

Quality Jobs Act

Call for Evidence

While current Quality Jobs Act discussions address critical aspects of improving job quality, the proposed measures overlook support to quality job providers for underrepresented groups. For example, the proposed just transition measures place no emphasis on reinforcing already-existing good practices within green sectors. Lacking a dedicated inclusivity dimension, the Quality Jobs Act risks upholding strong workplace standards for a selected workforce while leaving others sidelined, exacerbating social inequalities.

Social enterprises active in reuse, repair, and recycling, provide notable examples of fostering meaningful work experiences centered around workers' unique situations and aspirations. The story of Marius, a 45-year-old worker in Romania, exemplifies the inclusive direction the Quality Jobs Act should aim for. Marius faced severe obstacles to employment, including dropping out of school in the eighth grade, serving a custodial sentence, substance use, homelessness, debt, and a mental illness diagnosis at age 28.

In July 2023, he joined **Ateliere Fara Frontiere (AFF)**, a social enterprise and RREUSE member. His worker experience with AFF started first and foremost with securing housing and medical treatment before building a work routine and accessing job and self-esteem counseling. Through in-house skill-building, he developed competences in electronics equipment and he is now responsible for preparing deliveries of IT equipment to at-risk schools and communities. Today, Marius lives independently and is preparing to enter the mainstream labour market. Marius' story features in [the Romanian press](#) but is a similar story of people and workers finding a lifeline in the EU social economy.

Yet, despite fulfilling the core Pillars outlined in the Roadmap, the specialised model of social enterprises continues to lack recognition and adequate support. Even in Finland, a country with historically robust social and labour protections, recent budget cuts in social employment have endangered the operations and existence of many reuse and repair social enterprises while plunging the country into the highest unemployment rate of the Union.

The situation underscores the need for the Quality Jobs Act to guarantee support to social economy enterprises as a way to guarantee key quality jobs and training for underrepresented groups. Measures should include:

- Ensuring skill building initiatives (e.g. Union of Skills) better target underrepresented groups as they face geographic, financial, or caregiving barriers to formal education access.



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- Helping promote robust social conditionalities that recognise work integration social enterprises across policies such as public procurement, state aid, skills, and the circular economy (e.g. Public Procurement Act, General Block Exemption Regulation, and Circular Economy Act).
- Facilitate workers' transition from social economy employment into the broader labour market. The RREUSE "BuySocCirc" SMP project found that inclusive employment quota legislation in Italy and Croatia can enhance work integration for workers with disabilities, enrich workforce diversity, and reinforce opportunities for B2B cooperation. However, it remains paramount that the ultimate policy goal is to enhance future career prospects for underrepresented workers.

RREUSE is also one of the 39 signatories of the [2025 joint statement “How to Make Quality Jobs for Everyone?”](#). This statement sets out a shared vision that calls for more integrated and inclusive forms of employment and proposes standards for creating quality jobs for everyone:

- supporting more inclusive labour markets;
- advancing cooperation between social economy enterprises and inter alia social service providers and public employment services;
- setting quality job standards for workers with support needs.

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