Press release | 02.10.2013

European Social Fund

Youth employment and poverty to get greater focus under EU social programme

The European Parliament and Council reached an agreement yesterday evening on the European Social Fund for 2014-20. Commenting on the outcome, Green social policy spokesperson and vice-chair of the European Parliament's employment committee **Elisabeth Schroedter** said:

"Yesterday's agreement will ensure that measures to reduce poverty and tackle youth unemployment will get greater priority under the European Social Fund. In the context of the economic crisis and its impact on poverty and youth employment, it is crucial that the EU prioritises these areas under its social programmes.

"The European Parliament pushed for and ensured greater space for poverty reduction measures, both in terms of funding and in terms of content. 20% of ESF funding will have to be allocated to poverty reduction. In the future, the ESF will be able to support projects that tackle the root causes of poverty and not simply projects aimed at labour market participation. This is vital for ensuring European funds can help people affected by poverty, who are at a distance from the labour market, like children and the elderly.

"We were also able to ensure that refugees and asylum seekers will once again be eligible for assistance through ESF programmes, in spite of opposition to this from the EU Commission and national governments. This will also help the overall goal of poverty reduction and build on positive experiences in some member states."

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