



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Research and Information Service Briefing Paper

Paper 18/14

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NIAR 058-14

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European Commission Legislative & Non Legislative Proposals Q4 2013

Research and Information Service

Table 1: European Commission Legislative Proposals 2013 Q4

NIAR 058-2014

Title	Estimated date of Adoption	Current stage of progress	Type of Initiative	Description	Perceived Relevance to Northern Ireland	Current Prioritisation	Indicative date of when Committee can become involved	Any Identified Subsidiarity Issues?	NI Executive Priority/Objective (2013/14 priorities)
Draft Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council re-establishing EURES	December 2013	No information has been found regarding the proposal including a search of Prelex and the Register of Commission Documents which suggests that work is still underway.	COD	Intended to validate and integrate all elements of EURES reform so far. Would replace part II of Regulation 492/2011. The Regulation would define the operational aspects of the EURES services delivery such as: the EURES service catalogue, the accreditation system for expanding the network to other providers and the details of the provision of the European Employment Guarantee. Would also establish the Public Employment Service (PES) network as a permanent part of the EURES governance structure.	Part of a series of reforms to the EURES service operated by the European Commission. It may have some impact in NI in terms of increasing access to job opportunities across Europe.	Low to Medium	Current progress on the initiative is unknown, however it is expected to have been adopted in December 2013. The Committee may wish to ask the Department if it is aware of any progress on the initiative.	None identified	Competitiveness and Employment: Promote and facilitate mobility; Increase the skills profile of the working population; prepare for and influence EU Decision making processes in respect of the 2014-2020 structural funds programmes, the Trans-European Networks and the Connecting Europe Facility.

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Table 2: European Commission Non-Legislative Proposals 2013 Q4

NIAR 058-2014

Title	Estimated date of Adoption	Current stage of progress	Type of Initiative	Description	Perceived Relevance to Northern Ireland	Prioritisation	Indicative date of when Committee can become involved/potential actions	Any Identified Subsidiarity Issues?	NI Executive European Priority/Objective (2013/14 priorities)
Progress in the development of quality assurance systems in higher education	October 2013 (NOTE: Report Published 29 January 2014 - COM (2014) 29)	No information has been found regarding the proposal including a search of Prelex and the Register of Commission Documents which suggests that work is still underway.	Report	The Commission is required to present reports every three years on progress in the development of Quality Assurance systems in MS and on cooperation activities at EU level. The report is designed to monitor the implementation of the recommendations from the 2009 report "Progress in quality assurance in higher education", new activities and broader developments since then.	This is a review of progress in implementing a reports recommendations. The report may have some impact on the HEI sector in Northern Ireland but this will be dependant on the reviews findings.	Low	The Communication appears to be still in development. RalSe will keep a watching brief and provide updates to CEL if required.	No identified issues at this stage. However this may be subject to change.	Competitiveness and Employment: Increase the skills profile of the working population.
Implementation and management of the Horizon 2020 Participants Guarantee Fund (PGF).	November 2013	No documents found following a search which implies it is still in development.	Proposal	The Horizon 2020 programme includes a proposal for a single set of Rules for Participation and Dissemination, that provides that a participant guarantee fund shall cover the risk associated with non-recovery of sums due to the Union under actions financed in the programme. The proposed Commission decision is necessary for defining the detailed modalities for managing the PGF.	Horizon 2020 is a major flagship programme of the EU for the 2014-2020 period. Whilst the Working Paper is yet to be published it could have implications for organisations that participate in Horizon 2020.	Medium to High	It has not been possible to identify the current progress of the PGF. The Committee may wish to ask the Department if it is aware of any actions taken by the EU Commission in regards to it.	No identified issues at this stage. However this may be subject to change.	Innovation and Technology: Maximise the drawdown of Horizon 2020 funds for NI by promoting increased participation in EU research, technology and innovation programmes by NI companies, universities, research base and elsewhere in the public sector.

