



EPR Public Affairs e-bulletin

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Social Affairs & Social Services

Further shaping and consolidating the European Solidarity Corps

The European Commission launched a public consultation to consult young people, teachers, youth workers, organisations, employers and other stakeholders on the priorities and the strengthening of the recently launched European Solidarity Corps. As announced at the launch last December, the Commission is preparing a legislative proposal in the first half of 2017 to create a dedicated legal base for the European Solidarity Corps. The results of the consultation launched today will further shape and consolidate the European Solidarity Corps by feeding into the Commission's work on that legislative proposal.

Read more: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_AC-17-227_en.htm

Open public consultation on FEAD launched

The Open Public Consultation on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) has been launched. A questionnaire and related documents for the consultation are available in all EU languages except Irish.

The questions of the survey are tailored to the role of potential respondents in the FEAD. This consultation is carried out in the framework of the mid-term evaluation of the FEAD.

The survey is available online until 5 May 2017.

For more info:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2729&furtherNews=yes>

55th session of the United Nations Commission for Social Development

"The 55th session of the United Nations Commission for Social Development (CSocD55) took place in New York on 1-10 February 2017. The priority theme for the event was "Strategies for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all". Representatives of governments, civil society, social partners and NGOs from all regions of the world were invited to attend the CSocD55.

Read more:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2734&furtherNews=yes>

European Semester Winter Package: review of Member States' progress towards economic and social priorities

The European Commission today publishes its annual analysis of the economic and social situation in the Member States, including an assessment of remaining imbalances.

Member States are making headway in implementing the individual policy guidance they received last year around the "virtuous triangle" of boosting investment, pursuing structural reforms, ensuring responsible fiscal policies.

Read more:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2742&furtherNews=yes>

Employment & Disability

Employment and Social Developments Quarterly Review: 2.8 million more employees under a permanent contract

The winter edition of the Employment and Social Development in Europe (ESDE) Quarterly Review 2016, released today, highlights continuing economic growth in the EU, together with a steady decrease in unemployment. In December 2016, there were 1.8 million less unemployed people than the year before; including 1.3 million people less in the euro area. The strongest declines in unemployment were seen in the younger age groups (those 20-24 and 25-29 years old). In the third quarter of 2016, there were 940,000 more people in employment than in spring 2008. For the first time, all Member States in the EU achieved activity rates above 65%.

Read more: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEX-17-246_en.htm

National minimum wages in the EU- Monthly minimum wages below €500 in east and well above €1000 in northwest

As of 1st January 2017, 22 out of the 28 Member States of the European Union (EU) have national minimum wages: only Denmark, Italy, Cyprus, Austria, Finland and Sweden do not have one. The 22 EU Member States that have national minimum wages can be divided into three main groups based on the level in euro.

EUROSTAT news release: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/7860532/3-10022017-AP-EN.pdf/b5027315-0570-45df-9eb6-0cfda2f13dbc>

What has the European Disability Strategy achieved so far?

The European Commission presents its Progress Report on the implementation of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020. The Strategy is the main instrument to support the EU's implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

Read more:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2725&furtherNews=yes>

Employment and Social Development in Europe Quarterly Review – Winter 2016

In the year to the third quarter of 2016, the number of employees with permanent contracts grew by 1.8%. This represents an increase of 2.8 million employees, which is seven times more than the increase in temporary contracts of 420 thousand (1.6% growth), according to the latest Employment and Social Developments Quarterly Review.

Full read:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2730&furtherNews=yes>

Social dialogue makes a difference in reducing inequalities according to ILO/EC report

EU countries with coordinated bargaining systems have been successful at preventing the growth of inequalities on the labour market, while the erosion of collective bargaining in other EU countries has led to an increased number of low-paid jobs or increasing inequality among the workforce.

This is one of the findings of the report *Inequalities and the World of Work: What role for industrial relations and social dialogue*, produced by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in cooperation with the European Commission.

The report was presented and discussed during a two-day conference in Brussels on 23 and 24 February.

Read more:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2746&furtherNews=yes>

Education & Vocational Training

Commission invites citizens and organisations to give their views on Erasmus+

The European Commission has launched a public consultation to seek views on Erasmus+, the EU's flagship programme for education, training, youth and sport (2014-2020), as well as its predecessor programmes (Lifelong Learning, Youth in Action, Erasmus Mundus and other international higher education programmes). The results of the consultation will feed into the mid-term evaluation of Erasmus+ which is due to be finalised by the end of 2017. Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, Tibor Navracsics, said

Read more: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEX-17-384_en.htm

European Toolkit for Schools - Promoting inclusive education and tackling early school leaving

Early school leaving remains a key issue in Europe, despite having decreased through successful measures since 2005. Check out the updated European Toolkit for Schoolslink outside the EC domain– supported by Erasmus+. It is helping make schools more inclusive and offers resources for all people involved in education.

Read more: http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/20170213-european-toolkit-schools_en

Meet the Erasmus+ VET learners

Erasmus+ VET learners are varied and many. They are participants of all fields of study from across Europe who have completed a learning period abroad since 2014.

Through the programme, they gained valuable insight into different cultures and working practices, while gaining skills they can use for a lifetime. Read on to find out more about the demographics of the Erasmus+ VET learners, including which are the most popular host countries, and how students choose to spend their time abroad.

Full press release: http://ec.europa.eu/education/20170215-meet-vocational-learners_en

Have your say on education in Europe!

Take part in the consultation on key competences for lifelong learning and help develop quality, future-oriented education and training policies for the EU.

The consultation, which runs until 19/05, is open to all, particularly individuals, organisations, and policy-makers active in the field of education. More information is available on the consultation page.

