

Press release – MEPs demand unprecedented support measures for EU firms and workers



Member states need to take radical measures to cushion the employment and social shock caused by the pandemic, says the resolution on the [EU Employment Guidelines](#), drafted by [José Gusmão](#) (GUE/NGL, PT) and adopted on Wednesday by the Employment and Social Affairs Committee. The text calls on the Commission to revise the Employment Guidelines to take account of the consequences of the pandemic and better respond to future crises.

Measures proposed by MEPs include wage subsidies, income support, extending unemployment benefit schemes and paid sick leave as well as carers' leave and arrangements to work from home. The fight against youth unemployment, homelessness and poverty must be prioritised through a reinforced [Youth Guarantee](#), a strong [Child Guarantee](#) for tackling child poverty and the [Housing First](#) approach, they say.

Support labour mobility and financial assistance for EU firms

The text asks that only companies that are not registered in tax havens, that respect the applicable collective agreements and that do not pay dividends or bonuses can apply for financial assistance from the [SURE](#) mechanism for short-time work, and welcomes a proposal for a European permanent unemployment reinsurance scheme, expected towards the end of 2020. MEPs consider that the length of time that the '[General escape clause](#)' will apply, which gives member states fiscal flexibility during severe economic shocks, has to "reflect the dimension and duration of the COVID-19- crisis".

To create new job opportunities, MEPs propose that member states support fair labour mobility throughout Europe and further strengthen the [ERASMUS+ mobility programme](#). Public services should be digitalised more quickly,

particularly those linked to the [coordination of social security systems](#).

The report was adopted with 46 votes in favour, 5 votes against and 3 abstentions.

Next Steps

The full house is expected to vote during the September plenary session on the draft report adopted in committee today.

Background

The Employment Guidelines ([Article 148 of the TFEU](#)) present strategic objectives for national employment policies and policy priorities in the fields of employment, education and social inclusion. The Council will adopt the act after consulting the European Parliament. The Guidelines serve as a basis for [country-specific recommendations](#) in the different areas concerned.

The European Commission presented this year's revision of the Employment Guidelines in February 2020, before the COVID-19 outbreak, in order to integrate the four dimensions of the [Annual Strategy for Sustainable Growth](#) (ASGS) and, in particular, the dimension of environmental sustainability, to reflect the vision of a [strong social Europe for just transitions](#) and to take into account the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs).