

# Public consultation on integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market

Fields marked with \* are mandatory.

## 1 Introduction

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Addressing long-term unemployment is a key political priority of the European Commission's jobs and growth strategy. In February 2016 the Council of the European Union adopted the Recommendation on the integration of the long-term unemployed in the labour market (LTU Recommendation).

The aim of this consultation is to gather views and opinions on the measures proposed in the Recommendation and their implementation as well as to shed light on future possible action. In the context of this consultation, long-term unemployed are considered as those that have been without a job for more than one year but are looking for a job.

## 2 About you

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### \* 2.1 Are you replying

- as an individual in your personal capacity?
- in your professional capacity or on behalf of an organisation?

### \* 2.7 Your contribution:

*(Note that whatever option chosen your answers may be subject to a request for public access to documents under [Regulation \(EC\) no 1049/2001](#))*

- can be published with your personal information** (I consent the publication of all information in my contribution in whole or in part including my name or the name of my organisation, and I declare that nothing within my response is unlawful or would infringe the rights of any third party in a manner that would prevent publication)
- can be published provided you remain anonymous** (I consent the publication of all information in my contribution in whole or in part (which may include quotes or opinions I express) provided that it is done anonymously. I declare that nothing within my response is unlawful or would infringe the rights of any third party in a manner that would prevent publication)

### \* 2.8 Name of the organisation:

Eurodiaconia, aisbl

**\*2.9 Postal address of the organisation:**

166, Rue Joseph II  
1000 Brussels  
Belgium

**\*2.10 Type of organisation:**

- Association/non-governmental organisation
- Employer representation/business organisation/employer
- Trade union
- Ministry/public authority
- Public employment services
- Private employment services
- Public social services
- Private social services
- Education and training provider
- Academia/researcher
- Other

**\*2.12 Are you working at EU level, national or regional/local level?**

- EU
- National
- Regional/local
- Not applicable

**\*2.13 In which country is your organisation based?**

- Austria
- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Hungary
- Ireland
- Italy
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Malta
- Netherlands

- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Slovak Republic
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- United Kingdom
- Other

\* 2.14 Is your organisation included in the transparency register?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

\* 2.15 If yes, please indicate your Register ID number:

4293010684-55

### 3 Knowledge of the Council Recommendation on long-term unemployment

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\* 3.1 How familiar are you with the Recommendation on the integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market?

- Not at all
- Limited knowledge
- Fairly good knowledge
- In-depth knowledge

\* 3.2 How familiar are you with your country's policies for tackling long-term unemployment?

- Not at all
- Limited knowledge
- Fairly good knowledge
- In-depth knowledge

### 4 Relevance

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The Recommendation proposes a number of measures to support integration of long-term unemployed people into the labour market. In this section we would like to get your opinion whether these measures are still relevant. Please respond in relation to your country. If you indicated that you work at the EU level, please respond in relation to the EU as a whole.

4.1 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the following measures are still relevant to help long term unemployed find a job?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I don't know /No opinion
* Improving information on the job offers and support available to long-term unemployed persons	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Encouraging registration of long-term unemployed persons with Employment Services	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Providing a single point of contact that offers coordinated employment support and social support services to long-term unemployed persons	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Providing in-depth individual assessments to each long term unemployed person covering employability prospects, barriers to employment and previous job-search efforts	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Using Job Integration Agreements, detailing explicit goals, timelines and the obligations of both the long term unemployed person and the service provider(s), to facilitate transition into employment	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Improving services to employers such as placement support, workplace mentoring and training etc. to facilitate professional reintegration of long-term unemployed persons	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Developing financial incentives for employers to stimulate creation of job opportunities for long-term unemployed persons	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**4.2 Is there anything you wish to add regarding the relevance of the measures proposed by the Recommendation?**

*1000 character(s) maximum*

The mainstreamed individual, person-centred support is key and fully in line with Eurodiaconia members' services for unemployed people. Single points of contact (SPOC) are suited to operationalise such a principle, speeding up interventions and increasing their overall coherence. However, SPOCs should not limit to the contact with end users and coordination should be pursued across all the stages and levels of service. Early registration is another channel for increased effectiveness but emphasis on accessibility is needed, especially as people with lowest employability are often outside the radar of employment services. Early intervention is essential and should be envisaged particularly when the odds of being re-employed are lowest and well before the 12-18 month mark. Also, JIA should be interpreted as reinforced actions towards integration and not as a validation of stricter conditionality. Financial incentives should not create incentives to 'cream' the more employable job seekers.

