

Wednesday 8 July 2015

P8_TA(2015)0264

Green Employment Initiative

European Parliament resolution of 8 July 2015 on the Green Employment Initiative: Tapping into the job creation potential of the green economy (2014/2238(INI))

(2017/C 265/06)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission communication ‘Green Employment Initiative: Tapping into the job creation potential of the green economy’ (COM(2014)0446),
- having regard to the Commission communication ‘Green action plan for SMEs’ (COM(2014)0440),
- having regard to the Commission communication ‘Towards a circular economy: A zero waste programme for Europe’ (COM(2014)0398),
- having regard to the Commission staff working document ‘Exploiting the employment potential of green growth’ (SWD (2012)0092),
- having regard to the Council Conclusions of 6 December 2010 on ‘Employment policies for a competitive, low-carbon, resource-efficient and green economy’,
- having regard to the Council Decision 2010/707/EU of 21 October 2010 on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States,
- having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions ‘Green action plan for SMEs and Green Employment Initiative’,
- having regard to the OECD/European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training study of 2014 on ‘Greener Skills and Jobs, OECD Green Growth Studies’,
- having regard to the European Employment Observatory Review of April 2013 on ‘Promoting green jobs throughout the crisis: a handbook of best practices in Europe 2013’,
- having regard to the International Labour Organisation/European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training report of 2011 on ‘Skills for green jobs: a global view: synthesis report based on 21 country studies’,
- having regard to the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training report of 2010 on ‘Skills for green jobs — European synthesis report’,
- having regard to the Eurofound reports on Industrial Relations and Sustainability: the role of social partners in the transition towards a green economy (2011), Greening the European economy: responses and initiatives by Member States and social partners (2009), and Greening of Industries in the EU: anticipating and managing the effects on quantity and quality of jobs (2013),
- having regard to the OECD, CFE-LEED working document of 8 February 2010 on ‘Green jobs and skills: the local labour market implications of addressing climate change’,
- having regard to the ILO/UNEP definition of a green job as any decent job that contributes to preserving or restoring the quality of the environment whether it is in agriculture, industry, services or administration,

Wednesday 8 July 2015

- having regard to its resolution of 12 December 2013 on Eco-innovation — jobs and growth through environmental policy ⁽¹⁾,
 - having regard to its resolution of 15 March 2012 on a roadmap for moving to a competitive low carbon economy in 2050 ⁽²⁾,
 - having regard to its resolution of 7 September 2010 on developing the job potential of a new sustainable economy ⁽³⁾,
 - having regard to Rule 52 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs and the opinions of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety and the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (A8-0204/2015),
- A. whereas global trends such as the inefficient use of resources, the unsustainable pressure on the environment, and climate change are close to the limits beyond which irreversible impacts on our societies and the natural environment cannot be prevented and growing social exclusion and inequalities are a challenge to societies;
- B. whereas in its 2015 report the European Environment Agency has pointed out that current measures are insufficient to achieve aims related to biodiversity conservation, reduction in the use of fossil fuels, and combating climate change and averting its impact on human health and the environment;
- C. whereas the lack of a coherent policy response to tackle these common challenges risks leaving a significant part of the sustainable employment creation potential of a green and socially inclusive transition unused;
- D. whereas in response to these threats we are seeing the development of new sectors, changes within many others and the decline of some sectors such as those which are heavily polluting; whereas there is a need to focus on innovation and on ways to reduce pollution; whereas with regard to some declining sectors special attention needs to be paid to the workforce in terms of retraining and alternative employment; whereas investments in those areas prioritised under the Commission's Green Jobs agenda, including recycling, biodiversity, energy efficiency, air quality and all renewable energy technologies such as offshore renewable energy, have the potential to significantly boost job creation, including in sparsely populated areas;
- E. whereas, according to the European Environment Agency, the green goods and services sector grew by more than 50 % between 2000 and 2011, generating over 1,3 million jobs and whereas, according to the Commission's calculations, the renewable energy economy will create 20 million new jobs in Europe by 2020; whereas an ambitious and coherent EU policy and investment in renewable energies, forest management, sustainable agriculture and soil protection (to prevent and counteract hydrological instability) have the potential to significantly boost job creation;
- F. whereas the objective of sustainable development is enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty, and enforcement of this implies that environmental issues are treated at the same level as economic and social ones;
- G. whereas the EU2020 strategy to promote smart, sustainable and inclusive economies recognises the pivotal role of a transition towards green and socially fair economies;
- H. whereas labour market rigidities are impeding job creation, while a competitive EU labour market can contribute to achieving the Europe 2020 employment targets;

⁽¹⁾ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0584.

