



COMMON STATEMENT FROM **EARLALL** ON THE  
“PROPOSAL FOR A REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT  
AND OF THE COUNCIL **ON THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND**”

1. EARLALL welcomes the Commission's Proposal about the Regulation on the European Social Fund. In particular, we would like to stress some strategic components that we wish the European Parliament and the Council to confirm:

- *That the ESF becomes dedicated to support the development of a knowledge-based society in all European Regions.*
- *That the ESF promotes strategies that establish integrated and coherent educational-, labour market- and enterprise policies as a framework for lifelong learning both at European, national and regional levels.*
- *That the ESF promotes partnerships between public authorities, private and public enterprises as well as research and educational institutions to carry out these actions in reality for the benefit of both citizens, enterprises and society in general.*
- *That the ESF includes actions to upgrade the whole work force, both employed and unemployed people.*
- *That the ESF promotes international co-operation at regional and local level to increase the added value and synergy of initiatives undertaken in each region*

2. At the same time, following the document “Views on the Reform of the European Social Fund and Action to Build a Knowledge-based Society”, approved by the General assembly (18/03/2004) EARLALL has to stress that Investment in lifelong learning is among the priorities of the European Employment Strategy and EARLALL believes that in all European Regions such investment is vital to achieving a high skill, high value, socially cohesive economy which competes with the rest of the world on quality.

To build a Knowledge based economy is possible only in a frame of a Knowledge society. A more creative and more expanded entrepreneurial culture, especially in SMEs, needs more qualified learning regions. For that purpose a preventive learning policy able to act on the training directly connected with a short term adaptability of



workers is becoming more and more strategic. At the same time, we must consider that the main political challenge, nowadays, is to adopt a lifelong learning strategy as a mainstream, crossing all priorities and within an inclusive approach, open to all actors of the knowledge society, in all European Regions.

3. Considering the previous statements, EARLALL wishes the following amendments of the Proposal to be made:

3.1. The article **3** under point 1 describes the scope of support within the framework of the Regional Competitiveness and Employment Objectives, giving the following priorities to the Fund

- a. Increasing adaptability of workers and enterprises
- b. enhancing access to employment
- c. reinforcing social inclusion of people at disadvantage
- d. Mobilising for reforms in the fields of employment and inclusion

This article should also include a point e) related to “Lifelong Learning as a mainstream concerning and accompanying each priority of Regional Competitiveness and at the same time as specific priority involving all forms of learning, formal and non formal, personal and technical, for all members of the Knowledge society”

3.2. Article **8** of the Proposal under Point 1 states that “The Member States and managing authorities shall ensure that programming of trans-national and inter-regional co-operation activities takes the form of a specific priority axis within an operational programme or a specific operational programme”

This article should specify that “Trans-national and inter-regional co-operation activities can be established among all European Regions despite their inclusion in the framework of the convergence or the regional competitiveness so long as such co-operation activities do not contravene the rules of such frameworks or otherwise permit convergence and/or regional competitiveness funding to be transferred among European Regions. Those actions can be implemented by all Regions on the whole scope of support considered by the Article 2”

**EARLALL General Assembly  
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