**\* 4.3 In your view, should the Recommendation pursue other measures to help long-term unemployed find a job?**

- Yes  
 No

**\* 4.4 If yes, please explain which:**

Early intervention should especially target those with a highest risk of falling into LTU such as people with lower education and skill levels. Investing in skilling and training programmes has a preventative effect, keeping people on jobs and enhancing the employability of LTU. Whilst the Council Rec on Upskilling Pathways addresses the needs of people with lower skill levels, fast technological change and skill obsolescence in today's labour markets call for a more continued attention to skills among much wider groups of people.

The Rec emphasises the links with public support bodies and employment services as a way to facilitate the integration of LTU people into jobs. However, as already stressed, many LTU have fallen outside the public network of support and are at a higher risk of social exclusion. In this regard, the promotion of outreach activities should be stepped up as a way to link these profiles back to support pathways.

Emphasis on placement support and workplace mentoring should equally include the promotion of intermediate spaces of work inclusion that are conducive to integration into mainstream labour markets. (Work Integration) Social Enterprises are an ideal setting to this aim and available instruments such as public procurement should be used to develop these.

Finally, a greater integration between interventions towards LTU people and access to social benefits should be guaranteed, in line with the principles enshrined in the EC Rec on Active Inclusion.

## 5 Effectiveness

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In this section we would like to get your view on recent changes in measures used to facilitate the integration of long-term unemployed people into the labour market. Please respond in relation to your country. If you indicated that you work at the EU level, please respond in relation to the EU as a whole.

### 5.1

**To what extent do you agree or disagree that measures for the following specific groups at risk of long-term unemployment have been strengthened in the last two years?**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I don't know /No opinion
* Older LTU (i. e. older than 45 years)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Non-EU nationals	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Women	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* People with low skills or qualifications	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* People with physical or sensory disabilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* People with mental (including mental health problems) or intellectual disabilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Roma	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

## 5.2 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I don't know /No opinion
* Efforts to register long-term unemployed persons with employment services have been strengthened in the last two years	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Employment support services offered to long-term unemployed persons have become better tailored to their individual needs in the last two years	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Social support services for long-term unemployed persons have been strengthened in the last two years	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* Coordination (or integration) of support (between employment services, social assistance services, health care, training providers etc.) provided to the long-term unemployed has improved in the last two years	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Cooperation between employment services and employers has improved in the last two years	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5.3

**Is there anything you wish to add regarding the coordination, cooperation and partnerships between relevant service providers and organisations in the provision of services to the long-term unemployed?**

*1000 character(s) maximum*

The Rec has mainstreamed an integrated approach between labour market services and social services which has been echoed by the EPSR (principle 4; on the 'right to timely and tailor-made assistance to improve employment prospects'). The Rec called for stronger institutional approaches to address LTU but failed to recognise the role of CSOs in these. More than 2 years later, the implementation has partially 'made up' for this omission. By highlighting the emergency of LTU, new opportunities for service provision have been created for not-for-profit actors with an added value, experience and specialization in dealing with such profiles. However, the continuity and sustainability of such partnerships is jeopardised by the time-limits of public procurement practices and/or EU funding. Emphasis made on SPOC has helped mainstream a coordinated approach to work inclusion efforts. However, cooperation is often hindered by institutional division between employment and social departments.

## 6 Coherence

In this section we would like your opinion on whether the Recommendation fits into the overall EU policy framework tackling unemployment and inactivity.

**6.1 How familiar are you with the following EU policy initiatives?**

	In-depth knowledge	Fairly good knowledge	Limited knowledge	Not at all
* COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION of 22 April 2013 on establishing a Youth Guarantee	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION of 3 October 2008 on the active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION of 19 December 2016 on Upskilling Pathways: New Opportunities for Adults	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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## 6.2 In your opinion, what are the synergies and possible duplications between the LTU Recommendation and the EU policy initiatives mentioned earlier?

*1500 character(s) maximum*

Eurodiaconia flagged the low attention paid by the Rec to skills. In this regard, the Council Rec on Upskilling Pathways filled an important gap and both Recs should be implemented in an integrated manner. A Guarantee on Skills targets people who are particularly prone to LTU and contribute to their attachment to labour markets. However, many potential beneficiaries of such a guarantee are outside the radar of PES and outreach efforts are key (see 4.4.).

The Council Rec on a Youth Guarantee acted upon youth unemployment with a preventive angle to avoid scarring effects. The initiative, which was crucially underpinned by YEI funding, represented an enabling framework for work inclusion efforts targeting young people. In this regard, the Rec on LTU rightly broadened the spotlight towards all people experiencing LTU. However, the lack of ad hoc funding in the Rec has limited the attention towards other target groups for whom employability is lowest (e.g. 50+ people, migrants without language skills).

