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# SOCIAL AGENDA



## Employment and social innovation

I focus on

8

**FIGHT AGAINST  
POVERTY**

*The floor to local  
actors*



12

**ROMA INTEGRATION**

*Moving up a gear*



## EDITORIAL



*“One single year of the EU budget represents more money, in today’s prices, than the whole Marshall Plan in its time”, the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, explained in his State of the Union speech on 11 September 2013. “In some regions, the EU budget is the only way to get public investment because they do not have the resources at national level”.*

*As the negotiations on the implementation of the EU’s 2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) are drawing to an end, this issue of “Social Agenda” focuses on a small but decisive part of the new EU budgetary framework: the programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI), with an overall budget of € 919.5 million for the seven coming years, directly managed by the European Commission.*

*Decisive it is, because EaSI explicitly promotes innovation in connection with employment and social policy. It gives clarity, substance and methodology to social policy experimentation and to the notion of properly testing new approaches, before scaling them up and replicating them in other regions and countries.*

*Social innovation is the key to more effective and efficient social protection and labour market policies, in these times of economic crisis and in the face of the demographic challenge which faces the EU. It is the key, therefore, to more and better jobs and active inclusion and to fostering and ensuring medium to long-term economic growth.*

## *“Social innovation is the key”*

*EaSI confirms that innovation is no longer restricted to technology. It shows the way to public authorities and other stakeholders, so that they may test, for example, the youth guarantee which the EU Council of Ministers adopted in 2013, or the social protection one-stop shop advocated by the EU in the Social Investment Package, also adopted in 2013. It will also help the Member States respond to the country-specific recommendations issued at the end of each European Semester cycle of economic policy coordination.*

*The new programming period ensures that the European Social Fund will promote social innovation, scaling up successful social policy experiments carried out under EaSI. Like the EU budget as a whole, EaSI must be considered in terms of leverage. It is a means to set new energies and approaches into motion, taking full advantage of the synergies that can be achieved in a European Union of over 500 million inhabitants and beyond, as parts of EaSI also reach out to European Economic Area countries and to countries negotiating to join the EU.*

### **Koos Richelle**

*Director General of the European Commission’s Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion department*

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