



# EPR Public Affairs e-bulletin

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## Social Affairs & Social Services

### Policy initiatives on refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, data protection and social assistance beneficiaries

Six new Flash Reports prepared by the European Social policy Network (ESPN) have just become available and provide information on recent policy initiatives in Luxembourg, FYR Macedonia, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain and Turkey.

- InSitu Jobs” is a project of the Luxembourg federation of migrant organisations. It aims at supporting recognised refugees and legally residing third country nationals in finding their way onto the labour market. The flexibility of the approach overcomes procedural and competence problems related to official institutions and agencies.
- Huge flows of refugees in the period 2015-2016 transiting through and staying in the FYR Macedonia exposed the weaknesses of the institutional capacities of the national social protection system. Around 300 refugees currently face inadequate social service provision, poor treatment of unaccompanied minors, and lack of educational services.
- Municipalities in the Netherlands fail to sufficiently respect the rules concerning their citizens’ personal social data protection. If no improvement is forthcoming, municipalities risk high fines, the discontinuation of important data collection and processing applications; they also risk damaging their reputations.

Read more:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2591&furtherNews=yes>

### A new start for parents and caregivers: Commission launches second-stage consultation of EU social partner organisations on work-life balance

The European Commission has launched a second-stage consultation with social partner organisations at European level. The aim of the consultation is to seek their views on how to reduce obstacles to women's participation in the labour market, by improving work-life balance and possibilities for women and men to make use of their rights more equally. The Commission finds that further EU-level action is needed in order to effectively address women's underrepresentation in the labour market, which is leading to women's greater risk of poverty, underutilisation of women's skills and competences, and is negatively impacting economic growth.

In this second-stage consultation, the Commission has identified possible avenues for EU legislative action on which it would like to seek the views of social partners, including whether they would be interested in opening negotiations with a view to concluding an agreement at Union level between them. The consultation document also sets out that further legislative action could be reinforced by strengthened EU-level policy measures, such as policy guidance, knowledge sharing and awareness raising activities, and financial support. This consultation follows a first-stage social partner consultation and a broad public consultation, which closed earlier this year. EU employees' and employers' organisations have until 30 September 2016 to submit their views.

Read more:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=fr&catId=89&newsId=2582&furtherNews=yes>

## Report shows first results of Fund for European aid to the most deprived - providing food aid and social integration

The Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) contributes to alleviating the worst forms of poverty in the EU, such as food deprivation, child poverty and homelessness. With a budget of EUR 3.8 billion in 2014-2020, the FEAD can be used to **support the most disadvantaged groups** in society, by providing food, basic consumer items such as clothing, footwear and toiletries, or by organising social inclusion activities.

The Commission has adopted a [Summary report](#) on the implementation of the FEAD in 2014, based on the reports submitted by the Member States. The document shows that eight Member States (Belgium, Spain, France, Lithuania, Romania, Poland, Portugal and Slovenia) distributed a total of 228 707 tonnes of food in 2014. Almost **11 million people**, of which 51% women have **benefited** from FEAD assistance in 2014.

Read the full report: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1468220817957&uri=CELEX:52016DC0435>

## Update on social policies in Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia and Finland

Five new Flash Reports prepared by the European Social policy Network (ESPN) have just become available and provide information on recent policy initiatives in Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia and Finland.

- The Croatian Parliament in June 2016 voted not to accept the Annual Report of the Ombudsperson for Children. The vote is interpreted by many as a threat to the independence of the institution and may reflect a growing politicisation of issues related to child and family rights.
- A Government consultation document published in June 2016 recommends an increase of the one-off payment for every new-born child in Croatia from approximately €300 to €1,000 as a policy to reverse the negative demographic trend. The cost of this, however, was not included in the 2016 Budget and the increased payment was not coupled with any other measure aimed at the protection of children or at the reconciliation of work and family life..

Read more:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2587&furtherNews=yes>

## Towards better social statistics for a social Europe

On 24 August 2016, the European Commission adopted a proposal for a Regulation on new, integrated ways to collect and use data from social surveys so as to better support policy making in general and social policy in particular.

A more solid evidence base in terms of social indicators will improve the analysis of social developments and contribute to a social triple-A for Europe. The proposed framework Regulation will allow data to be published faster, as it reduces the transmission deadlines in a number of areas. It will also increase the comparability and coherence of EU social statistics, by bringing together seven existing household surveys that are currently carried

out in the EU and harmonising variables that are common to two or more surveys. This will, in addition, facilitate joint analysis of social phenomena, based on new survey methods. Finally, we will have a richer and broader data set at our disposal, thanks to the use of innovative approaches and methods by national statistical authorities and the combination of data from several sources.

