



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL POLICY & HEALTH



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... from the Parliament

**Commission presidency:
Parliament will vote next week on José Manuel Barroso**

MEPs will vote on Wednesday 16th September on whether to appoint José Manuel Barroso for a second term as President of the European Commission.

The Conference of Presidents – the leaders of Parliament’s political groups and the President of Parliament – confirmed that the vote would be held when they adopted the final draft agenda of next week’s parliamentary session in Strasbourg.

European Parliament President Jerzy Buzek said:

"The meeting of the Conference of Presidents came to a clear decision, which sends a strong signal to the citizens of Europe. In this time of economic crisis, we cannot afford to continue in a political vacuum. We need to be able to move forward, deciding whether or not Mr Barroso will be Commission President for the next five years. Mr Barroso will now seek the support of a majority of MEPs in the vote next Wednesday in Strasbourg. His 'political guidelines' and discussion with the individual political groups have been widely appreciated by MEPs and set an important precedent for the future."

Mr Barroso will debate his plans for a possible second term in office with Parliament on Tuesday. The vote on whether to elect him as Commission President will take place the following day at midday.



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... from the Commission

Health and Safety at Work

COM (2009) 449 - REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS on the practical implementation of Health and Safety at Work Directives 92/91/EEC (mineral extraction through drilling) and 92/104/EEC (surface and underground mineral extraction).

This assessment covers the transposition and implementation, in EU-15 only, of two Directives, namely [Council Directive 92/91/EEC](#) of 3rd November 1992, concerning the minimum requirements for improving the safety and health protection of workers in the mineral-extracting industries through drilling and [Council Directive 92/104/EEC](#) of 3rd December 1992, on the minimum requirements for improving the safety and health protection of workers in surface and underground mineral-extracting industries. The Commission is of the opinion that this assessment may also provide useful information on the application of the Directives for the 12 Member States that have meanwhile joined the EU.

The extractive industries do not fall within the scope of [Directive 89/654/EEC](#) concerning the minimum safety and health requirements for the workplace (first individual directive within the meaning of Article 16(1) of Directive 89/391/EEC). Workers in the sector are likely to be exposed to particularly high levels of risk, so there are separate specific provisions for them, in two individual directives (Directives 92/91/EEC and 92/104/EEC) within the meaning of Article 16(1) of Directive 89/391/EEC on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work.

Social Europe e-newsletter

A new e-mail newsletter on employment, social affairs and equal opportunities has been launched by the European Commission.

The newsletter includes information about policy developments, funding opportunities, new publications and events. Subscribers can choose how often to receive the updates and which policy areas they want to be informed about.

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... Eurostat

Population growth slowing and life expectancy increasing in the Euro-Mediterranean region, 2000-2007

Between the years 2000 and 2007, the population in the nine Mediterranean partner countries (MPCs) grew faster than in the EU-27 (13% compared with 2.6%). Over the same period, the population of Turkey increased by 9.3%. Growth rates varied widely among the MPCs, with annual rates of well over 2% in the occupied Palestinian territory and Jordan, and virtually nil in Lebanon.

Patterns of crude birth and death rates were broadly consistent with that of population growth, with high birth rates in the MPCs compared to a low birth rate coupled with a relatively high death rate in the EU-27.

Apart from Israel, life expectancy was lower in the MPCs and Turkey than in the EU-27 (although this indicator improved in all countries over the period 2000-2007).

The proportion of the population in the three age groups (under 15, 15-64, and 65 and over) varied greatly with, for example, 46% of Palestinians in the youngest group compared with 16% in the EU-27.

Report



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... Eurofound

Real pay plummets in all but four EU Member States in 2008

Eurofound published its annual [report](#) on pay developments across the European Union.

The average real wage increase for European workers fell from 3.6% in 2007 to 1.3% in 2008, according to new data published by Eurofound's European Industrial Relations Observatory (EIRO). The annual update on pay developments in Europe 2008 recorded sizeable differences between EU Member States, with the rate of real increase falling sharply, and the nominal rate dropping only slightly. Wide differences emerge, however, between the various groups of countries within the EU, in terms of the level of real wage increases, with a broad east-west split.

Collective bargaining remains one of the primary tools for setting pay levels in Europe. The new report, which covers pay developments in the 27 EU Member States (EU27) and Norway in 2008, found the average collectively agreed nominal pay increase in the EU as a whole fell from 7% in 2007 to 6.6% in 2008. Nominal increases in the EU15 are at much lower levels than in the EU as a whole, with the average pay rise standing at 3.2% in 2007 and 3.8% in 2008. In the 12 new EU Member States (NMS12), the average rate of nominal increase is considerably higher, at 11.6% in 2007 and 10.1% in 2008. However, the difference in pay increases between the EU15 and the NMS12 narrowed from 2007 to 2008 – average pay rises in the NMS12 were 3.6 times higher than in EU15 in 2007 and 2.7 times higher in 2008.

When the sharp inflation increases across the EU27 in 2008 are taken into account, the rate of real increase is seen to have fallen from 3.6% in 2007 to 1.3% in 2008. This decline in real pay increases of 2.3 percentage points compares with a decrease of only 0.4 percentage points in nominal pay increases. In the EU15, the average real pay increase stood at 1% in 2007 and fell to 0.3% in 2008 – and at 1.3% and 0.5% respectively, if Norway is included. In the NMS12, the average real pay increase was considerably higher than in the EU15, at 6.9% in 2007 and 2.4% in 2008.

In terms of trends in real pay rises, the rate of increase, following the average trend, fell between 2007 and 2008 in all but four countries: Germany, Greece, Hungary and the Netherlands. The rate of increase declined most sharply in Estonia, Latvia and Romania.

The report also examines collectively-agreed pay increases in three selected sectors (metalworking, banking and local government), current wage rates and minimum wage increases, increases in average earnings, and the extent of the gender pay gap across all countries.

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