Press release | 05.07.2012

European Social Fund

EP agrees to put focus on fighting poverty

The European Parliament's employment and social affairs committee voted on a mandate for negotiations with the Council on the European Social Fund from 2014 on. Commenting on the vote, Green MEP and vice-chair of the committee **Elisabeth Schroedter** stated:

“The ESF should be focusing on fighting poverty and we welcome that the EP will push to ensure this is the case. MEPs voted to ensure a minimum of 20% ESF funds have to be used in each member state on fighting poverty, with a wider number of groups involved. Fighting poverty through the ESF will now become more than just giving access to the labour market.

"MEPs also voted in favour of making local cultural initiatives eligible for ESF funds. This is crucial as these initiatives play a key role in social inclusion. The Greens were also successful in ensuring a greater focus on combating discrimination, as well as ensuring NGOs, social partners and local and regional authorities have more scope to launch proposals themselves.

"EP negotiators must now use this broad mandate to push to ensure fighting poverty is a central focus of the forthcoming ESF in spite of the reticence of some member states."

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