Read more: [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-16-2867\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-2867_en.htm)

## Employment & Disability

### Education, employment, both or neither? What are young people doing in the EU?

The European Union (EU) totals almost 90 million people aged 15-29, representing 17% of population. These young people are in very different situations, with education and employment patterns varying considerably between Member States and by age group. Between the ages of 15 and 29, a clear and significant shift occurs from the world of education to the world of employment. While in the 15-19 age group the vast majority of people in the EU were in education in 2015, the opposite is true for those aged 25-29: most of them were in employment. In-between, young people aged 20-24 were relatively evenly distributed between education and employment. Moreover, the proportion of young people neither in employment nor in education or training (NEET) increases considerably with age. The NEET rate, which stood at 6.3% for the age group 15-19 in 2015, almost tripled to 17.3% for the age group 20-24 and reached almost 1 young person in 5 aged 25-29 (19.7%).

Read more: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/7590616/3-11082016-AP-EN.pdf/c0393ef3-2ea1-455a-ab64-2271c41fd9d4>

### Temporary employment in the EU: springboards or career dead ends?

The share of temporary workers has increased in most EU Member States since 2008. Flexible contractual arrangements have been extensively used since the crisis, their major attraction for employers being their less strict dismissals rules. Between 2008 and 2014 the share of temporary workers as a percentage of the total number of employees increased by more than two percentage points in Cyprus, Slovakia, Malta, Hungary and Czech Republic. Temporary jobs may have helped people back into the labour market, but empirical evidence shows that temporary contracts are generally associated with lower levels of job satisfaction compared to permanent contracts. In addition, temporary workers have worse access to training, paid sick leave, unemployment insurance and pension, and lower salaries.

Whether this increase in the use of temporary contracts over recent years is good or bad news depends on whether they are a stepping stone into stable employment, or career dead ends, or a revolving door between unemployment and precarious jobs. A look at recent data on upward job mobility yields a worrying picture.

Read more:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2581&furtherNews=yes>

## Education & Vocational Training

### Vocational education - Almost half of upper secondary pupils in the EU enrolled in vocational education - Most of them are men

Of the 22 million pupils in the European Union (EU) studying at upper secondary level in 2014, almost 11 million (or 48%) were enrolled in vocational education. In twelve EU Member States, more than half of all upper secondary pupils studied vocational programmes. Vocational education at upper secondary level was somewhat dominated by men, who accounted for 56% of pupils, compared with 44% women. This pattern can be observed in almost all Member States.

Ensuring that young people develop the skills and competences needed by the labour market by promoting vocational education and training is one of the initiatives of the European Commission to tackle youth unemployment.

Read more: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/7564100/3-18072016-AP-EN.pdf/88d7d902-9261-491e-9a3a-23acd4ad3fd6>

### Training teachers for students with dyslexia

People with dyslexia can encounter a range of difficulties when studying foreign languages, especially English. That's why this group of teacher trainers decided to set up an initiative that addresses dyslexia as part of teacher training. Funding allowed the coordinators to put together an international team including specialists in the area of teaching foreign languages to students with learning difficulties, experienced teacher trainers, and academic language researchers. They conducted an extensive needs analysis, using the results to develop course structure and content.

The resulting course, which both raises awareness and equips teachers with new approaches, is available as a face-to-face training course, an online self-study course, or an interactive online Moodle (a free and open-source software for e-learning). Course materials have been made available under a Creative Commons licence, which has allowed the team to distribute the materials more widely.

Read more: [http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/updates/20160720-training-teachers-students-dyslexia\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/updates/20160720-training-teachers-students-dyslexia_en)

Read more: [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-16-1654\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-1654_en.htm)

### ESF Success story: Job-related language courses for migrants in Germany go national

On 1 July 2016 a major new initiative of the German Federal Government for job-related language courses for migrants entered into force. The new initiative is closely based on the ESF measure "[BAMF-Sprachkurse](#)" and it is intended to meet a growing need as thousands of refugees who arrived in Germany in 2015 finish their initial integration courses and come onto the labour market.

Job-related language courses are core to the German policy concept for the sustainable social integration of migrants and to their successful labour market integration. In order to

increase the labour market chances of migrants, language courses can be combined with

- employment,
- vocational and educational training
- active labour market policy measures.

This is an excellent example of ESF being used to test and refine a policy concept that is then mainstreamed into a national system. As part of the new national initiative the current ESF BAMF-programme will be topped up significantly in 2016 as a transitional measure, and completely replaced by the new national programme by the end of 2017.