⁽²⁾ OJ C 251 E, 31.8.2013, p. 75.

⁽³⁾ OJ C 308 E, 20.10.2011, p. 6.

Wednesday 8 July 2015

- I. whereas the EU and its Member States made a commitment, at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference in Cancun in 2010, to ensure 'a just transition of the workforce that creates decent work and quality jobs'; whereas a just transition for all towards an environmentally sustainable economy needs to be well managed to contribute to the objective of sustainable and long-term employment for all — including, but not limited to, highly skilled jobs —, social inclusion and the eradication of poverty;
- J. whereas the five pillars of a 'Just transition' include: consultation/union voice; investment in green and decent jobs; green skills; respect for labour and human rights; and social protection for workers and communities on the frontline of the transition from high to low carbon;
- K. whereas strong participation by workers in the transition is essential with a view to increasing environmental consciousness and an understanding of the need for resource efficiency and decreasing our impact on the environment;
- L. whereas the potential for expansion in green jobs is hampered by a skills deficiency and mismatch caused by a number of factors, including variability of curricula in relation to sustainability, identified shortcomings in particular sectors, the lack of students with the necessary STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) and IT skills, and gender concentration in some sectors rather than gender balance;
- M. whereas there is evidence that investing in energy and resource efficiency and developing the supply chain through a clear industrial strategy, as well as shifting tax from labour to other sources, has the potential to have a positive impact on job creation;
- N. whereas Europe is engaged in global competition, and affordable energy costs, the completion of the EU's internal market and an improved investment climate for sustainable growth and the creation of jobs play a decisive role;
- O. whereas certain sectors, such as energy-efficient building renovation, are site-specific and cannot be offshored or relocated;
- P. whereas uncertainty and a lack of coherence in policy direction and an absence of clear goals hinders investment, skills development, R&D and thus frustrates the development of employment opportunities;
- Q. whereas a greater societal awareness of the importance of the need for a green economy would enhance employment possibilities;
- R. whereas clear, fixed, mid- to long-term targets, including the EU energy efficiency and pollution targets, can be important drivers of change, and whereas EU regulation also has an important role to play in this regard; whereas targeted investment, including in the development of supply chains within the EU, leading to job creation should stem from, and be consistent with, a clear policy framework;
- S. whereas the public sector and local and regional authorities can play a pivotal role in facilitating the transitions to a green economy and creating inclusive labour markets;
- T. whereas the Ecolabel, EMAS, GPP and similar schemes help to create green jobs;
- U. whereas micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises are one of the most important generators of employment in the EU, account for considerably more than 80 % of all jobs and have led the way in many 'green' sectors, but may face particular difficulties in anticipating the skills needed and in fulfilling the job potential;
- V. whereas the Integrated Guidelines are a key aspect of the coordination of Member States' economic and employment policies and form the basis of country-specific recommendations, and whereas they should underpin the Europe 2020 objectives, notably the employment target, inter alia by promoting quality job creation including through green employment;

Wednesday 8 July 2015

- W. whereas women must benefit equally from the creation of suitable green jobs, and the 'glass ceiling' must be broken through;
- X. whereas women are disproportionately hit by the crisis and by austerity policies, and whereas green jobs have shown themselves to be more crisis-resistant than others;
- Y. whereas low-carbon sectors tend to have higher labour productivity, and wage shares have fallen less in these sectors than in the top 15 emitting industries;
- Z. whereas Eurobarometer data on green work in SMEs show that energy saving, waste reduction and lowering raw material consumption are measures which have come to be economically advantageous;