Read more: http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/20170221-key-competences-consultation_en

New report on Structural Indicators for Inclusive Systems in and around Schools

Inclusion in education, viewed more comprehensively as inclusive systems in and around schools, concentrates on supportive, quality learning environments, on welcoming and caring schools and classrooms, and on preventing discrimination.

It addresses the needs of students in a holistic way (their emotional, physical, cognitive and social needs), and recognises their individual talents and voices. It is open to the voices and active participation of parents, and also wider multidisciplinary teams and agencies.

Read full news item: http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/20170224-structural-indicators-inclusive-systems-schools_en

Health & Medical Rehabilitation

Expert Panel on Health helps strengthen EU health systems

The newly appointed Expert Panel on Effective Ways of Investing in Health recently held its first Plenary Meeting in Brussels on 24 January 2017 and will now begin work on three new Opinions. Prof. Jan De Maeseneer, chair of the Expert Panel and Head of Department of Family Medicine and Primary Health Care at Ghent University, explains the Panel's role, work and impact.

Read more: https://ec.europa.eu/health/node/51403_en

Other relevant EU affairs

Statement by Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development Neven Mimica: Women's rights and empowerment are key for sustainable development

The European Commission's international cooperation and development policy will continue to play a leading role in ensuring women's access to health and family planning services. Gender equality is a global priority. The European Commission supports this actively, in particular through the Gender Action Plan and EU external action. World-wide, around 225 million women are in need of modern contraception. More than 300,000

women die each year from pregnancy or childbirth-related causes, 99% of them in developing countries.

Full press release: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-17-196_en.htm

Statement by Commissioner Crețu following the roundtable on how to strengthen the integration of migrants with mayors of European cities

“Today, together with mayors of major European cities, we are having our second meeting to discuss efficient ways to strengthen the integration of migrants in cities across the EU, especially with Cohesion Policy investments in innovative urban projects. We have an important but difficult work to accomplish together in Europe and we are at the beginning of a long journey. Today's meeting shows our readiness to financially support cities in coping with a pressing need for more inclusion. But beyond that, it is a mark of our strong political commitment to tackle a growing trend that is taking root in many countries, a trend that promotes rejection and selfishness.”

Full statement: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-17-211_en.htm

Speech by Commissioner Jourová - 10 years of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency: a call to action in defence of fundamental rights, democracy and the rule of law

Relevance of fundamental rights in today's context

“I must admit that I approach this event with mixed feelings. On the one hand I want to celebrate. It is the 10th anniversary of an EU Agency which has worked hard to promote fundamental rights in the EU. And I want to pay tribute today to all the staff of the FRA for your essential contribution.

On the other hand, when I see the reality - the true state of fundamental rights in Europe - I don't feel in a festive mood, but rather in a combative mood.

Let's face it: our most fundamental rights and values are no longer a given. [...]”

Full speech: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-17-403_en.htm

EU funded programmes

- Erasmus+ [new calls 2017](#)
- DG EMPL – PROGRESS / EaSI [calls](#)
- Horizon 2020 – various [new calls](#)

Calendar of upcoming events

Date	Title	Venue	Contact
14/02/2017	Making ReferNet products more visible - a digital marketing workshop	Thessaloniki (Greece)	http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/events/making-refernet-products-more-visible-digital-marketing-workshop
16/17/02/2017	ET in the 21st century – New pressures and changing expectations	Thessaloniki (Greece)	http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/events/vet-21st-century-new-pressures-and-changing-expectations
21-22/02/2017	European Platform for Rehabilitation: EQUASS European Conference	Vilnius (Lithuania)	http://equass.be/equass/index.php?option=com_eventbooking&view=event&id=50&catid=5&Itemid=328
22-24/02/2017	European public opinion survey on vocational education and training Expert workshop	Thessaloniki (Greece)	http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/events/european-public-opinion-survey-vocational-education-and-training
07/02/2017	Tackling youth employability through innovative projects	Brussels	https://www.ticketea.com/entradas-tackling-youth-employability-through-innovative-projects/?cldee=Y2luemlhlMxRILmxdGizQGvWci5ldQ%3d%3d&recipientid=contact-852d8026aeb8e311adda005056a05070-987916d5a80b409dbf282c22c1280bbc&sid=9fec6644-efe6-e611-91ea-005056a05070&urlid=4
08-09/03/2017	EU Sport Forum 2017	St. Julian's (Malta)	https://ec.europa.eu/sport/events/201700127-eu-sport-forum_en
16-17/03/2017	SEFORIS Final Conference: 'Social Entrepreneurship: Inclusion and Innovation in Society'	Brussels	http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/index.cfm?pg=events&eventcode=874F0F5A-A83E-0116-966696E1C6A3F7C6
22-23/03/2017	Shipping 2030 Europe: "Technology for Today, Ideas for the Future"	Copenhagen (Denmark)	http://ec.europa.eu/research/index.cfm?pg=events&eventcode=EBEBCE49-0D75-9F95-598538DD9450C54E
06-07/04/2017	7th University Business Forum	Brussel	http://ec.europa.eu/education/events/20170406-university-business-forum_en
24/04/2017	EqUIP Showcasing Event: Research with Impact	Brussels	http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/index.cfm?pg=events
16-17/05/2017	Policy learning forum: VET as a solution to leaving education early	Thessaloniki (Greece)	http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/events/policy-learning-forum-vet-solution-leaving-education-early
08-09/06/2017	EPR Annual Conference	Mulhouse (France)	http://www.epr.eu/index.php/component/jevents/icalrepeat.detail/2017/06/08/47/-/epr-annual-conference?Itemid=1&filter_reset=1
16-17/05/2017	Policy learning forum: Skills matching policies for the long-term unemployed	Thessaloniki (Greece)	http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/events/change-dates-policy-learning-forum-skills-matching-policies-long-term