



HOUSE OF LORDS

European Union Committee

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Esther McVey MP
Minister for Employment
Department for Work and Pensions
Caxton House
Tothill Street
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24 March 2015

Dear Esther,

6107/15: Amending Regulation (EU) No 1304/2013 of the European Parliament and the Council on the European Social Fund, as regards an increase of the initial pre-financing amount paid to operational programmes supported by the Youth Employment Initiative

5567/14: Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on a European network of Employment Services, workers' access to mobility services and the further integration of labour markets

We thank your colleague Greg Clark MP, Minister of State for Cities, Cabinet Office, and Minister of State for Universities and Science, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, for his explanatory memorandum (EM) of 4 March 2015 on the Commission's proposal regarding the Youth Employment Initiative, and thank you for your letter of 4 March 2015 on EURES. We are also very grateful to you for giving evidence to the Committee on 16 March 2015 regarding youth unemployment issues.

6107/15 – Youth Employment Initiative

We note your support for the Commission's proposal to increase the initial pre-financing amount paid to operational programmes supported by the Youth Employment Initiative. We agree that it is a helpful proposal from the Commission, and we have decided to clear it from scrutiny. We would be grateful to receive further updates on the progress of negotiations.

5567/14 - EURES

Since the Commission first published its proposal last year, you have explained clearly the Government's policies towards EURES and how the Government has gathered support for its position in the Council and in the European Parliament. As a result, we cleared this proposal from scrutiny in November 2014. However, further to the evidence you gave on 16 March 2015, we would like to express again our disappointment that the UK and other EU Member States have not supported and developed EURES to the extent to which it can be a genuinely useful tool for young Europeans seeking employment.

Youth Contract

The Government appears to have been successful in meeting its targets for the number of “starts” for work experience, and participants in the sector-based work academies. We commend the Government for the successes that it has achieved, and we are pleased to see that the number of young unemployed people in the UK has fallen in recent months.

We consider that the outputs of the Government’s Youth Contract and related schemes are very similar to what the Commission originally proposed in its Youth Guarantee. In the interests of promoting better UK cooperation with EU institutions in tackling youth unemployment, we recommend that the Government continues to share UK good practice and to learn from other EU Member States in tackling this problem.

I am copying this letter to Greg Clark MP, Minister of State for Cities, Cabinet Office, and Minister of State for Universities and Science, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, Sir William Cash MP, Chair of the Commons European Scrutiny Committee; Sarah Davies, Clerk to the Commons Committee; Les Saunders, Cabinet Office; and Ken Cooper and Marzena Bujalska, Departmental Scrutiny Co-ordinators.

Yours,
Tim

Lord Boswell
Chairman of the European Union Committee