Towards a green economy — opportunities for the labour market

1. Emphasises that a transition towards sustainable societies and economies, including sustainable patterns of consumption and production, can generate the potential both to create new quality jobs and to transform existing employment into green jobs in virtually all sectors and across the entire value chain: from research to production, distribution and servicing, and in new green high-tech sectors such as renewable energies, as well as in traditional industries like manufacturing and construction, or in agriculture and fisheries, or service sectors such as tourism, catering, transport and education; at the same time stresses that, in addition to creating a large number of jobs, investment in renewable energies and energy efficiency contributes to maintaining Europe's economic and industrial competitiveness and to reducing Europe's energy dependency;
2. Stresses that two thirds of the services provided by nature, including fertile land and clean water and air, are in decline, and global warming and biodiversity loss are close to the limits beyond which irreversible impacts on our societies and the natural environment cannot be prevented;
3. Points out that continuous economic growth is possible only if it takes into account the limitations of the environment; highlights, in this context, the fact that a green and circular economy can provide solutions for the environment as well as for the economy and for society in general;
4. Highlights the fact that full implementation of environmental legislation, as well as the improvement of environmental integration and policy coherence across different sectorial policies in the EU, are essential for a full deployment of the potential linked to the green economy and therefore for the creation of green jobs;
5. Notes that in its 2015 report the European Environment Agency points out that current measures are insufficient to achieve aims related to conserving biodiversity, reducing the use of fossil fuels, and combating climate change and averting its impact on human health and the quality of the environment;
6. Notes that the transition bears significant potential to create local jobs which cannot be relocated, and in areas which cannot be offshored, and in sectors hit by the crisis such as the buildings sector; notes that there is strong evidence that the green transition will, on balance, have a positive impact on employment, reflecting the fact that sustainable economic activities like saving energy or farming organically are more labour-intensive than the activities they replace and could have the potential to enable regions to become more self-sufficient;
7. Considers that an agreed definition of 'green jobs', based on that of the ILO and the International Conference of Statisticians, should be adopted;

Just transition and creation of quality and sustainable jobs

8. Welcomes the Commission's statement that restructuring should be handled in a socially responsible way, while at the same time recognising the need for companies to innovate and restructure;

Wednesday 8 July 2015

9. Believes it is crucial, in order to maximise the net job potential of the green economy, that we provide our existing workforce with proper opportunities to acquire the new skills needed for the circular economy;

10. Calls on the Member States to encourage policies aimed at protecting and upgrading public buildings in order to increase energy efficiency and reduce consumption;

11. Calls on the Member States, and the Commission where appropriate, to commit to a 'just transition roadmap' to pursue ambitious environmental goals with the promotion of the following aspects: adequate social protection and remuneration, long-term jobs and healthy and safe working conditions, government-led investment in education, training and skills programmes, respect for labour rights and the strengthening of worker information, consultation and participation rights regarding matters concerning sustainable development, and effective workforce representation; calls on the Member States to pursue these goals;

12. Recalls that the revised EU Health and Safety Strategy should take account of specific developments in new sectors where appropriate;

13. Stresses that anticipating change in employment requires proactive transformation management and improved high-quality data collection on the current and future needs of the labour market, with the involvement of European higher-education institutions, and that long-term planning is essential for ensuring an effective transition and increased employment; stresses the important role played by local and regional authorities in the transition to the greener economy in education, infrastructure, supporting local businesses and creating stable employment with salaries governed by collective agreements or other permitted means in accordance with national legislation; whereas social dialogue is an essential element of transformation management; calls on the Commission, Member States, regional and local governments and social partners to assume their responsibility and tackle this challenge collectively, taking into account the principle of subsidiarity;

14. Notes that the role of the social partners in the transition to green jobs has been gradually increasing in recent years, but recalls that more needs to be done to build a lasting and sustainable social dialogue that can help to meet the challenges posed by the move to a competitive, low-carbon, resource-efficient economy;

15. Highlights the importance of national governments in promoting sectorial social dialogue, especially in newly emerging green industries, and also in ensuring the inclusion of SMEs;

16. Notes that some regions are facing more challenges than others because of the geographical concentration of energy-, resource-intensive and polluting industries, or of higher levels of poverty or unemployment; calls on the Member States and local and regional governments supported by the European Union to collaborate with the social partners and collectively implement just transition roadmaps, including solidarity mechanisms for a socially fair, green transition of the local and regional economies, while supporting communities and workers affected by change and thereby reducing insecurity due to job displacement and ensuring that demands for new job skills are met;

17. Highlights the fact that local authorities can play a key role in promoting job growth in the green economy and more decent and inclusive jobs by:

