



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

# EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL POLICY & HEALTH

Sectoral Committee

Weekly Update

**3.09.10**

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## ***... European Council***

### **European Council Thursday 16 September 2010**

The European Council will discuss, in the presence of foreign ministers, the EU's relations with its strategic partners, in particular with emerging countries in Asia, in the context of bilateral summits that will be held in the autumn, as well as the forthcoming G20 summit in Seoul, in November.

The European Council may adopt conclusions setting guidelines for future work in this field. The President of the European Council will report on progress achieved in the Task Force on the strengthening of economic governance, set up at the request of the European Council in March.

## ***... Commission***

### **Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy Roadmap 2**

**COM 384 (2010) COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL. The TSE Road map 2: A Strategy paper on Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies for 2010-2015.**

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0384:FIN:EN:PDF>

**Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSEs) are a family of diseases occurring in human and animals and are characterised by a degeneration of brain tissue giving a sponge-like appearance leading to death. The family includes diseases such as Creutzfeldt Jakob Disease (CJD) in humans, Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) in cattle, Scrapie in small ruminants (sheep and goats), Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in cervids.<sup>1</sup>**

The first TSE Roadmap, provided an outline of possible future changes to EU measures on TSEs while still making food safety and consumer protection the highest priority. The majority of short and medium term actions envisaged in the first TSE Roadmap have been achieved and the positive trend already observed in 2005 in the Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) epidemic has continued since then. At the same time, the impact of BSE on human health appears to be more limited than initially feared.

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<sup>1</sup> For definitions of technical terms click on <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/10/st12/st12380-ad01.en10.pdf>.



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The goal for the coming years is to continue the review of the measures while assuring a high level of food safety. Amendments to the TSE rules are and will continue to be taken following a stepwise approach supported by a solid scientific basis.

This Communication outlines the future possible amendments and the actions to be taken, allowing a review of the measures, to align them with the situation where the EU is finally on the last pathway to eradicate BSE within its cattle population.

The Commission declares that the EU must take the lead in international standard setting bodies to promote European standards and policies, and align its legislation with international standards as far as possible. In setting the future strategy it is also important not to lose sight of other threats to animal and public health which have emerged in recent years, such as Salmonella and antimicrobial resistance. The balance of evidence is increasingly pointing towards the need to better prioritise actions towards diseases which may have a bigger impact than TSEs in terms of public health and to set out EU funding accordingly. The encouraging trends in relation to BSE merit a considered review of the opportunities to focus on these other threats.

## **Developing Public Health Capacity in the EU**

**The European Commission contracted a consortium of organisations representing the major professional organisations in public health in Europe to review the current public health capacity in Europe and to make recommendations for EU action and support.**

The specific objectives of this project are:

- To carry out a detailed review of the capacity of EU Member States to develop and implement public health policies and interventions;
- To identify gaps, needs and common issues in the public health sector;
- To identify a number of suggestions for action where EU support (including programmes and instruments in other policy areas) could provide assistance and added value to strengthen public health capacities.

The project started in January 2010 with the development of the assessment tool/questionnaire and will continue with document analysis, focus groups and development of in-depth case studies at country level. The data collected and findings from each country will be included in a database by the end of October. A final report including main findings, suggestions and recommendations for future actions will be submitted to the European Commission in 2011.



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## World Suicide Prevention Day 10 September 2010

**World Suicide Prevention Day promotes worldwide commitment and action to prevent suicides. On average, almost 3000 people commit suicide daily. For every person who completes a suicide, 20 or more may attempt to end their lives.**

The sponsoring International Association for Suicide Prevention, the co-sponsor WHO and other partners advocate for the prevention of suicidal behaviour, provision of adequate treatment and follow-up care for people who attempted suicide, as well as responsible reporting of suicides in the media.

At the global level, awareness needs to be raised that suicide is a major preventable cause of premature death. Governments need to develop policy frameworks for national suicide prevention strategies. At the local level, policy statements and research outcomes need to be translated into prevention programmes and activities in communities.

### More Information

#### World Suicide Prevention Day

[http://www.who.int/mental\\_health/prevention/suicide/wspd\\_2009\\_statement.pdf](http://www.who.int/mental_health/prevention/suicide/wspd_2009_statement.pdf)

### Facts and Figures

[http://www.who.int/mental\\_health/prevention/suicide/suicideprevent/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/mental_health/prevention/suicide/suicideprevent/en/index.html)

## **...Eurostat**

### Unemployment in the EU July 2010

**The euro area(EA16) unemployment rate was 10.0% in July 2010, unchanged compared with June. It was 9.6% in July 2009. The EU27 unemployment rate was 9.6% in July 2010, unchanged compared with June. It was 9.1% in July 2009.**

Eurostat estimates that 23.057 million men and women in the EU27, of whom 15.833 million were in the euro area, were unemployed in July 2010. Compared with June, the number of persons unemployed decreased by 45 000 in the EU27 and by 8 000 in the euro area. Compared with July 2009, unemployment rose by 1.108 million in the EU27 and by 0.668 million in the euro area.



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Among the Member States, the lowest unemployment rates were recorded in Austria (3.8%) and the Netherlands (4.4%), and the highest rates in Spain (20.3%), Latvia (20.1%) and Estonia (18.6%).

Compared with a year ago, three Member States recorded a fall in the unemployment rate, two remained stable and twenty-two showed an increase. The falls were observed in Austria (5.1% to 3.8%), Malta (7.3% to 6.5%) and Germany (7.6% to 6.9%). The highest increases were registered in Latvia (13.5% to 20.1%) and Lithuania (11.2% to 17.3%).

Between July 2009 and July 2010, the unemployment rate for males rose by 0.3% in the euro area and by 0.4% in the EU27. The female unemployment rate increased by 0.5% in the euro area and by 0.6% in the EU27.

In July 2010, the unemployment rate was 9.5% in the USA and 5.2% in Japan.

#### **Full report**

[http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY\\_PUBLIC/3-31082010-BP/EN/3-31082010-BP-EN.PDF](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/3-31082010-BP/EN/3-31082010-BP-EN.PDF)