EU Ministers for Employment and Social Affairs
Via email

2 March 2015

Dear Minister,

RE: European investment strategy misses a strong social dimension

Last November, with the presentation of the Commission's Investment Plan, we were very concerned that the new European investment strategy is lacking a serious commitment to investment in the social field. Even if the Plan already puts forward investment in "human capital" as a priority, no long-term and sustainable results will be achieved if it is limited to job creation and building social infrastructure.

Our concerns have not been alleviated by the recent proposal for a regulation on the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI). Although the Commission said that the fund should "target projects delivering higher societal and economic value" and should be consistent with the Europe 2020 Strategy, it misses the necessary elements to ensure that it will benefit the social objectives of the strategy and enhance social progress.

The mobilisation of 315 billion euro at EU level should support a broader social investment approach and should be carried out within an equality - including gender equality - framework. This is vital for both social and economic prosperity.

To remedy the situation, we call on you to:

1. **Push for investment in ambitious integrated social policies**, including social protection, social services and social economy, in line with the 2013 Social Investment Package.
2. **Insist on the exclusion of social investments from the deficit targets** established under the Stability and Growth Pact, alongside investments qualified in the context of EFSI, by making the best use of the flexibility within these rules.
3. **Request the inclusion of social and equality preconditions in the overall orientation, investment guidelines, strategic policies and asset allocation of the EFSI**, decided by the fund's Steering Board. This should lead to the selection of projects that are consistent with EU's social policy priorities, including the reduction of poverty and social exclusion, and tackling all forms of discrimination. To this end, it would be important to ensure that the European Commission's representatives on the Board have proven expertise in social policies.
4. **Call for the appointment of a specialist in social policies to the EFSI Investment Committee**. This specialist would be responsible for assessing the social impact of submitted projects to ensure that those receiving support from the fund, benefit society as a whole.

We count on your support for these proposals in view of securing a strong social dimension in the EU investment agenda and achieving growth that is smart, sustainable and inclusive.

Yours sincerely,

Heather Roy
President

Pierre Baussand
Director

Social Platform is the largest civil society alliance fighting for social justice and participatory democracy in Europe. Consisting of 48 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.