

Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2008/2098(INI)	Procedure completed
European job mobility action plan (2007-2010)		
Subject 4.15.04 Workforce, occupational mobility, job conversion, working conditions		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	EMPL Employment and Social Affairs		17/12/2007
		PPE-DE IACOB-RIDZI Monica Maria	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	CULT Culture and Education		17/01/2008
		PPE-DE ZWIEFKA Tadeusz	
	FEMM Women's Rights and Gender Equality		19/06/2008
		PSE LYUBCHEVA Marusya	
	PETI Petitions		16/04/2008
		PSE MATSOUKA Maria	
European Commission	Commission DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion	Commissioner ŠPIDLA Vladimír	

Key events			
06/12/2007	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2007)0773	Summary
24/04/2008	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
17/11/2008	Vote in committee		Summary
24/11/2008	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0463/2008	
18/12/2008	Results of vote in Parliament		
18/12/2008	Decision by Parliament	T6-0624/2008	Summary
18/12/2008	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2008/2098(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 052; Rules of Procedure EP 052-p4
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed

Documentation gateway					
Non-legislative basic document		COM(2007)0773	06/12/2007	EC	Summary
Committee draft report		PE409.373	20/06/2008	EP	
Committee opinion	FEMM	PE409.368	09/09/2008	EP	
Committee opinion	PETI	PE409.581	16/09/2008	EP	
Committee opinion	CULT	PE407.693	18/09/2008	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE412.217	18/09/2008	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A6-0463/2008	24/11/2008	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T6-0624/2008	18/12/2008	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary		SP(2009)988	22/04/2009	EC	

European job mobility action plan (2007-2010)

PURPOSE: the purpose of this Communication is to present a further important step in a long line of initiatives, to promote worker mobility. It intends to realise this objective by establishing a ?Job Mobility Action Plan? 2007-2010.

BACKGROUND: for the EU to remain competitive and to fulfil the Lisbon Strategy on growth and employment it is vital for workers to be mobile ? both between jobs and between regions. To do so the right opportunities must be created to allow workers to move frequently between jobs and to progress in their careers. Worker mobility, however, remains restricted. Individuals face a number of hurdles when moving across internal borders. These can range from legal and administrative obstacles, housing costs, spous employment, portability of pensions, linguistic barriers and accepted qualifications. Worker mobility remains relatively low. Around 2% of working-age citizens from one of the EU-27 currently live and work in another Member State

CONTENT: this Communication, therefore, sets out the ?Job Mobility Action Plan 2007 -2010?, the purpose of which is to promote worker mobility. The Action Plan centres around four specific domains. They are:

1) Improving existing legislation and administrative practices:

Under this heading, the Commission will consider whether there is a need to adapt Community legislation on social security coordination and administrative practices. An inventory of current ?problems? will be prepared by the Commission followed by a systematic investigation at the beginning of 2008 on the scope and characteristics of recent mobility patterns. Following a consultation process, the Commission will decide whether there is a need to adapt administrative practices or the rules themselves. Within this context, the Commission proposes to strengthen the status and analytical capacity of the Training and Reporting in European Social Security (TRESS) network by proposing to amend Regulation (EC) No 883/2004. Based on this amendment, the revised network will focus on (i) publishing regular reports on the application of social security Regulation within the Member States; (ii) providing expert advice on the evolution of existing regulations and practices to meet the needs of EU migrant workers; and (iii) streamlining administrative practices and administrative cooperation.

2) Supporting national authorities in their attempts to promote mobility:

Member States play an important role in demonstrating the benefits of geographic and job-to-job mobility for the individual and the economy as a whole. Mobility should be encouraged through national employment strategies and lifelong learning schemes that develop vocational skills as well as language and intercultural skills. In order to strengthen national authorities in their attempts to promote mobility the Commission will: (i) encourage the Member States to include geographic and job-to-job mobility as a priority in their national employment and lifelong learning strategies; (ii) encourage regional and local authorities to remove any remaining practical obstacles to mobility and to promote the concept of ?fair mobility? by fighting undeclared work and social dumping; (iii) encourage the Member States to learn from good practice; and (iv) support implementation of the ?European Qualifications Framework? as well as Europass and the credit transfer in vocational education and training (ECVET).