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Table 3: Status Unknown

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This table has been added to the update as a result of several legislative and non-legislative proposals current status being unknown. No record of them has been found in either the "Adopted Commission initiatives since January 2013" or the "Planned Commission initiatives until the end of 2013" documents produced by the EU Commission. A review on each initiative of the Register of Commission Documents and Prelex and additional databases searches have failed to find any information on their current status.

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European platform to fight undeclared work.	4th Quarter 2013	Initial research carried out in 2010 by Regioplan (A Research body) for the European Commission. A consultation was launched on the 4 July 2013 and closed the 20 September 2013. Current status unknown - no listing found in adopted legislation or in forward programme.	COD (Legislative)	Initiative intended to establish a European platform between labour inspectorates and other enforcement bodies. It aims for a more coherent approach by covering all the key areas influenced by undeclared work and supporting a more effective fight against undeclared work by way of improving cooperation, sharing best practice and identifying common principles.	Cracking down on undeclared work could have a number of impacts, including in dealing with benefit fraud and potentially increasing tax revenues. It may also help in areas such as illegal immigration.	Low to medium (this may be subject to change as a result of the lack of detail currently available on the proposal).	This appears to be at an early stage of development so the Committee may wish to ask the Department if it is aware of any actions taken by the EU Commission in regards to it.	No identified issues at this stage. However this may be subject to change.	Competitiveness and Employment: Increase the skills profile of the working population; prepare for and influence EU Decision making processes in respect of the 2014-2020 structural funds programmes, the Trans-European Networks and the Connecting Europe Facility.
Commission Observations to Member States proposals of partnership agreements for the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) for the period 2014-2020	September 2013	Current status unknown - no listing found in adopted legislation or in forward programme. However - in a European Parliament question dated 13 December 2013 it was stated that the agreements cannot be submitted until after the Common Provisions Regulations come into force and that this was expected by the end of December 2013 (it came into force on the 17 December 2013). The Commission subsequently has 3 months in which to make observations (E-011474/2013)	Staff Working Document (Non-Legislative)	The ESIF compose the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, all under the umbrella title of the Common Strategic Framework. The SWD will contain observations to MS proposals of partnership agreements. In the Partnership Agreement each Member State will set out their strategy and rationale for how the Funds are to be deployed to complement the EU 2020 strategy and domestic initiatives for sustainable jobs and growth.	Information on the partnership agreements is limited. The Committee may wish to ask the Department for any information it has on the development of the Partnership Agreements here in NI, including how they will operate, the links being created between the various fund administrative bodies and how they will meet NI, UK and EU targets.	High (may be subject to change as information becomes available).	Based on information identified in a European Parliament Question the observations can be expected within the next 3 months.	No identified issues at this stage. However this may be subject to change.	Competitiveness and Employment: Increase the skills profile of the working population; prepare for and influence EU Decision making processes in respect of the 2014-2020 structural funds programmes, the Trans-European Networks and the Connecting Europe Facility.