- green investment,
- leveraging the power of public procurement, including the use of social and environmental clauses in public procurement,
- creating partnerships, including with training institutions, to improve the job/skills match on local labour markets,
- supporting both green SMEs and greening of SMEs,
- setting up inclusive green employment programmes that ensure that vulnerable groups will also capitalise on green growth;

Wednesday 8 July 2015

18. Points to the evidence that emphasises the importance of management's engagement with the workforce to ensure substantial participation by them in achieving these changes through social partnership; recommends the involvement of trade union 'green representatives' working with employers on strengthening the greening of the economy and increasing sustainability at their workplaces; calls on the Member States to provide targeted support for joint worker/employer initiatives for greening industries;

19. Considers that pilot projects in support of certain of these objectives should be developed;

20. Welcomes the Commission's commitment to using the Targeted Mobility Schemes under the Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) to promote labour mobility of jobseekers;

Skills for green employment

21. Welcomes the tools for skills development and the forecasting of skill needs proposed by the Commission; highlights the fact that skills development should encourage the development of STEM skills, which are widely useful in an economy; stresses, however, that more ambitious action and investment is needed; believes that in order to anticipate future skills needs, all labour market stakeholders must be strongly involved at all levels;

22. Calls on the Member States to work with the Commission to set up a data bank listing training courses and job offers related to green employment, with the aim of improving the quality of information, advice and guidance available on careers and the skills needed to capitalise on employment opportunities provided by the greening of the economy;

23. Calls on the Commission to ensure that data collection is carried out in all green sectors, including those that are currently neglected, such as public transport and the retail sector; asks the Commission, while providing support to national statistical offices and Public Employment Services (PES), and while reinforcing the use of quantitative modelling tools, to incorporate a gender equality perspective in data collection on all green employment sectors;

24. Asks the Commission to include a gender perspective in the development of new data collection, disaggregation and analysis, such as work carried out with the econometrical tool FIDELIO or with stakeholders such as the International Conference of Labour Statisticians;

25. Stresses the need for a greater emphasis on bridging the skills gap through fostering skills development;

26. Calls on the Commission to help foster skills development through the updating of qualifications and corresponding education and training curricula at EU level;

27. Calls on the Commission to emphasise greater use of classification systems such as ESCO which can be used to identify skills gaps;

28. Emphasises the importance of better synergies between education systems and emerging new green jobs through better coordination between educational institutions and employers' unions and other relevant organisations;

29. Calls on the Member States, regional governments and local authorities to adopt and implement, together with the social partners and training providers, skill development and anticipation strategies with the objective of improving generic, sectoral and occupation-specific skills; further stresses the importance of partnerships and trust between educational institutions, businesses, the social partners and authorities;

30. Notes that these strategies should include a thorough assessment of the type and level of green jobs to be created and the required skills and knowledge, leading to the anticipation and identification of skills gaps and targeted vocational and lifelong training programmes focusing on matching skills and jobs with the aim of increasing employment; stresses the need to actively include in the strategies both displaced workers and low-skilled workers at risk of being excluded from the labour market, by ensuring that skills training is targeted, accessible and free for these workers;

Wednesday 8 July 2015

31. Notes that CEDEFOP proposes that adapting curricula and including environmental awareness, with an understanding of sustainable development and business efficiency, is better than proposing new training programmes;

32. Encourages the Member States and regional and local authorities to integrate sustainable development and environmental competences and skills into training and education systems, in particular by strengthening VET (vocational education and training) systems and by encouraging research centres to develop technologies, projects and patents for green products, in collaboration with new green companies; encourages exchanges of ideas between research centres and networks of companies and professionals; recalls the importance of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) skills and the need to ensure that more women study STEM subjects;

33. Calls for an ambitious strategy for creating sustainable jobs, including by addressing the skills mismatch with a particular focus on meeting the skills needs of a greener economy;

34. Urges the Member States to take advantage of the development of this sector, to create highly skilled apprenticeships to provide young people with specialised knowledge and training, and to help tackle the high levels of youth unemployment;

35. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to take into account, when making the transition to the green economy, the needs of women and girls for better lifelong learning opportunities, especially in fields which have a high potential for providing a significant number of new green jobs, such as science, research, engineering, digital technology and new technologies, with the aim of strengthening women's position in society, removing gender stereotypes and providing jobs which correspond fully to the particular needs and skills of women;