The need to ensure coherence between the Rec on LTU and the EC Rec on Active Inclusion is essential to avoid a disproportionate emphasis on activation and overlooking the dimensions on service and minimum income support. Whilst all three dimensions are enshrined in the EPSR -although in separate principles, not integrated-, parallel progress is essential to safeguard an active inclusion logic. For this reason, any assessment of the Rec on LTU should adopt a 3-tiered approach.

## 7 EU added value

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In this section we would like your view of the added value of having a policy at EU level to tackle long-term unemployment.



7.1

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding the Recommendation? Please respond in relation to your country. If you indicated that you work at the EU level, please respond in relation to the EU as a whole.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I don't know/No opinion
* The Recommendation prompted prioritization of long term unemployment policy measures	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* The Recommendation prompted a shift in funding towards the long term unemployed	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* The Recommendation accelerated implementation of planned actions to tackle long-term unemployment	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* The Recommendation prompted other changes	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**7.2 Please describe other changes prompted by the Recommendation, if any:**

*1000 character(s) maximum*

Measures included in the Rec on LTU have been integrated in the EPSR (principle 4, and 13 and 14 on income support). Also, the Council Rec on Access to Social Protection addressed the need for stronger safety nets for non-standard forms of work where the risk of LTU is higher.

Another development is linked with the post 2020 MFF. The proposed ESF+ Regulation includes thematic concentration on LTU (within the 25% earmark) and a ringfencing of 10% when the rate of young NEETs is especially high. The proposed increased link between EU funds and CSRs in the Semester is also likely to benefit actions against LTU.

The Rec called for action on LTU and new spaces for partnership with CSOs with experience in the field have been created as a result. However, ad hoc funding schemes in place have favoured increased efforts on specific groups (e.g. young people through YEI). The lack of funds for the implementation of the Council Rec has hindered comparable efforts towards other LTU groups.

**\*7.3 In your opinion/experience, is it useful to have a targeted EU policy to tackle long-term unemployment?**

- Yes  
 No

**\*7.4 Please, explain why:**

*1000 character(s) maximum*

Despite significant improvements, unemployment and the share of LTU remain high, especially in some EU MS and specific groups. Therefore, a targeted EU policy is pertinent, also because some groups face permanent employability issues regardless of the state of the economy. Addressing LTU calls for a targeted look at the different groups within the pool of LTU. Such a person-centred approach should also look at intersections with other circumstances and address LTU more as an effect rather than a cause itself. To this aim, social services are core to discriminate between 'pure' employability issues and barriers which can be overcome with adequate service support.

Also, LTU is often an effect of poor functioning of labour markets and low quality of jobs. For this reason, the fight against LTU should aim at its root causes and envisage increased quality of jobs, lifelong learning and adequate income support as key pillars of a preventive approach towards LTU.

**7.5 If you have anything to add, within the scope of this questionnaire, please feel free to do so here:**

*1500 character(s) maximum*

One of the main weaknesses of the Recommendation was its lack of focus on quality of jobs. This should be reversed during its process of implementation, as greater job quality remains a basic strategy to guarantee the sustainability of placements, avoid unemployment relapses and decrease pressure on employment and social services. European societies are witnessing the rise of in-work poverty and the proportion of employed persons at risk of poverty has risen continually, from 8.3% in 2010 to 9.6% in 2016 [Eurostat]. Such evidence should constitute a decisive motivation to adopt a more preventative approach to LTU by putting quality of jobs at the centre of employment policies.

As the Rec acknowledges, social services have a key role in bringing people (back) into employment. High quality services should, therefore, lie at the centre of effective interventions and be promoted accordingly. Efforts on the implementation and quality of SPOC or JIA is justified but a coherent active inclusion strategy should equally strive for higher quality levels in income support and in social services. In light of this, Eurodiaconia encourages a renewed look at the voluntary European Quality Framework for Social Services as a way to bring such efforts forward, monitoring and updating quality dimensions of services for the LTU.

## 7.6

Please feel free to upload a concise document, such as a position paper. The maximum file size is 1MB. *Please note that the uploaded document will be published alongside your response to the questionnaire which is the essential input to this public consultation. The upload of such a document is optional and will serve as additional background reading to better understand your position. If you have indicated that you/your organisation should remain anonymous, please make sure that the uploaded document contains no reference to your name/the name of your organisation.*

The maximum file size is 1 MB

**3178a8b4-85b0-4f4a-a24f-1230a0560797/Eurodiaconia-on-Long-Term-Unemployed-Proposed-Recommendation.pdf**

## Contact

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