National Action Plans which highlight the multidimensional nature of poverty and social exclusion, which is not restricted to access to the labour market, but also concerns education, health, and participation in decision-making forums.?

Social cohesion: poverty and social exclusion, joint report on social inclusion

The Council heard a progress report from the Chairman of the Social Protection Committee (SPC), Mr Raoul Briet, on the committee's work concerning the fight against poverty and social exclusion in the Union. The report focused on the work currently being undertaken by the SPC on the revision of objectives in view of the drawing-up of the second round of National Action Plans on Social Inclusion due to be submitted by the Member States in the Spring/Summer of 2003. A revision of the common objectives is expected to be agreed in time for the Copenhagen European Council on 12-13 December 2002. ?