



European Network Against Racism
Réseau européen contre le racisme
Europäisches Netz gegen Rassismus

FACT SHEET 24

Proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a Community Programme for employment and social solidarity – PROGRESS

November 2005

Introduction

In July 2004 the Commission presented a Communication [COM (2004) 488] to establish a Community Programme for employment and social solidarity. The programme will be one of two programmes in the employment and social field (the other will deal with free movement of workers), and will have a proposed budget of €28.8 million over the period 2007-2013. The new programme replaces the four existing programmes which currently support the implementation of the social policy agenda, including the Community Action Programme against Discrimination.¹

'Simplification'

One of the overall objectives of the proposed decision is the simplification of existing funding programmes. The Commission argues that moving from 28 to two budget lines in the employment and social field, will increase coherency and consistence and avoid duplication. The Commission also posits that this rationalisation will make it easier for the end users and potential beneficiaries, as it will be possible to apply for funding in a more standardised and harmonised way.

General objectives and areas of activity

PROGRESS will have six general objectives:

1. Improve knowledge and understanding
2. Develop data collection and statistics
3. Support the implementation of community law
4. Promote exchange of good practice
5. Enhance awareness raising
6. Build the capacity of EU networks.

The proposal identifies **five areas of activity** for the programme including: employment, social protection and inclusion; working conditions; anti-discrimination and diversity; and gender equality.

¹ For further information about the current programme see:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/fundamental_rights/policy/prog_en.htm

Anti-discrimination and diversity

Overall the programme aims to support the implementation of the principle of non-discrimination and to promote mainstreaming in all relevant EU policy areas.² There are four proposed areas of activity on anti-discrimination and diversity:

1. Improving understanding of discrimination through research and analysis, in particular through the development of statistics.
2. Support the implementation of EU anti-discrimination legislation through monitoring and training initiatives, and working with the specialised bodies.
3. Raising awareness and promoting debate about discrimination, including supporting mainstreaming.
4. Developing the capacity of key EU networks.

Activities on anti-discrimination and equality have a proposed budget of €158.2 million over the seven years of the programme. The Commission has defined a range of key outputs that will build on existing activities under the current Community Action Programme on anti-discrimination, which will come to an end in 2006. Table 1 contains a summary of the planned actions.

Table 1: Overview of key outputs envisaged in the areas of anti-discrimination and diversity

Activity area	Key outputs	Unit cost €	Total cost €
1. Understanding	Expert groups (7)	1,500,000	10,500,000
	Studies (17)	500,000	8,500,000
	Reports (25)	150,000	3,750,000
	Conferences (7)	300,000	2,100,000
	Statistics (3)	1,000,000	3,000,000
2. Legislation monitoring	Training (90)	200,000	18,000,000
	Working groups (7)	300,000	2,100,000
	Equality body meetings (7)	300,000	2,100,000
3. Awareness-raising	Media campaign (7)	5,400,000	37,800,000
	National conferences (175)	150,000	26,250,000
	Presidency conferences (7)	300,000	6,300,000
	Publications (7)	800,000	5,600,000
4. NGO Networks	Key Networks (35)	800,000	28,000,000
	Smaller networks (35)	120,000	4,200,000
Total			158,200,000

Nearly half of the proposed anti-discrimination and equality budget will be spent on awareness-raising activities including a media campaign over the seven years. 20% of the budget or just over €32 million will be spent on supporting NGO networks, while 18% will go on promoting understanding of discrimination, and 14% on activities to monitor and promote the implementation of the anti-discrimination legislation.

Framework strategy

PROGRESS is a technical financial document which will provide the monetary capacity for the Commission to implement its planned activities in the field of employment and social affairs. In other words, the programme will facilitate the range

² In 2004 ENAR published ‘*Mainstreaming equality in European law and policy making*’, which defined mainstreaming as ‘the incorporation of Equal Opportunities issues into all actions, programmes and policies from the start’. See: http://www.enar-eu.org/en/publication/mainstreaming_04_en.pdf

of activities which the Commission already undertakes or is planning in the area of anti-discrimination and equality. The Commission recently published a 'Framework Strategy' outlining its policy priorities in the area of non-discrimination. PROGRESS will give the financial teeth to actually implement these plans.

The Framework Strategy provides further detail about the thematic and policy priorities which the Commission has identified, priorities which will be elaborated through annual work programmes. The Framework Strategy itself is divided into **seven areas of activity**: (1) ensuring legal protection; (2) assessing the need for new legal protections; (3) mainstreaming; (4) learning from good practice; (5) awareness-raising and cooperation; (6) special initiative on ethnic minorities; and (7) international cooperation.

Decision procedure

The decision on PROGRESS will be taken under the co-decision procedure which means that the European Parliament and the Council will decide on the funding programme together.³

On 6 September 2005 the European Parliament adopted without amendment the report of the Employment and Social Affairs Committee on PROGRESS. The report raised a number of issues which reflected concerns which have been expressed by NGOs and civil society actors. The European Parliament adopted a resolution amending the financial framework of the Programme from €28.8 million to €54.2 million, and made other amendments with a view to taking into account gender mainstreaming, the rights of disabled people, the role of the European Parliament and NGOs. The Parliament included access by NGOs working at the national and regional level to programme funds, and raised the co-financing limits back up to 90% from the 80% proposed by the Commission.

The proposal will now go back to the Council. Once the Council has reached a common position on the amendments, the proposal will go back to the Parliament for a second reading. However, the time frame for adoption of the programme is not clear, as the EU has so far failed to agree its overall budget.

Conclusion

PROGRESS will be the overall framework in which EU activities in the broad area of employment and social affairs, which include anti-discrimination and diversity, will take place. As such it will inform the work of NGOs who are seeking to influence Commission activity in this area, as well as providing direct support to NGOs through the EU networks and other project funding. While PROGRESS will not set the policy priorities for the Commission it will shape them by determining how key funds will be allocated. Consequently it is vital that the proposal matches the priority action areas of the Commission, to ensure that EU activities on anti-discrimination add value to local, national and international efforts in the fight against discrimination and racism.

³ For further information on decision making in the European Union see: http://europa.eu.int/institutions/decision-making/index_en.htm

Key documents

Proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a community programme for employment and social solidarity [COM (2004) 488], http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2004/com2004_0488en01.pdf

European Parliament Report on the proposal on PROGRESS, Rapporteur Karin Jöns, <http://www.europarl.eu.int/omk/sipade3?PUBREF=-//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A6-2005-0199+0+NOT+XML+V0//EN>

Commission Communication on Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunities for all – A Framework Strategy, COM(2005) 224 final, http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/fundamental_rights/public/pubst_en.htm#Commission

ENAR Fact Sheet 23: Commission communication on non-discrimination and equal opportunities for all – A framework strategy (September 2005), http://www.enar-eu.org/en/info/2_3.shtml

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ENAR is a network of some 600 European NGOs working to combat racism in all EU Member States. Its establishment was a major outcome of the 1997 European Year against Racism. ENAR is determined to fight racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, to promote equality of treatment between EU citizens and third country nationals, and to link local/regional/national initiatives with European initiatives.



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