3) Reinforcing the European Employment Services EURES:

The European Employment Services (EURES) is an important instrument for strengthening the labour market infrastructure at national and EU level. It has been designed to act as a one-stop instrument in order to facilitate the mobility of workers and their families. Thus, the third strand of the 2007-2010 Job Mobility Action Plan is to significantly reinforce the services provided by EURES by (i) enhancing its strategic dimension, by reinforcing its analytical potential as regards mobility flows and changes in the labour market; (ii) enhancing the scope and quality of its services to assist EU mobile workers and their families; and (iii) increasing its operational coverage by reinforcing its relation with other providers of similar services.

4) Fostering an awareness of the advantages of mobility:

Access to improved information on mobility would benefit a number of workers. The fourth strand of the Action Plan, therefore, is to promote

awareness-raising activities through the exchange of information and good practice. Practically speaking, this will entail: (i) the Commission organising annual 'European Job Days' in order to improve public awareness of workers' rights and the benefits of mobility; (ii) stepping up information exchange and best practices amongst stakeholders; (iii) launching the 'European Job Mobility Partnership' (an initiative hosting a network of stakeholders committed to developing job mobility in the EU); and (iv) earmarking, within the PROGRESS Programme, support for the financing of pilot activities, exchange of good practices, disseminating results on new developments and the emergence of innovative schemes.

To conclude, the Commission will monitor progress of actions outlined in this Communication through studies and surveys conducted at a European, national or regional level – including Eurobarometer surveys on the evolution of citizens' attitudes and practices relating to job mobility. An interim report on the implementation of this Communication will be published in 2009.

European job mobility action plan (2007-2010)

The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs adopted the own-initiative report drafted by Monica Maria IACOB-RIDZI (EPP-ED, RO) on the European Job Mobility Action Plan (2007-2010).

Firstly, the report recalls that free movement of workers remains one of the four fundamental freedoms enshrined in the Treaty. Although significant progress has been made as regards ensuring the free movement of workers such as reformed legislation in the field of social security, Parliament has in numerous resolutions drawn attention to the outstanding obstacles to mobility. It has proposed possible means of removing such obstacles. However, experience has shown that identifying obstacles and advancing proposals has not sufficed for the complete removal of the obstacles to freedom of movement and mobility. Numerous texts of the EU institutions have also spelt out the problems and have proposed corrective measures. However, these have not always been implemented.

Parliament will continue actively to seek solutions to all problems encountered by citizens in exercising their right to mobility within the territory of the EU.

The committee supports the launch of the Action Plan and reaffirms the crucial importance of mobility, both within the labour market and between Member States and regions, for consolidating the EU labour market and attaining the Lisbon objectives. It further welcomes the Commission's intention to promote mobility on fair conditions, including by opposing clandestine employment and social dumping.

Although it welcomes the Commission's proposal for a Council Recommendation on the mobility of young volunteers across Europe, the committee regrets that it has not been provided adequate time to issue an opinion on the proposal before the recommendation is adopted.

MEPs consider that the EU needs to support the inclusion of the concept of labour mobility in all Community policies, especially those concerning the completion of the internal market, the protection of workers, rules concerning posted workers and protection against non-secure work, which may affect mobility within the EU or combat discrimination. In this context, they call on the Commission to treat labour mobility as a priority transversal policy, involving all relevant EU policy areas and all levels of authority in the Member States. The Commission is also called upon to draw up a long-term mobility strategy which takes into account the requirements of the labour market, economic trends and the prospects for enlargement of the EU, as only a long-term strategy can both guarantee free movement of workers without conflict and properly address brain-drain.

MEPs call on the Commission to take into account the specific needs of female workers wishing to exercise freedom of movement of all ages and to include concrete steps to meet their needs in the four areas of the European Job Mobility Action Plan. Member States are asked to consider and remove the obstacles to the mobility of women workers, by providing, among other things, fair access to qualified

jobs and high-level positions, equal pay, flexible working conditions, adequate healthcare and childcare services, good quality education facilities for children, portable pension rights, and ensuring the elimination of gender stereotypes.