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Adoption of the partnership agreements for the European Structural and Investment Funds for the period 2014-2020	November 2013	No information has been found regarding the proposal including a search of Prelex and the Register of Commission Documents. Current status unknown - no listing found in adopted legislation or in forward programme.	Non-legislative	The expected date of adoption of the Partnership Agreements discussed above. These documents will shape the priorities in Member States for public investment for the next seven years.	As with the previous two Communications this proposal could have a long term impact on Northern Ireland. As such the Committee may wish to ask the Department for information on what is happening in regards the CSF and the ESIF.	High	Based on information identified in a European Parliament Question the observations can be expected within the next 3 months with their subsequent adoption occurring at some point after.	No identified issues at this stage. However this may be subject to change.	Competitiveness and Employment: Increase the skills profile of the working population; prepare for and influence EU Decision making processes in respect of the 2014-2020 structural funds programmes, the Trans-European Networks and the Connecting Europe Facility.
Commission Implementing Decision establishing the EURES charter	October 2013	No information has been found regarding the proposal including a search of Prelex and the Register of Commission Documents. Current status unknown - no listing found in adopted legislation or in forward programme.	Commission Implementing Decision (Non-Legislative)	Follow-up to the EURES decision C(2012) 8548 of 26/11/2012 which reestablished the EURES network. As part of this initial decision it was necessary for the Commission to establish the EURES governing charter (as established in Article 10 of C (2012) 8548). The Charter will replace the current EURES charter and guidelines. It will define the accreditation system to be used in the appointment of EURES partners, as well as details on operational issues and cross-border co-operation.	The establishment of the EURES charter will not have any direct impact on Northern Ireland, although it may have some implications for those seeking employment across the EU.	Low	The Communication appears to be still in development. RaISe will keep a watching brief and provide updates to CEL if required.	No identified issues at this stage. However this may be subject to change.	Competitiveness and Employment: Promote and facilitate mobility; Increase the skills profile of the working population; Prepare for and influence EU Decision making processes in respect of the 2014-2020 structural funds programmes, the Trans-European Networks and the Connecting Europe Facility.
Commission Staff Working Paper: The Evaluation and Reporting Strategy for the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme.	4th Semester 2013	No information has been found regarding the proposal including a search of Prelex and the Register of Commission Documents which suggests that work is still underway. Current status unknown - no listing found in adopted legislation or in forward programme.	Staff Working Paper (Non-Legislative)	Document intended to provide additional guidance on the way programme evaluation and reporting will be implemented under the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme. This includes additional information on the overall evaluation planning for the different activity lines and on the use of indicators to monitor the progress of Horizon 2020 towards its main objectives.	Horizon 2020 is a major flagship programme of the EU for 2014-2020. Whilst the Working Paper is yet to be published it could have implications for organisations that participate in Horizon 2020.	Medium-High	This is a Working Paper and its publication date is relatively close, as such any Committee involvement would be limited. The Committee may wish to ask the Department if it has had any input into the development of the document.	No identified issues at this stage. However this may be subject to change.	Innovation and Technology: Maximise the drawdown of Horizon 2020 funds for NI by promoting increased participation in EU research, technology and innovation programmes by NI companies, universities, research base and elsewhere in the public sector.
Policy Guidance for Entrepreneurship Education	November 2013	Thematic Working Group established in 2011. Current status unknown - no listing found in adopted legislation or in forward programme.	SWD (Non-Legislative)	The SWD will provide policy makers and managers at national and regional level with policy guidance to increase the level, quality and impact of entrepreneurship education. Guidance will follow five themes: Enhancing teacher education; entrepreneurial learning outcomes; curriculum and pedagogies; stakeholder engagement; and Measuring Impact.	Part of the Education and Training 2020 Work Programme. May have some impact on education and training in Northern Ireland but it is not possible to state to what extent until it is published.	Low - the policy guidance is targeted at a very specific area of education. Full impact will not be known until the guidance is published.	The Communication appears to be still in development. RaISe will keep a watching brief and provide updates to CEL if required.	No identified issues at this stage. However this may be subject to change.	Competitiveness and Employment: Increase the skills profile of the working population.

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Structural changes in universities and research institutions to promote gender equality.	4th Quarter 2013	Workshops carried out in July 2011, report produced in 2012. Current status unknown - no listing found in adopted legislation or in forward programme.	Recommendations (Non-Legislative)	The Commission will prepare a recommendation to the MS to promote structural changes (modernisation of scientific institutions) within universities and research institutions across Europe in order to foster equal representation of women and men at all levels of seniority.	The Recommendations would encourage changes within universities and research institutions to ensure equal representation of women and men by removing barriers. This could act as an encouragement to involvement in STEM topics and increase the skills profile of the population.	Medium	Extensive work has already been carried out on the Recommendations. The Committee may wish to ask the Department if it has been involved/consulted regarding the development of the Recommendations.	No identified issues at this stage. However this may be subject to change.	Social Cohesion: Increase engagement with the European institutions and key European networks by March 2014 in relation to delivering social change and the Erasmus+, Creative Europe, Social Change and Innovation, and Horizon 2020 Programmes