



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL POLICY & HEALTH

Sectoral Committee

Weekly Update

09.04.10



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... Commission

The European Citizens' Initiative

COM (2010) 119 - Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Citizens' Initiative.

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat_general/citizens_initiative/docs/com_2010_119_en.pdf

The Lisbon Treaty introduced a new form of public participation in the shaping of European Union policy. The European Citizens' Initiative enables one million citizens who are nationals of a significant number of Member States to call directly on the European Commission to bring forward an initiative of interest to them in an area of EU competence.

Given the importance of this new tool for citizens, civil society and stakeholders across the EU, in November 2009, the Commission has opened a broad public consultation in order to seek the views of all interested parties on how the citizens' initiative should work in practice. The proposal gives the results of the consultation.

Before citizens can start exercising this new right, a few ground rules and procedures have to be laid down in an EU regulation, such as the minimum number of Member States, the minimum number of citizens per Member State, the minimum age and other procedures and conditions.

Citizens' summary

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat_general/citizens_initiative/docs/eci_citizens_summary_en.pdf

Humanitarian Food Assistance

COM (2010) 126 - Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament - Humanitarian Food Assistance.

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0126:FIN:EN:PDF>

This Communication sets out the policy framework for EU humanitarian food assistance. It explains the issues and trends to be taken into account; the concepts, definitions and objectives that should drive humanitarian food assistance; the principles that should underscore this work; and the scope of activities undertaken.

The principal aims of this Communication are to:

- maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of EU food assistance;
- improve policy coherence, coordination, and complementarity between the Commission, Member States and other donors, in the provision of food assistance;
- inform partners and stakeholders of the Commission's objectives, priorities and standards in the delivery of humanitarian food assistance.



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The EU's Role in Global Health

COM (2010) 128 - Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - The EU Role in Global Health.

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0128:FIN:EN:PDF>

EU action to improve health in third countries is underpinned by the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (Art.168). It specifies that the Union and the Member States shall foster cooperation with third countries and the competent international organisations in the sphere of public health, and that a high level of human health protection shall be ensured in the definition and implementation of all Union policies and activities.

The Communication lists four challenges that the EU should concentrate upon for the strengthening of health systems to ensure that these are effective enough to deliver basic equitable and quality health care for all without discrimination on any grounds as defined by the Charter of Fundamental Rights. The challenges are:

- **Governance:** how strong leadership can coordinate global actors;
- **Universal coverage:** ensuring access to health services for all;
- **Policy coherence:** health policy can not be handled in isolation;
- **Knowledge:** investing in research that benefits all.

Furthermore, the Communication states that the EU should support third countries' efforts to formulate effective policies to mobilise domestic revenues, scale up fair financing of health systems and develop or strengthen social protection mechanisms in the health sector.

Roma in Europe

COM (2010) 133 - Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: The social and economic integration of the Roma in Europe.

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0133:FIN:EN:PDF>

In this policy Communication, the Commission outlines an ambitious programme to meet the biggest challenges for Roma inclusion, including:

- Mobilising the Structural Funds, including the European Social Fund – which together represent almost half of the EU's budget – to support Roma inclusion;
- Taking Roma issues into account in all relevant policy areas at national and EU level, from employment to urban development and from public health to EU expansion;



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- Harnessing the potential of Roma communities to support inclusive growth as part of the Europe 2020 strategy.

A separate report presented by the Commission evaluated the progress achieved in integration over the past two years. Although the situation of many of Europe's Roma people remains difficult, important progress has been made at EU and national levels. In the last two years, the EU and Member States have focused on making anti-discrimination laws and EU funding more effective in promoting Roma inclusion. This includes fighting discrimination, segregation and racist violence as well as supporting programmes to address the vicious circle of poverty, social marginalisation, low school achievement and poor housing and health.

To encourage Member States' effective use of Structural Funds, the Commission is conducting two studies that will identify successful projects, programmes and policies for Roma inclusion – one covering the funds as a whole and a second on the European Social Fund's support for Roma.

The Communication and progress report were discussed at the second European Roma Summit, which is organised with the Spanish EU Presidency. The event brings together high-level representatives of the EU institutions, Member States and civil society to review progress since the first summit in 2008.

COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

SEC (2010) 400 - Roma in Europe: The Implementation of European Union Instruments and Policies for Roma Inclusion – Progress Report 2008-2010

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=749&furtherNews=yes>

2nd European Summit on Actions and Policies in favour of the Roma Population (8-9 April 2010):

<http://www.eu2010.es/en/agenda/otrasreunionesministeriales/evento022.html?idioma=de>

The Commission's Work Programme for 2010

COM (2010) 135 – Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Commission Work Programme 2010 - Time to act.

http://ec.europa.eu/atwork/programmes/docs/cwp2010_en.pdf

The Commission Work Programme (CWP) 2010 provides a multi-annual overview of the work which the Commission plans to undertake in the coming years. This will not only improve predictability for all stakeholders, but also facilitate cooperation with the other EU institutions.



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Overall, emphasis of the CWP is on:

- putting the Europe 2020 Strategy into practice, thereby building the basis for exiting the economic crisis and creating sustainable growth and jobs;
- enhancing the rights and security of European citizens; and
- strengthening Europe's role on the world stage.

The Commission commits itself to deliver on the strategic initiatives foreseen for adoption in 2010 and provides indicative lists of other important initiatives for the years 2010-2014. Through annual updates of the Work Programme, the Commission will identify new annual strategic initiatives and adapt the multi-annual strand as necessary.

President Barroso's political guidelines:

http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/pdf/press_20090903_en.pdf

EY2010 - Second Newsletter

Women and poverty, the fundamental right to live a decent life

In this second issue of the 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion newsletter one can find out more about women and poverty, the 'fundamental right to live a decent life' and a project designed to promote the social inclusion of the elderly.



Newsletter:

http://www.2010againstopoverty.eu/downloads/newsletter/Newsletter_EN_EY_20x00D25F.pdf?langid=en

European Year of Volunteering 2011 EU Logo and Slogan



The European
Year of Volunteering
2011

The slogan for the Year will be:

"Volunteer! Make a difference."

The slogan will be translated into the official languages of the EU, linguistically adapted where necessary to retain the spirit and message of the English original.

Logo: Ivan Gamal (Ukraine)

Slogan: Silvia-Roxana Patru (Romania)