The Commission is urged to prioritise the streamlining of administrative practices and administrative cooperation so as to allow synergies to develop between national institutions and authorities whose interaction is decisive when trying to resolve problems between Member States efficiently. In addition, MEPs consider that Member States should vigorously tackle all legal and administrative barriers and obstacles to geographical mobility at European, national, regional and local levels, such as the non-recognition of mobility-related experiences for career prospects or social security and pensions, particularly within SMEs.

According to the report, Member States should ensure that the labour rights and collective agreements of citizens who choose to move to another Member State are fully respected, without discrimination between nationals of that Member State and non-nationals. The committee believes that, to that end, the Commission's measures should focus on ensuring that migrant citizens receive equal treatment and are not turned into a cheap labour force.

MEPs call on the Member States actively to promote foreign language teaching (especially for adults), given that linguistic barriers are among the main remaining obstacles to the mobility of workers and their families.

The report reiterates that labour mobility is a key instrument for the efficient working of the internal market. It calls, therefore, on the Member States to take appropriate measures to emphasise flexicurity on the one hand and to protect workers' security on the other, bearing in mind the fundamental principles of opportunities, access and solidarity referred to in the renewed social agenda.

MEPs note with concern that some Member States are maintaining labour market restrictions on workers from the new Member States. They call on the Council to ensure greater involvement and closer monitoring on the part of the EU institutions, especially the Parliament, with regard to the process of authorisation and justification by Member States of the transitional periods for access to their labour markets for the citizens of the new Member States, including from the first year of membership.

The report notes with concern certain moves by Member States to alter their internal legal frameworks for immigration and interpret and apply the principle of the free movement of labour in a manner that is contrary to the letter and spirit of the Community rules in force. MEPs call for an immediate end to such practices, and encourage the Member States to introduce comprehensive schemes for the integration of Union citizens exercising their right of free movement on their territory, where appropriate, in cooperation with the Member States of origin.

On the issue of reintegration, MEPs call on the Member States and the Commission to work together in order to draw up, implement, monitor and evaluate a programme of social reintegration for citizens and their families returning to their Member State of origin after a period spent

working in another.

MEPs take the view that border workers occupy a special position in the area of European labour mobility.

On qualifications, MEPs encourage the Member States to speed up the implementation of the common framework for qualifications (European Qualifications Framework-EQF). They consider that, while alignment with this reference system is due in 2010, its accelerated implementation in all Member States could reduce the obstacles currently facing workers. They encourage educational authorities to work together pro-actively on the mutual recognition of qualifications ? gained from formal, informal and non-formal education ? and professions which correspond to the standards set by Member States. They also endorse the Commission's commitment to developing Europass in order to make qualifications more readable for employers and they stress the value of the Euraxess Services.

The report calls on the Commission, the Member States, and the two sides of industry to open discussions with a view to harmonising salary scales with the different levels of qualifications laid down in the EQF so as to enable labour mobility to be guaranteed by virtue of wage levels corresponding to workers' skills.

The report highlights that throughout the EU, there is still diversity in the regulation of healthcare professionals. Member States and their regulatory authorities for healthcare professionals are urged to share information and establish standardised accreditation systems for healthcare professionals in order to ensure patient safety. The lack of a common framework for comparing, transferring and recognising vocational qualifications at EU level is a serious barrier to transnational mobility. In this context, MEPs welcome the Commission's initiative on the establishment of the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET).

On social security and pensions, MEPs stress the need for further progress in recognition and cumulation of social security entitlements and in the portability of pensions. They take the view that the portability of social security provisions is better coordinated on the basis of Regulations (EEC) No 1408/71 and (EC) No 883/2004 (applicable from 2009) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the coordination of social security systems, and bilateral agreements. Member States are urged to implement fully these Regulations, as well as related legislation on social security matters and the payment of allowances of any kind. They also call on the Member States and the Commission to urgently address the recurring problems raised in petitions and complaints concerning social security, pensions, and health care and support the Commission's plans for the introduction of an electronic version of the European health insurance card. They suggest that there should also be an electric revision of form "E106". MEPs advocate a discussion on social security arrangements, inter alia with reference to access to health care and the fact that workforce mobility can, in some cases, lead to the loss of social security benefits. They support the Commission's plans to improve its proposal for a directive on minimum requirements for enhancing worker mobility by improving the acquisition and preservation of supplementary pension rights. Accordingly, they call on the Commission to submit a revised proposal for a directive on the portability of occupational pensions.

