



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

# EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL POLICY & HEALTH

Sectoral Committee

Weekly Update

**11.06.10**



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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 held a policy debate on the Europe 2020 strategy and agreed on an EU target on social inclusion and appropriate indicators, as a contribution to the European Council meeting of June. It also reached a general approach on the guidelines for the employment policies of the member states for implementing the Europe 2020 strategy.

#### **Council conclusions on Europe 2020 Strategy**

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/114996.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/114996.pdf)

#### **Employment and Social Policy**

The Council adopted 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.

#### **Council conclusions on "New Skills for New Jobs: the way forward"**

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/114962.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/114962.pdf)

#### **Council conclusions on "Sustainable social security systems achieving adequate pensions and social inclusion objectives"**

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/114960.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/114960.pdf)

#### **Council conclusions on Active Ageing**

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/114968.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/114968.pdf)

#### **Council conclusions on advancing Roma Inclusion**

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/114966.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/114966.pdf)

Furthermore, the Council:

- Adopted a resolution on the new European Disability Framework 2010-2020; **Resolution of the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member states, meeting within the Council, on a new European Disability Framework.**

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/114970.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/114970.pdf)

- Agreed on a draft regulation extending the EU rules on the coordination of social security entitlements to nationals of third countries.



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### Health

The Council agreed on a draft directive concerning patients' rights in cross-border healthcare (see article below).

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

Furthermore, the Council adopted two sets of conclusions on:

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

### Council conclusions on Equity and Health in All Policies: Solidarity in Health

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/114994.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/114994.pdf)

### Council conclusions on action to reduce population salt intake for better health

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/114998.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/114998.pdf)

## New rules for patients' rights in cross-border healthcare

**The Council agreed on a draft directive concerning the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare, on the basis of a compromise proposal of the Spanish presidency.**

The draft directive aims to facilitate the access to safe and high-quality cross-border healthcare and to promote cooperation on healthcare between member states. More specifically, the draft directive contains the following provisions:

- as a general rule, patients will be allowed to receive healthcare in another member state and be reimbursed according to the level of the same or similar treatment in their national health system;
- in cases of serious national situations a member state may limit the application of the rules on reimbursement for cross-border healthcare;
- the cooperation between member states in the field of healthcare is strengthened, for example in the field of e-health and through the development of European reference networks which will bring together, on a voluntary basis, specialised centres in different member states;
- sales of medicinal products and medical devices via internet, long-term care services provided in residential homes and the access and allocation of organs for the purpose of transplantation fall outside the scope of the draft directive.

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/114992.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/114992.pdf)



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## **Maternity and pension benefits for self-employed workers**

**A draft Directive on self-employed workers and assisting spouses, agreed with the European Parliament and endorsed by the EU Member States, improves the social protection rights of millions of women in the labour market, boosting female entrepreneurship. The Directive gives better protection to self-employed workers and their partners – including the right to maternity leave for the first time.**

Once adopted, the legislation will provide equivalent access to maternity leave as for employees, but on a voluntary basis. At EU level, this is the first time a maternity allowance has been granted to self-employed workers. The new rules will also serve to promote entrepreneurship in general and among women in particular. There is a currently a major gender gap in this area – only 30% of entrepreneurs in Europe are women.

Finally, as a step forward from existing legislation, assisting spouses will have the right to social security coverage (such as pensions) on an equal basis as formal self-employed workers. This will help to provide a stronger social safety net and to stop women from falling into poverty.

As far as employees are concerned, the EU recently adopted a new Directive improving the right to parental leave and the Commission's proposal for a revised Directive on maternity leave is currently in first reading by the European Parliament.

The Council of Ministers is now expected to formally adopt the legislation on 24 June 2010. EU countries will then have two years to introduce it into national law. Where justified by particular difficulties, they may have an additional period of two years to implement the provisions concerning assisting spouses.

### **Proposal for a Directive on equal treatment between self-employed men and women**

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=608&langId=en>



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## **... Commission**

### **Public consultation on children's rights**

**The European Commission has just launched a public consultation on a new EU children's rights strategy. The answers will be used to find out how EU policies can do more to promote children's rights. The consultation will cover issues like child-friendly justice, violence against children, child poverty and child participation.**

Protecting the rights of children in daily life requires a different approach than for adults: whether it is a child participating at a trial, involved in a family dispute, dealing with public administrations, or facing challenging situations like migration, violence or poverty. To know what their rights are and to have them respected, an EU-wide strategy can provide good guidance and useful input. The EU and its Member States want to ensure that children get care and protection and that their voice is heard.

In 2006 the Commission launched a strategy on the rights of the child to make sure EU policies promote children's rights. This public consultation aims to improve and find new potential actions for the re-launch of the strategy for the period 2011-2014. As usual, it will draw on the experience of citizens and organisations, associations, bodies, institutions, and experts who deal with the protection and promotion of children's rights from local to international level.

The consultation is looking at specific areas – identified by people working in the field at the Forum for the Rights of the Child – where children might face problems such as:

- Child-friendly justice and children's participation in the justice system (as witnesses, for example);
- Justice policies safeguarding children's rights, such as in the framework of family mediation;
- Protecting vulnerable groups of children (victims of violence, sexual exploitation or trafficking, or children living in poverty);
- Child participation in the development of policies affecting children.

The Commission will publish a report summarising all the contributions received through this consultation. It will use the results when drafting a new Communication on the Rights of the Child to cover the period 2011-2014. **The consultation is open until 20 August 2010.**

**Public Consultation on the Commission's Communication on the Rights of the Child (2011-2014):**

[http://ec.europa.eu/justice\\_home/news/consulting\\_public/news\\_consulting\\_public\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/news/consulting_public/news_consulting_public_en.htm)



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## World Blood Donor Day “Celebrating the Gift of Blood” 14 June 2010

The focus of this year’s World Blood Donor Day will be on young donors - with the slogan: “New blood for the world”. The need for blood is increasing in all parts of the world. Young people can make an important contribution by donating blood and by recruiting other young people to become donors.

The aim of World Blood Donor Day is to raise global awareness of the need for safe blood and blood products for transfusion and of the critical contribution voluntary, unpaid blood donors make to national health systems.

World Blood Donor Day is also an opportunity to celebrate those who already donate blood, in response to the worldwide increase in demand for voluntary non-remunerated blood and plasma donations.

### Website

<http://wbdd.org/index.php?id=1>

## Social Agenda 23

### European Year 2010: Fighting against poverty and social exclusion



Issue 23 of Social Agenda focuses on the 2010 European Year for combating poverty and social exclusion and on the efforts deployed to address this issue across the EU. It also takes a look at women in corporate Europe and examines the reasons why they are still underrepresented in high-level positions.

### Social Agenda – Issue 23:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=737&langId=en&pubId=518&furtherPubs=yes>

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<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=740&langId=en>