



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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from: Council General Secretariat

to: Delegations

No. Cion prop.: 17244/12 SOC 982 ECOFIN 1022 EDUC 367 + COR 1

Subject: Proposal for a Council Decision on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States

- Opinion of the Committee of the Regions

Delegations will find attached the letter from the Secretary General of the Committee of the Regions, Mr. Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso, regarding the decision of the Committee of the Regions not to issue an opinion on the employment guidelines for 2013.



The President

Committee of the Regions

Brussels, 10.01.2013*000032

PresCab/AK/MCNC/WD/ha/D-3038/2012

László Andor

Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
 European Commission
 1049 Brussels

Subject: Opinion on the *Council Decision on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States*

Dear Commissioner,

We would like to thank you for your consultation request to the Committee of the Regions regarding the proposal for a *Council Decision on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States for 2013 (COM(2012) 709 final)*.

In accordance with Rule 64 of its Rules of Procedure, the CoR Commission on Economic and Social Policy (ECOS) decided, at its meeting on 14 December 2012, not to issue an opinion but to reply in the form of the present letter.

In particular, I would like to draw your attention to the position taken by the Committee of the Regions in its resolution on a *better tool-box to implement the EU 2020 Strategy: the integrated guidelines for the economic and employment policies of the Member States and the Union CdR 175/2010 fin*, which it adopted on 10 June 2010.

In this resolution the Committee of the Regions supported the redesign of the broad economic and employment guidelines and the concept of integrating them into a coherent document aligned with the Europe 2020 Strategy. Given that the proposed Council Decision further extends this set of guidelines to 2013, the Committee of the Regions maintains its support provided the Commission is willing to ensure that the guidelines, while addressed to the Member States, are implemented in partnership with regional and local authorities. Considering their competences and capacities in the fields covered by these guidelines and according to the principle of subsidiarity, they are indeed key actors in the development of National Reform Programmes, in their effective implementation and in overall communication on the Strategy.

The EU's Assembly of Regional and Local Representatives

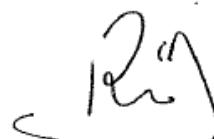
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Furthermore, in its *Resolution on the priorities of the Committee of the Regions for 2013 based on the legislative and work programme of the European Commission CdR 2204/2012 fin*, adopted on 30 November 2012, the Committee of the Regions identifies a number of key political priorities, with a strong focus on overcoming the economic, social and financial crisis through a job-rich recovery. For a recovery to be successful, both the younger generation and the elderly must be taken on board. For this reason, initiatives aiming to improve employment opportunities for young Europeans such as the Recommendation on Youth Guarantees or improving the functioning of EURES are at the centre of the CoR's attention. However, it should also be remembered that increased job mobility requires safeguards for the future such as solutions that guarantee cross-border transferability of occupational pensions, and protection for the rights of cross-border workers or posted workers.

Finally, the broader picture of the governance of the European Semester should be also borne in mind. The Annual Growth Survey and the European Semester have developed to become a more complex tool for coordination, not only with regard to economic policy and employment policy but also within the monetary and budgetary framework. Since the creation of the European Semester, the Committee of the Regions has been calling for a well designed and balanced delivery structure that would reflect the reality of multilevel governance in the European Union. I would like to take this opportunity to point out that both National Reform Programmes and National Jobs Programmes can be best delivered if local and regional authorities are fully involved in their development and delivery. The Committee of the Regions supports proven governance mechanisms that complement NRPs and NJPs, such as territorial pacts.

In conclusion, the Committee of the Regions is glad to see that the political priorities in the area of employment are well established at European Union level. However, in the context of the ongoing financial, economic and social crisis, local and regional authorities must, more than ever, be involved in the reform process for Europe to successfully address the challenges ahead.

Yours sincerely



Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso

c.c.: **Catherine Day**, Secretary-General, European Commission

c.c.: **Uwe Corsepius**, Secretary-General, Council of the European Union

c.c.: **Richard Bruton TD**, Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Republic of Ireland