EURES: MEPs express their ongoing support for the contribution of the EURES network to facilitating workforce mobility in the EU. They support the idea of transforming EURES into a one-stop mobility information portal which would operate as a centralised helpdesk where potentially mobile workers can obtain information about all aspects of job mobility ? not only about job vacancies, social security, health care, pensions and the recognition of qualifications, but also about language issues, housing, employment for spouses, education for children and integration in general in the target state; points out that, where appropriate, it should be expanded to the benefit of third-country nationals, including those who have not yet acquired long-term resident status.

They consider that the supplementary budget of EUR 2 million allocated to innovative mobility projects up to 2013 is too low, given the need to inform as many Union citizens as possible about labour mobility in the Union and the objectives set out in the various programme documents in support of labour mobility in the Union.

Specific types of mobility: MEPs stress the need to distinguish the specific mobility of artists from that of workers in the Union in general, in terms of the nature of the performing arts and the irregularity and unpredictability resulting from a particular employment regime.

They call on firms to support worker mobility, for example through flexible working hours and tele-working. The Commission is urged to seek instruments by means of which to eliminate the complex obstacles which can prevent workers from opting to work abroad, such as difficulty in finding work for one's partner or spouse, high relocation costs, language barriers, the risk of losing tax advantages or no longer being able to contribute to national pension, health insurance or unemployment insurance

Schemes.

SOLVIT is supported by the MEPs as an instrument for swift resolution of problems in the internal market and equally of problems related to worker mobility. They recommend that more resources be made available to SOLVIT.

Acknowledging the contributions made by the Comenius, Erasmus and Leonardo programmes to enabling young people to study abroad, and stressing their importance from the point of view of later professional mobility; MEPs call on the Commission to examine the scope for expanding access to the programmes, bearing in mind the special needs of disadvantaged groups.

European job mobility action plan (2007-2010)

The European Parliament adopted by 540 to 18 with 31 abstentions, a resolution on the European Job Mobility Action Plan (2007-2010).

The own-initiative report had been tabled for consideration in plenary by Monica Maria IACOB-RIDZI (EPP-ED, RO) on behalf of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs.

Parliament recalls that about 2% of citizens of working age currently live and work in a Member State. In this context, Parliament will continue actively to seek solutions to all problems encountered by citizens in exercising their right to mobility within the territory of the EU. Parliament reiterates that EU-wide mobility with security for workers is one of the fundamental rights of Union citizens under the Treaty and that remaining administrative and legal barriers hindering transnational mobility must be removed.

Although Parliament welcomes the Commission's initiative and supports the launch of the proposed Action Plan, in particular as regards promoting mobility on fair conditions, it considers that the EU needs to support the inclusion of the concept of labour mobility in all Community policies, especially those concerning the completion of the internal market, the protection of workers, rules concerning posted workers and protection against non-secure work, which may affect mobility within the EU or combat discrimination. In this context, they call on the

Commission to treat labour mobility as a priority transversal policy, involving all relevant EU policy areas and all levels of authority in the Member States.

Parliament considers that, while the Commission's Action Plan covers the main issues relating to mobility, much more action still needs to be taken, notably creating stronger links between education systems and the labour market, providing proper information on mobility, maintaining acquired linguistic abilities for workers and their families preparing for mobility via the teaching of foreign languages and, not least, in vocational training and learning systems.

Long-term strategy: Parliament invites the Commission to draw up a long-term mobility strategy which takes into account the requirements of the labour market, economic trends and the prospects for enlargement of the EU, as only a long-term strategy can both guarantee free movement of workers without conflict and properly address brain-drain. It calls on the Commission to take into account the specific needs of female workers of all ages wishing to exercise freedom of movement and to include concrete steps to meet their needs in the four areas of the European Job Mobility Action Plan.

Breaking down administrative barriers to free movement: Parliament urges the Commission to prioritise the streamlining of administrative practices and administrative cooperation so as to allow synergies to develop between national institutions and authorities whose interaction is decisive when trying to resolve problems between Member States efficiently. It considers that Member States should vigorously tackle all legal and administrative barriers and obstacles to geographical mobility at European, national, regional and local levels, such as the non-recognition of mobility-related experiences for career prospects or social security and pensions, particularly within small and medium-sized enterprises. Amongst other measures to promote mobility, the Parliament suggests the teaching of foreign languages.