Read more:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2570&furtherNews=yes>

## Other relevant EU Affairs

### Monday 11 - Friday 15 July: 14th round of negotiations for a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership

The 14th round of the [Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership \(TTIP\)](#) negotiations between the EU and the US will take place from 11 to 15 July in Brussels. This third round in six months continues the very intensive period of talks which started at the beginning of this year. The negotiators will discuss all three pillars of TTIP: market access for EU and US firms, regulatory cooperation, and rules of trade. The EU will submit proposals in a number of areas, such as regulatory cooperation, digital trade and energy and raw materials. The focus of the round will be on the more technical work of consolidating as many texts as possible and bringing positions closer together.

The EU is negotiating an ambitious and balanced trade and investment deal with the US. The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) will create new trade and investment opportunities for companies, big and small, and new jobs. For consumers, it will cut prices and widen choice, while keeping the EU's high standards for consumer protection, social rights and environmental rules.

Read more: [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_AGENDA-16-2441\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_AGENDA-16-2441_en.htm)

### Summer holidays – but not for everyone!

Schools are closed, summer holidays are here, and also this blog is having its well-deserved summer break. Like many of you, authors of Evidence in Focus are leaving their desks to travel in Europe and beyond. However, without wanting to spoil your holidays, this may be a good time to recall that **39 per cent of Europeans cannot afford paying for one week annual holiday away from home**. This is a form of deprivation that is taken into account in the calculation of the EU's indicator of the risk of poverty and social exclusion (AROPE) which counts people who face:

1. monetary poverty (discussed already in several blog posts e.g. [comparing the situation of young and old Europeans](#) and [looking at parental employment and child poverty](#)), and/or
2. low work intensity, and/or

### 3. severe material deprivation.

The last one is an absolute measure of living standards that complements the measure of relative monetary poverty (people with disposable income below 60 % of the country's median income). **The EU severe material deprivation rate is currently defined as the share of the population living in households that cannot afford at least four out of nine items.** 8.9 per cent of the EU population were in this situation in 2014.

Read more:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2589&furtherNews=yes>

## EU funded programmes

- Erasmus+ [new calls 2016](#) and [Programme Guide](#)
- DG EMPL – PROGRESS / EaSI [calls](#)
- Horizon 2020 – various [new calls](#)

## Calendar of upcoming events

Date	Title	Venue	Contact
09/09/2016	FreSsco seminar: EU non-discrimination law and intra-EU mobility	Paris (France)	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=88&amp;eventsId=1097&amp;furtherEvents=yes">http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=88&amp;eventsId=1097&amp;furtherEvents=yes</a>
13/09/2016	FreSsco seminar: Coordination of type-A invalidity benefits	Hungary	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=88&amp;eventsId=1098&amp;furtherEvents=yes">http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=88&amp;eventsId=1098&amp;furtherEvents=yes</a>
23/09/2016	FreSsco seminar: Selected topics related to intra-EU mobility	Estonia	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=88&amp;eventsId=1099&amp;furtherEvents=yes">http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=88&amp;eventsId=1099&amp;furtherEvents=yes</a>
26/09/2016	FreSsco seminar: Solidarity and migration	Austria	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=88&amp;eventsId=1100&amp;furtherEvents=yes">http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=88&amp;eventsId=1100&amp;furtherEvents=yes</a>
06-07/10/2016	First EU Mental Health Compass Forum	Luxembourg	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/health/mental_health/events/ev_20161006_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/health/mental_health/events/ev_20161006_en.htm</a>
10-13/10/2016	European Week of Regions and Cities	Brussels	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=88&amp;eventsId=1139&amp;furtherEvents=yes">http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=88&amp;eventsId=1139&amp;furtherEvents=yes</a>
12/10/2016	Networking Seminar on Motivation Strategies	Dublin	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=88&amp;eventsId=1130&amp;furtherEvents=yes">http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=88&amp;eventsId=1130&amp;furtherEvents=yes</a>
13/10/2016	FreSsco seminar: Key issues relating to social security coordination and free movement of workers in Romania	Romania	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=88&amp;eventsId=1101&amp;furtherEvents=yes">http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=88&amp;eventsId=1101&amp;furtherEvents=yes</a>
28/10/2016	FreSsco seminar: Social tourism within the EU; legal and practical reflections on a political debate	The Netherlands	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=88&amp;eventsId=1102&amp;furtherEvents=yes">http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=88&amp;eventsId=1102&amp;furtherEvents=yes</a>
04/11/2016	FreSsco seminar: Recent developments in the coordination of family benefits, unemployment benefits and student aid	Luxembourg	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=88&amp;eventsId=1103&amp;furtherEvents=yes">http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=88&amp;eventsId=1103&amp;furtherEvents=yes</a>
5-9/12/2016	The European Vocational Skills Week	Brussels	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=88&amp;eventsId=1125&amp;furtherEvents=yes">http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=88&amp;eventsId=1125&amp;furtherEvents=yes</a>