socialplatform

Brussels, March 12, 2013

Dear Members of the European Parliament,

Social Platform asks you to support the social dimension of the EU budget, as you consider the Resolution on the European Council's conclusions of 7-8 February on the Multiannual Financial Framework.

Why?

Unemployment is the highest in 15 years with 26 million people out of work (Eurostat, January 2013) and poverty is also increasing (120 million Europeans are at risk of poverty), despite the target set in 2010 to decrease it by 20 million by 2020.

What are the consequences of the Council's decision on the ESF?

- According to the Council's decision on the MFF, it is foreseen that €325.1 billion are available for the structural funds: this amount is approximately 8% less than the one allocated under the current period (€352.3 billion). These cuts are even more important as a new member state will join the EU and as these figures include two new instruments: a new Youth Employment initiative (€ 3 billion) and the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (€ 2.5 billion).

- The Council conclusions of February do not retain the ESF minimum share. However, there is clear reference to the necessity to support human capital development through an adequate share of the ESF.

- For all the reasons above, **we believe that it is more important than ever to keep the minimum share for the ESF to ensure adequate funding for social and economic development of the EU**. The Commission proposed to allocate 25% of the cohesion policy's budget to the ESF. The European Parliament supports the Commission's proposal (resolution of October 23, 2012).

Social Platform is the largest civil society alliance fighting for social justice and participatory democracy in Europe. Consisting of 45 pan-European networks of NGOs, we campaign to ensure that EU policies are developed in partnership with the people they affect, respecting fundamental rights, promoting solidarity and improving lives.

We trust that you will give these issues your utmost attention in your vote tomorrow and in the future negotiations with the Council on the MFF and cohesion policy.

Yours sincerely,

PN Baussand.

Pierre Baussand

Director

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