36. Invites the Commission, the Member States and regional and local authorities systematically to include a gender equality perspective in the definition, implementation and monitoring of green job creation policies at all levels, with a view to ensuring that equal opportunities are guaranteed, taking into account the challenges of green job creation in rural areas; encourages the Member States and regional and local authorities to make further efforts to enable women to participate fully in policy formulation, decision-making and the implementation of a green employment strategy that includes green skills;

37. Asks the Commission to open a public debate on, and to promote the concept of, 'education for sustainable development', with special emphasis on the education of girls and women; calls on the Member States and the Commission to promote policies to encourage higher participation of women in education in STEM subjects and entrepreneurship, and to connect the green jobs agenda to the empowerment of women through education; calls for measures encouraging women's participation in VET and life-long learning opportunities in green sectors;

38. Calls on the Commission to adopt a Europe 2015-2020 strategy for gender equality that takes into account the Europe 2020 strategy's employment rate targets for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth;

39. Stresses the need for targeted action by public authorities and services to involve all labour market stakeholders, including employers' and employees' organisations, to bridge the skills gap; calls on the Member States and regional and local authorities to have mechanisms in place to train staff in employment authorities and services to mainstream skills for green employment in labour market policies and to develop the means of assessing the impact of such training; stresses the importance of European education institutions aligning their programmes with the needs of the green economy and the labour market in general;

40. Calls on the Member States to put in place a regulatory environment that encourages innovation in the green economy;

Policy coherence to fully develop the job potential of sustainable economies

41. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to adopt ambitious, long-term and integrated regulatory, fiscal and financial frameworks for sustainable investment and to encourage innovation, thereby fully unlocking the employment potential of these changes; emphasises that policies should be developed in a framework of long-term horizons that includes targets as well as indicators to measure progress towards their achievement;

Wednesday 8 July 2015

42. Stresses that coordination across the Commission and across relevant ministries at national level is important in order to create a comprehensive, whole-of-government framework for change that is capable of devoting the required attention to the distributional effects of the transition;

43. Notes that the success or failure of the Green Employment Initiative is dependent on the level of ambition of the Commission's binding targets to renewable energy and energy efficiency, and on investment in renewable energy technology and energy efficiency programmes committed to by the Member States;

44. Stresses that the Commission and the Member States are responsible for consistent policies that promote renewable energy production and increased energy efficiency with a view to triggering local and regional development and creating quality local jobs; stresses that investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency can become one of the main sources of job creation in Europe in the coming years;

45. Points out that territorial self-sufficiency in energy remains one of the EU's long-term economic and energy policy goals; maintains, moreover, that the territorial dimension of investment must, without fail, be taken into account, given that it helps to achieve the EU's territorial cohesion policy aims to connect cities and the countryside;

46. Welcomes the Commission's inclusion of decent jobs in the EU negotiating mandate for the COP 21 Paris talks, building on the Cancun agreement of 2010 and subsequent initiatives; calls on the Commission to ensure that the 'just transition' agenda remains part of its negotiating position;

47. Calls on the EU and the Member States to set mandatory energy-saving and efficiency targets, and to support white certificates as an instrument to facilitate the achievement of EU energy-saving targets; calls on the Member States to implement fully, and to enforce, the Energy Efficiency Directive and to remain committed to achieving, as a minimum, the 2030 energy efficiency targets;

48. Supports EU commitments to pushing for a just global transition to an inclusive green economy in collaboration with other international partners;

49. Calls on the Member States to fully respect and implement the new provisions of the revised EU legislation on public procurement, and to consider examining whether the introduction of environmental and social criteria in public procurement policies could boost job creation in the greener economy; stresses that remaining legal uncertainties related to use of the social and environmental clauses in public procurement could be clarified;

50. Calls on the Commission to help revive the repairs sector, which would lead to the creation of new jobs that are by their very nature environmentally friendly;

51. Calls on the Member States to support the contribution of public services to the just transition towards a sustainable economy, notably by proactively ensuring that services such as communications, energy, transport, waste and water management are delivered in a sustainable way;

