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From: Secretary-General of the European Commission, signed by Ms Martine DEPREZ, Director

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To: Mr Jeppe TRANHOLM-MIKKELSEN, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union

No. Cion doc.: COM(2021) 298 final ANNEX

Subject: ANNEX to the COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT pursuant to Article 294(6) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union concerning the **position of the Council on the adoption of a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+)**

Delegations will find attached document COM(2021) 298 final ANNEX.

Encl.: COM(2021) 298 final ANNEX



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ANNEX

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to the

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION
TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

pursuant to Article 294(6) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

concerning the

**position of the Council on the adoption of a Regulation of the European Parliament and
of the Council on the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+)**

ANNEX: Statements by the Commission

On ESF+ investments to combat child poverty

In 2019, there were 18 million children at risk of poverty and social exclusion in the EU with very high numbers in some Member States. The COVID-19 outbreak and its socio-economic consequences have exacerbated inequalities and poverty with a more pronounced effect on them. Child poverty is consistently present in all Member States and continues to be higher than for working-age adults.

The Commission therefore welcomes the balanced agreement making the ESF+ a decisive tool to address the challenge of child poverty. The agreement recognises the urgency to invest in children in all Member States.

On 24 March 2021, the Commission adopted a proposal for a Council Recommendation establishing a European Child Guarantee with the aim to tackle the challenge structurally. When programming the ESF+, the Commission will do its utmost to ensure that Member States dedicate appropriate ESF+ funding to contribute to implementing the European Child Guarantee. Moreover, it will encourage Member States to also use other EU funding instruments and national resources available to support adequate investments in this area.

On ESF+ investments in youth employment

The Commission underlines that young people have been disproportionately hit by the socio-economic crisis following the COVID-19 outbreak. From December 2019 to December 2020, youth unemployment has increased by 3 percentage points in the EU, bringing the number of unemployed young persons to over 3.1 million. The Commission also recalls that youth unemployment has been consistently and significantly higher than that of the adult population with the latest figures showing a difference of over 10 percentage points (17.8% compared to 6.6% in December 2020).

The Commission welcomes the agreement reached by the co-legislators which recognises the challenge across all Member States. The ESF+ is the most important EU funding instrument to implement the recently adopted reinforced Youth Guarantee as well as other relevant measures under the Youth Employment Support initiative.

When programming the ESF+, the Commission will do its utmost to ensure that Member States dedicate appropriate ESF+ funding to implement the reinforced Youth Guarantee. Moreover, it will encourage Member States to use also other EU funding instruments and national resources available to support adequate investments in this area.

