



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL POLICY & HEALTH

Sectoral Committee

Weekly Update

04.06.10



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... Council

3019th session of the Council of the European Union EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL POLICY, HEALTH AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS 7 and 8 June 2010

The Council in charge of employment, social policy, health and consumer affairs will meet on 7 and 8 June, focusing on social and employment policy issues on the first day and on health policy during the second day.

Monday 7 June

Employment and Social Policy

As a contribution to the June European Council meeting, the Council will hold a policy debate on the Europe 2020 strategy and try to agree on indicators for the EU target on social inclusion and reach a general approach on the guidelines for the employment policies of the member states for implementing the Europe 2020 strategy. The Council will be briefed by the presidents of the Employment Committee and of the Social Protection Committee on their contribution to the Europe 2020 strategy. The Council will be informed by the Commission on the national targets for employment and social inclusion as well as on poverty reduction.

The Council is expected to reach a political agreement on a draft regulation extending the EU rules on the coordination of social security entitlements to nationals of third countries. It will take note of a presidency progress report on a draft directive implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

Furthermore, the Council will endorse the opinion of the social protection committee on "Solidarity in Health: reducing health inequalities in the EU" and adopt conclusions on the interim joint report of the Economic Policy Committee (EPC) and the Social Protection Committee (SPC) on pensions.

The Council will also adopt conclusions on the following topics of employment and social policy:

- new skills for new jobs;
- sustainable social security systems achieving adequate pensions and social inclusion objectives;
- active ageing;
- advancing Roma inclusion.



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Tuesday 8 June

Health and Consumer Affairs

In public deliberation, health ministers will try to reach a political agreement on a draft directive on patients' rights in cross-border healthcare. The draft directive aims to facilitate the access to high quality health services for patients who decide to seek healthcare in another EU member state and to promote cooperation on healthcare between member states.

The ministers will hold a policy debate on a draft regulation on the provision of food information to consumers.

Furthermore, the Council is expected to adopt two sets of conclusions on:

- equity and health in all policies: solidarity in health;
- action to reduce population salt intake for better health.

... Commission

Digital Agenda: ICT solutions to help elderly to live more independently

A high-level panel established to advise the European Commission on the functioning of The Ambient Assisted Living joint programme (AAL JP), has launched a consultation inviting citizens, businesses and researchers to share ideas on how best to use information and communications technologies (ICTs). The consultation is aimed at helping older Europeans live more independently, and to establish new ways to put ICTs at the service of the most vulnerable members of society. The public consultation is the first step towards meeting the target of doubling the take-up of independent living arrangements for the elderly by 2015 set by the Digital Agenda.

The Ambient Assisted Living joint programme, which involves both the European Commission and EU Member States, aims to ensure that ICTs permit a more independent and dignified life for elderly people who are socially isolated, suffer from chronic conditions or have disabilities. The programme aims at developing new solutions to deal with problems that elderly people face, such as preventing falls and supporting sufferers of dementia. Such applications improve older and vulnerable people's quality of life, keep down the cost of social and health care and open new market opportunities for Europe's industry and service providers.

Examples of Ambient Assisted Living research projects include, for example, 'eldercare social robots' which can help perform daily tasks such as lifting or cooking, or set off an alarm if an in-built camera registers that a person has fallen. Another example is a 'smart home' environment, where smart cameras interpret the activities of people and can communicate changes in their behaviour to emergency centres.



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The AAL JP brings together 20 EU Member States (Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the UK), three associated countries (Israel, Norway and Switzerland) and the European Commission. It supports solutions that can be launched on the market in two to three years and become commercially viable. This brings new business opportunities and huge savings in the cost of social and health care. For example, telecare solutions can cut the costs of home care services by up to 30%.

The consultation runs until 1 July 2010.

Public consultation available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/einclusion/research/aal/interim_review/index_en.htm

Ambient Assisted Living joint programme (AAL JP)

<http://www.aal-europe.eu/>

Health-EU Newsletter Issue 51

Your health – wherever you live
3 June 2010

In this Issue:

- News from the EU
- Forthcoming events
- New publications

http://ec.europa.eu/health-eu/newsletter/51/newsletter_en.htm

...Parliament

Better access to jobs market for young people

A "European Youth Guarantee" enabling young people not to be unemployed for over six months, a decent income and good quality traineeships were among the proposals made by Parliament's Employment and Social Affairs Committee this week as part of efforts to improve access to the labour market for young people.



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European Youth Guarantee

The Committee is proposing that the Council and Commission devise a "European Youth Guarantee" to give every young person in the EU the right to a job, an apprenticeship, further training or a job combined with training, if they have been out of work for six months.

Decent income

MEPs call on Member States to guarantee young people a decent income so they can be financially independent. The Committee says some national laws could be seen as discriminatory, as they prevent young people from being financially independent. For example, the minimum wage in the UK, which is lower for young people, the limited access to the "active solidarity income" in France and the reduction in unemployment benefit for young people in Denmark.

European Quality Charter on Traineeships

The resolution emphasises that traineeships are part of an education and must not replace real jobs. MEPs call on the Commission and Council to set up a "European Quality Charter on Traineeships" to ensure their educational value and avoid exploitation. Among other things, this charter should lay down time limits on internships, a minimum allowance based on standard of living costs of the place where the internship takes place and social security benefits.

... Eurostat

April 2010

Euro area unemployment rate at 10.1%

In April 2010, the euro area seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate was 10.1%, compared with 10.0% in March. It was 9.2% in April 2009. The EU27 unemployment rate was 9.7% in April 2010, the same as in March. It was 8.7% in April 2009.

Among the Member States, the lowest unemployment rates were recorded in the Netherlands (4.1%) and Austria (4.9%), and the highest rates in Latvia (22.5%), Spain (19.7%) and Estonia (19.0%).

Compared to a year ago, one Member State recorded a fall in the unemployment rate and twenty-six recorded an increase. The fall was observed in Germany (with 0.5%), and the smallest increases in Luxembourg and Malta (with 0.1%). The highest increases were registered in Estonia (11.0% to 19.0%), Latvia (15.4% to 22.5%) and Lithuania (11.2% to 17.4%).

In the USA, the unemployment rate was 9.9% in April 2010. In Japan it was 5.0% in March 2010.