



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

**PRESS RELEASE**

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## **Public consultation on the Europe 2020 strategy: towards a post-crisis growth strategy for Europe**

Today, the Commission has launched a public consultation on the Europe 2020 strategy, the EU's long-term growth and jobs plan. The consultation will be open until 31 October 2014. Through this public consultation, the Commission is seeking the views of all interested people and organisations on the Europe 2020 strategy.

The aim of the consultation is to draw lessons from the first four years of the strategy and to make sure it acts as an effective post-crisis strategy for growth and jobs in Europe. It covers the scope, nature, instruments, ownership and delivery of the Europe 2020 strategy, and will provide important evidence for the mid-term review of the strategy, scheduled for 2015.

A lot has been done in recent years to assist Member States in developing their national policies. Now is the right time to take stock of Europe 2020 and to think about what its focus should be in the coming years. Not only are we approaching the halfway point of the strategy but we are also emerging from the worst crisis faced by our economies. It is also timely to examine where things stand as the EU prepares for a new political leadership following the European Parliament's elections.

### **Preparing for the public consultation**

On 5 March 2014, the Commission laid the foundations for the public consultation by publishing a Communication, '[Taking stock of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth](#)', analysing how the implementation of the strategy is advancing at EU and national level (see [MEMO/14/149](#)).

It found that progress on the 2020 targets has been mixed. The EU is on course to meet or come close to its education, climate and energy targets, but – given the magnitude of the challenges – it is off course on its employment, research and development and poverty reduction goals. However, the results and forecasts vary widely across Member States.

### **Next steps**

The Commission will draw on the contributions it receives during the public consultation when it presents proposals for the mid-term review of the Europe 2020 strategy early in 2015. This will be followed by a discussion at next year's spring European Council.

### **Background**

The Europe 2020 strategy was launched in 2010, against the background of an unprecedented crisis. It sets out a vision for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth for Europe by 2020, based on five headline targets:

- 1. To have at least 75% of people aged 20-64 in employment by 2020;*
- 2. To invest 3% of GDP in research and development by 2020;*

3. *To cut greenhouse gas emissions by at least 20%, increase the share of renewables to 20% and improve energy efficiency by 20% by 2020;*
4. *To reduce school drop-out rates to below 10% and increase the share of young people with a third-level degree or diploma to at least 40% by 2020;*
5. *To ensure that 20 million fewer people are at risk of poverty or social exclusion by 2020.*

Progress on the Europe 2020 strategy is monitored during the European Semester, the EU's calendar for coordinating economic, budgetary and social policies. The objectives of the strategy are embedded in the various steps of the European Semester, and are integrated in its priorities and in the country-specific recommendations addressed to Member States each spring.

Europe 2020 is supported by the single market, the multiannual financial framework and the EU's trade agenda. In addition, it has been buttressed by seven "flagship initiatives", which are projects in areas that are important engines for growth: A "Digital agenda for Europe", the "Innovation Union", "Youth on the move", a "Resource efficient Europe", "An industrial policy for the globalisation era", an "Agenda for new skills and jobs" and the "European platform against poverty".

The strategy was conceived as a partnership between the EU and its Member States, and its success depends on the commitment and involvement of national governments, parliaments, local and regional authorities, social partners, stakeholders and civil society. That is why it is crucial to get the views of all of those involved in the implementation of the strategy, and learn from their experiences and best practices.

#### **Further information:**

The public consultation is available through [Your Voice in Europe](#) or on the Europe 2020 website: [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/public-consultation/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/public-consultation/index_en.htm)

The March Communication, 'Taking stock of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth', is available here: [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/europe2020stocktaking\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/europe2020stocktaking_en.pdf)

Country-by-country data on Europe 2020 is available in the annexes to the March Communication: [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/europe2020stocktaking\\_annex\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/europe2020stocktaking_annex_en.pdf)

For more information on Europe 2020: [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm)

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