Mobility: a fundamental instrument of the internal market: Parliament reiterates that labour mobility is a key instrument for the efficient working of the internal market and invites Member States to take appropriate measures to emphasise flexibility on the one hand and to protect workers' security on the other. It also calls on the Member States and stakeholders to consider and remove the obstacles to the mobility of women workers, by providing, among other things, fair access to qualified jobs and high-level positions, equal pay, flexible working conditions, adequate healthcare and childcare services, good quality education facilities for children, portable pension rights, and ensuring the elimination of gender stereotypes. The following should also be promoted: special employment, training, educational, distance learning and language programmes to create a more women-friendly labour market and to enable the reconciliation of professional and family life.

Mobility and immigration: Parliament notes with concern certain moves by Member States to alter their internal legal frameworks for immigration and interpret and apply the principle of the free movement of labour in a manner that is contrary to the letter and spirit of the Community rules in force. It calls for an immediate end to such practices and encourages the Member States to introduce comprehensive schemes for the integration of Union citizens exercising their right of free movement on their territory, where appropriate, in cooperation with the Member States of origin. It calls on the Member States and the Commission to work together in order to draw up, implement, monitor and evaluate a programme of social reintegration for citizens and their families returning to their Member State of origin after a period spent working in another.

Recognition of qualifications: Parliament encourages the Member States to speed up the implementation of the common framework for qualifications (European Qualifications Framework ? EQF). It considers that, while alignment with this reference system is due in 2010, its accelerated implementation in all Member States could reduce the obstacles currently facing workers. It also encourages educational authorities to work together pro-actively on the mutual recognition of qualifications ? gained from formal, informal and non-formal education ? and professions which correspond to the standards set by Member States. Parliament endorses the Commission's commitment to developing Europass in order to make qualifications more readable for employers and they stress the value of the Euraxess Services.

Social security: Parliament calls on the Commission, the Member States, and the two sides of industry to open discussions with a view to harmonising salary scales with the different levels of qualifications laid down in the EQF so as to enable labour mobility to be guaranteed by virtue of wage levels corresponding to workers' skills. It stresses the need for further progress in recognition and cumulation of social security entitlements and in the portability of pensions. They take the view that the portability of social security provisions is better coordinated on the basis of Regulations (EEC) No 1408/71 and (EC) No 883/2004 (applicable from 2009) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the coordination of social security systems, and bilateral agreements. Member States are urged to implement fully these Regulations, as well as related legislation on social security matters and the payment of allowances of any kind. They also call on the Member States and the Commission to urgently address the recurring problems raised in petitions and complaints concerning social security, pensions, and health care and support the Commission's plans for the introduction of an electronic version of the European health insurance card which includes all information relating to the contributions paid by and the social rights of the individual concerned in all Member States where that person has worked.

EURES: Parliament expresses its support for the contribution of the EURES network to facilitating workforce mobility in the EU. It supports the idea of transforming EURES into a one-stop mobility information portal which would operate as a centralised helpdesk where potentially mobile workers can obtain information about all aspects of job mobility ? not only about job vacancies, social security, health care, pensions and the recognition of qualifications, but also about language issues, housing, employment for spouses, education for children and integration in general in the target state. It points out that, where appropriate, it should be expanded to the benefit of third-country nationals, including those who have not yet acquired long-term resident status. It considers that the supplementary budget of EUR 2 million allocated to innovative mobility projects up to 2013 is too low, given the need to inform as many Union citizens as possible about labour mobility in the Union and the objectives set out in the various programme documents in support of labour mobility in the Union.

Other instruments to promote mobility: Parliament calls on firms to support worker mobility, for example through flexible working hours and tele-working. The Commission is urged to seek instruments by means of which to eliminate the complex obstacles which can prevent workers from opting to work abroad, such as difficulty in finding work for one's partner or spouse, high relocation costs, language barriers, the risk of losing tax advantages or no longer being able to contribute to national pension, health insurance or unemployment insurance Schemes. SOLVIT is supported by the Parliament as an instrument for swift resolution of problems in the internal market and equally of problems related to worker mobility. It recommends that more resources be made available to SOLVIT.