

The Section for Social Questions, which was responsible for preparing the Committee's work on the matter, adopted its opinion on 14 November 1985, in the light of the report by Mr Pearson.

At its 231st plenary session, (meeting of 27 November 1985) the Economic and Social Committee adopted the following opinion by a unanimous vote:

1.1. The Committee approves the Commission's intention to bring up to date EEC Regulation 1408/71 with the amendments proposed in the proposal for a Council Regulation (COM(85) 396 final), seeing them as a consistent step towards greater cohesion of the Community.

1.2. The original Regulation and the new amendments must therefore be read in conjunction one with the other.

1.3. These measures will be of practical assistance to employed persons, self-employed persons and to members of their families moving within the Community, and accordingly are strongly endorsed.

2.1. The matter could be complicated, owing to the differing ranges of benefits available in Member States; thus the Committee is pleased that the final paragraph of the new (proposed) Article 10 (a) is clear and unequivocal:

'such benefits shall be granted by and at the expense of the institution of the place of residence'.

2.2. The Committee notes that, while the proposed amendments are specific and detailed in their application,

their implications are wider, reflecting the growing significance of non-contributory benefits in the context of contemporary social and economic conditions in the Member States. This need will grow, to take account of (a) limited contribution records (i.e. disabled people) and (b) the eroding of contribution-based entitlements (i.e. youth and long-term unemployment).

2.3. It is further pleased that employment within another Member State or States will qualify as regards seniority and availability of benefit, even prior to the implementation of the current proposal.

3. It is noted that the measures apply to citizens of Member States of the European Community and reflect the relevance of Decisions made by the European Court of Justice in relation to social security benefits and to social assistance.

4. The Committee notes with approval that the Commission has moved away from the usage of the term 'migrant' in its description of citizen of a Member State working and residing in another Member State. This is a proper stance in pursuance of a 'Peoples' Europe'.

Done at Brussels, 27 November 1985.

*The Chairman
of the Economic and Social Committee*
Gerd MUHR

Opinion on the proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) amending Regulation No 2950/83 on the implementation of Decision 83/516/EEC on the tasks of the European Social Fund ⁽¹⁾

(85/C 344/03)

On 9 September 1985 the Council decided, in accordance with Article 127 of the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, to ask the Economic and Social Committee for an opinion on the abovementioned proposal.

The Section for Social Questions, which was responsible for preparing the Committee's work on the subject, adopted its opinion on 14 November 1985 in the light of the report by Mr Beretta.

At its 231st plenary session (meeting of 27 November 1985) the Economic and Social Committee adopted the following opinion unanimously:

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 237, 18. 9. 1985, p. 6.

Comments

1. The Committee agrees that the European Social Fund should cover both the young and long-term unemployed who decide to work in a self-employed capacity. The Committee accordingly supports the Commission's proposal and notes that it accommodates views expressed in previous opinions ⁽¹⁾.

2. The Committee believes that, in view of the large number of potential beneficiaries, the ESF funds earmarked for financing the projects in question are wholly inadequate. The Committee therefore feels that adoption of the proposed amendment must go hand in hand with an increase in the Social Fund budget. This reaffirmation of earlier statements is all the more valid today because of the acceptance of new ESF aid beneficiaries and the enlargement of the Community.

3. The Committee considers that the beneficial impact of the new type of ESF aid would be much greater if there were close coordination with other structural funds of the Community, such as the ERDF and EAGGF, as well as with EEC loan instruments (EIB and NCI).

4. The Committee considers that generally speaking, and particularly where the self-employed are concerned, grants

⁽¹⁾ Review of the European Social Fund
OJ No C 124, 9. 5. 1983.
Action to Combat Long-Term Unemployment
OJ No C 25, 28. 1. 1985.
Statistical Machinery of the European Social Fund
OJ No C 44, 15. 2. 1985.

from the Social Fund must not be limited to financing measures and programmes already in process of implementation at national level; they must rather be focused primarily on promoting new initiatives planned and selected according to the principle of 'additionality'.

5. The Committee proposes that the bodies responsible for administering the Fund should give maximum publicity to the benefits and opportunities such a Community instrument offers to the self-employed and to job-creating projects; such publicity would ensure that the maximum number of citizens enjoy equal opportunities and would highlight one of the advantages of belonging to the European Community.

6. The Committee would not wish to hide the fact that there is an element of risk in disbursing funds for self-employed activities, especially if such funds are earmarked for additional training; the risk lies in the fact that the funds might be used up in providing short-term support which merely produces a temporary reduction in unemployment. The Committee therefore believes that the appropriate Community and national bodies need to take particular care to ensure that the projects in question have concrete prospects of long-term success.

7. The Committee would underline the importance of helping the self-employed in the interests of discouraging all forms of moonlighting.

8. Finally, the Committee considers that help should be given to self-employed persons who opt to join cooperative-base schemes.

Done at Brussels, 27 November 1985.

*The Chairman
of the Economic and Social Committee*
Gerd MUHR

Opinion on the proposal for a Council Decision adopting an action programme of the Community in education and training for technology — Comett (1986 to 1992) ⁽¹⁾

(85/C 344/04)

On 27 August 1985 the Council decided to consult the Economic and Social Committee, under Article 128 of the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, on the abovementioned proposal.

On 14 November 1985 the Section for Social Questions, which was responsible for preparing the Committee's work on the subject, adopted its opinion in the light of the report by Mr Nierhaus.

At its 231st plenary session (meeting of 27 November 1985) the Economic and Social Committee adopted the following opinion unanimously:

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 234, 13. 9. 1985, p. 3.