



**COUNCIL OF  
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**NOTE**

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from:	General Secretariat of the Council
to:	Delegations
Subject:	Partial summary record of the meeting of the European Parliament's <b>Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL)</b> , held in Brussels on 18 December 2012. Item 3 on the agenda.

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The meeting was chaired by Ms BERES (S&D, FR).

***Item 3 on the agenda***

**Eures reform**

**Exchange of views with Commissioner Andor on Oral Question by Jutta Steinruck, PSCI rapporteur**

Ms BERES (S&D, FR), started the discussion by noting that the Lisbon Treaty had increased the European Parliament's legislative powers and that, in this respect, the EMPL Committee had repeatedly requested that the Commission associate the Parliament and the Council with the EURES reform. Ms BERES (S&D, FR) wondered why, despite these requests, the Commission had adopted its Decision, acting alone. The question was echoed by Ms STEINRUCK (S&D, DE), who asked for comments from the Commission and inquired how the procedure would continue from the legal standpoint concerning the EURES reform.

The Commissioner explained that the Commission EURES Decision was important for several reasons. Firstly, regarding the timing, because the Decision was adopted by the college of Commissioners on 26 November 2012 and would apply from 1 January 2014, a sufficiently long *vacatio legis* was important to ensure that Member States and the private and public partners had enough time before the Decision entered into force.

It meant in practice that different implementation measures would be undertaken in 2013, namely the development of common accreditation criteria for selecting service providers and launching the selection procedure based these criteria; upgrading the service catalogue at national level in line with the service catalogue as agreed at EU level; the inclusion of the private partners in the EURES network. Secondly, from the governance point of view, the functioning of the EURES was based on various legislative instruments, in particular on Regulation (EU) No 492/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on freedom of movement for workers within the Union and on the Article 46 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. He said that from 2014 the financing of the EURES would be governed by financial instruments, such as the Programme for Social Change and Innovation (PSCI) on the one hand, and the European Social Fund (ESF) and the national budgets on the other. At this point, he noted that, EURES access reflected the policy objectives laid down in Regulation 492/2011 and that therefore should always be considered in conjunction with that Regulation. In his view, the rules in the Commission's Decision came within the scope of Regulation 492/2011 could therefore substantially change neither the structure nor the composition of the EURES network as such. He referred to the main modifications introduced by the Decision, in particular the change to the name of the governance bodies (the competencies and the composition remained unchanged), the possibility for the private partners to be integrated among the social partners and the reinforcement of the role of the social partners. He concluded by saying that the review of Regulation 492/2011 as regards the part concerning the EURES would be conducted under the ordinary legislative procedure, which meant that the substantial changes concerning the governance of EURES would be decided with the European Parliament acting as a co-legislator.

In Ms STEINRUCK's (S&D, DE) opinion, the financing of the EURES activities partly by the PSCI and partly by the ESF was of fundamental importance. For this reason, she regretted that the Commission had not waited for the results of the ongoing informal trilogues in order to understand the consequences of that decision. Ms SCHROEDTER (Greens/EFA, DE) was concerned by the reduction in the funds allocated to the social partners in cross-border operations. Ms HARKIN (ALDE, IE) and Mr BOULLAND (EPP, FR) expressed their full support for the previous speakers regarding the PSCI and the cross-border provisions. In addition, Mr BOULLAND regretted the lack of clarity concerning coordination between the EURES bodies.

The Commissioner replied by saying that there was a real urgency to act because of the dramatic unemployment rates in some European countries and referred in this respect to the employment package adopted recently by the Commission. In his view, the EURES reform had an important role to play in improving the existing system and in responding to the current crisis situation. In connection with the financing of the EURES, he noted that more time was needed to see the positive results of this decision . He added that the PSCI was part of the Multiannual Financial Framework for 2014-2020, and noted that if discussion of the PSCI itself allowed for inclusion of the new elements concerning the EURES, it would be taken into account either in the context of the review of the Regulation or even earlier because of the emergency. In his closing remarks, he confirmed the Commission's strong wish to work closely with the European Parliament and with the social partners, which he considered to be key stakeholders in the European employment policy decision-making process.

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