52. Expresses strong disappointment at the withdrawal of the circular economy legislative package, the provisions of which would have been expected to create up to 180 000 jobs in the EU waste management sector alone; calls on the Commission, therefore, while respecting the responsibilities of the Member States, to honour its commitment to proposing, as soon as possible, ambitious waste legislation to cover upstream reduction, new recycling targets, and redefinition of the criteria for calculating the quantity of material actually recycled;

53. Calls on the Commission, moreover, to consider introducing criteria to provide incentives for companies which have a virtuous and environmentally sustainable waste disposal cycle;

54. Recognises that linking sustainable agricultural production with the monitoring and protection of on-farm biodiversity and, subsequently, the use of smart labelling for agricultural products to mark their environmental impact, in order to stimulate consumer demand for biodiversity-friendly produce, represents a significant potential for green employment in EU rural areas;

Wednesday 8 July 2015

55. Notes that sustainable forest management has real potential to create jobs while actively contributing to climate change mitigation and the protection of biodiversity;

56. Calls on the Commission to use the EU Semester and the review of the Europe 2020 strategy to support green job creation; calls on the Commission to issue country-specific recommendations that can contribute to higher employment and smaller ecological footprints, and calls for detailed independent studies on the costs and benefits of a shift in tax burdens (e.g. from labour to environmental taxation), as well as the phasing-out of subsidies by 2020;

57. Stresses that such recommendations could include a shift from labour to other sources, and that such a tax shift should aim to change polluting behaviour, but must not have unwanted repercussions on social security systems or impact disproportionately on those on low incomes;

58. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to phase out direct and indirect environmentally harmful subsidies including, but not limited to, those for fossil fuels; invites the Commission to develop models that can be implemented by Member States for shifting taxation from labour to environmental pollution, and to take into account the environmental impact of goods and services in the spirit of the polluter pays principle; calls on the Commission to issue country-specific recommendations to the Member States that can contribute to efforts to foster green employment and reduce ecological footprints; calls, furthermore, on the Commission to integrate in a proactive manner environmental and climate-related considerations into the European Semester in order to support green jobs creation;

59. Invites the Member States to introduce targeted subsidies and/or tax exemptions for start-ups, and for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, that provide goods and services offering high environmental added value, including overall reduced carbon content;

60. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to show greater coherence and cohesion in their policies and to make more substantial political commitments at the highest level in related areas such as tax on financial transactions and the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion;

61. Calls on the Commission to renew its commitment to the Europe 2020 strategy and to issue its mid-term review without delay and at the latest by 2015; calls on the Commission to reconfirm the targets in the European Semester, taking into account the scoreboard for macroeconomic imbalances and the review of the Europe 2020 strategy; calls on the Commission to propose more ambitious social and environmental targets for 2030 and 2050; stresses that accurate, methodologically grounded and shared monitoring of green jobs could also help Member States in assessing the effectiveness of their environmental and labour policies, and strengthen the tools developed at European level to track the progress of, and monitor, the Employment Guidelines under Europe 2020;

62. Stresses the opportunities that the 2030 Climate and Energy package provides in job creation and the future role that environmental legislation will play in achieving the EU's long-term environmental goals and in creating jobs and green growth;

63. Calls on the Commission to look upon innovation as the cornerstone of Europe's industry and to develop active strategies to ensure that social transitions are well managed and benefits are spread across all of Europe; calls on the Commission and the Member States to support the emergence of new supply chains and industry networks in resource efficiency, goods and services through a sustainable industrial policy and market transformation incentives;

64. Underlines the need for the Member States to prepare their economies for a low-carbon, resource- and energy-efficient future, while taking account of the possible risk of job relocation and carbon leakage due to the impact of climate policies;

65. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to step up international efforts to create a global environmental policy that can limit the damage caused by offshoring of industrial production outside the EU and by carbon leakage;

66. Calls on the Commission to present its proposal to reform the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) as soon as possible, taking into account the need to protect industries exposed to a significant risk of 'carbon leakage';

Wednesday 8 July 2015

67. Calls on the Commission to address green employment in the implementation of the Energy Union;

Investing in sustainable job creation

68. Highlights the fact that there is a need to apply the right mix of supply- and demand-side interventions, which comes from combining job creation with matching active labour-market policies, specific to the needs of different local labour markets;

69. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to promote, including in the framework of the European Fund for Strategic Investments, quality investments geared towards generating societal and economic benefits such as sustainable quality jobs, gender equality, quality education and innovation to promote the green transition and to fight energy poverty; calls on the Commission and the Member States to focus investment in areas with positive labour market impact with the aims of creating sustainable jobs with full social protection and fighting unemployment; stresses that the projects financed shall contribute to the EU 2020 strategy in a measurable way; points out, in this context, that job creation in the green sectors has remained positive throughout the recession;

70. Highlights the fact that investing in energy efficiency can promote local job creation and local economic development and reduce energy poverty, and that ensuring energy efficiency in buildings is the most cost-effective way of offering long-term solutions to energy poverty, which affects some 125 million people in Europe, and an important element in ensuring more efficient use of European energy and creating green jobs; reiterates that ensuring the safety of buildings is also crucial in this regard; invites the Commission to present its 'Smart Financing for Smart Buildings' initiative as soon as possible;

71. Recommends that climate, renewable energy and energy efficiency targets should be considered investment targets and key principles for political action;

72. Warns against supporting activities that carry adverse environmental and social impacts as they undermine the policy coherence necessary to maximise the employment potential of green jobs;

73. Recommends that quality investment in key public services such as communications, energy, transport, waste and water management are targeted in order to support sustainable public-procurement procedures and the mainstreaming of green skills;

74. Calls on the Member States to make full use of the possibilities under the legal framework for the European Structural and Investment Funds and other sources of EU funding to promote sustainable projects that foster green employment, and to make EU funding and financial instruments as easily accessible as possible for local authorities, with clear, straightforward rules and reachable minimum funding thresholds;

75. Encourages the Commission and the Member States to use the 2016 post-electoral revision of the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) as an opportunity to promote the greener transition of our economies;

76. Notes that ESF support is available to help support green economic and employment growth and encourages national governments and the relevant national services to consider using this financing more actively in order to promote the creation of economically justified and economically sustainable green jobs;

77. Notes that some Member States have made considerable progress in the greening of the economy, and encourages the Union and the Member States to foster the sharing of ideas, knowledge, experience, and best practices in this area so as to ensure a smooth transition;

78. Urges the Member States and the private sector to use instruments such as Ecodesign, Ecolabel, EMAS and green public procurement (GPP), as they can support the green economy and thus contribute to the creation of green jobs; calls on the Commission to provide guidance tools to create favourable market conditions for the full adoption of these voluntary instruments;

79. Calls on the Member States to focus greater attention on the implementation of environmental management and eco-auditing systems based on the European standard (ISO 14000);

Wednesday 8 July 2015

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)

80. Supports the objectives of the Green Action Plan for SMEs and the SME-oriented actions, including the establishment of a European Resource Efficiency Excellence Centre to advise and assist SMEs seeking to improve their resource-efficiency performance, to support green entrepreneurship, to exploit opportunities for greener value chains and to facilitate market access for green SMEs and microenterprises; considers that awareness-raising activities and technical assistance are key to active participation by SMEs in the circular economy;

81. Recalls that SMEs have enormous potential for creating employment, in particular youth employment, and promoting a dual system of vocational training and apprenticeship schemes;

82. Recognises that the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) could help micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises to engage in activities involving a high degree of environmental and social innovation;

83. Notes that Eurobarometer data on green work in SMEs show that saving energy and reducing waste and the use of raw materials have become economically advantageous;

84. Calls on the Commission to stimulate new business models, such as cooperative enterprises, for increasing the efficiency of production and distribution processes, adopting innovative solutions to save resources and offering more sustainable products and services;

85. Points out that SMEs can only create growth and jobs if favourable incentivising opportunities are also available through the green economy;

86. Calls on the Commission to ensure that green incentives for SMEs have a meaningful impact where they are most needed;

87. Notes that SMEs and microenterprises are key drivers of job creation in Europe; stresses that SMEs and microenterprises face particular challenges when exploiting the job opportunities of a green transition, in particular regarding access to finance, training and bridging skills gaps; calls on the Commission and the Member States to take ambitious action to provide support to facilitate green job creation in SMEs and microenterprises, including targeted information, awareness raising, technical assistance and access to finance and training measures;

88. Points out that a greener value chain, which involves re-manufacturing, repair, maintenance, recycling and eco-design, can provide considerable business opportunities for many SMEs;

o

o o

89. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission, and to the governments and parliaments of the Member States.
