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European Platform for Rehabilitation, Avenue des Arts 8, c/o CCI, B-1210, Brussels, Belgium
Tel: +32 2 736 54 44, Fax: +32 2 736 8622, Website: www.epr.eu

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Social Affairs & Social Services

European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities: Suspension of Structural Funds to Portugal and Spain will hit disadvantaged most

On the 3rd of October, the European Parliament discussed with the European Commission about their proposal to suspend part of the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) for Portugal and Spain in 2017, as part of their non-compliance with the European Union's budgetary rules. In a letter to Members of the European Parliament, EASPD – alongside the Social Platform and Social Services Europe – strongly opposes the suspension of any ESI fund which supports human rights enjoyment, labour market integration and social inclusion.

Full article available here: <http://www.easpd.eu/en/content/suspension-structural-funds-portugal-and-spain-will-hit-disadvantaged-most>

World Mental Health Day 2016: The digital age as an opportunity to improve youth mental health

Mental Health Europe, together with Members of the European Parliament Miriam Dalli (Malta, S&D) and Julie Ward (UK, S&D) as well as the European Commissioner for Health Vytenis Andriukaitis celebrated World Mental Health Day (10/10/2016) in the European Parliament. Experts from Google, Facebook and representatives from civil society, including Youth Mental Health Ambassador Nikki Mattocks, gathered to share expertise and experience on how to prevent, protect and improve youth mental health online. More than 80 participants attended the event to discuss the digitalisation of society as both a risk and an opportunity for mental health.

Read full press release:

http://www.mhesme.org/fileadmin/Position_papers/Press_release_World_Mental_Health_Day_2016.pdf

Social Services Europe position on European Pillar of Social Rights

Social Services Europe is the largest European umbrella organization representing non-profit social and health care providers. Our members are at the forefront of ensuring accessible, affordable and quality services for all people in Europe and believe that investing in people brings both social and economic returns. Social and health care services enable people to live with dignity and care but also support people to engage in economic activities that contribute to growth. Social Services Europe made its contribution to the European Commission consultation on the Pillar of Social Rights and called for more concrete actions.

Read SSE position: <http://www.socialserviceseurope.eu/>

Read also the Draft report of the European Parliament Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (Rapporteur: Maria João Rodrigues):

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+COMPARL+PE-589.146+02+DOC+PDF+V0//EN&language=EN>

Delegates discuss FEAD at first Network meetings

The first two FEAD (Network the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived) meetings have been held in Brussels on 26 September and 18 October. The events allowed delegates to hear from projects and managing authorities in different countries, and to discuss innovative ways of delivering accompanying and social inclusion measures.

Read more:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2660&furtherNews=yes>

Employment & Disability

Second generation immigrants in the EU generally well integrated into the labour market... and have high educational attainment

What is the educational and labour market performance of second generation immigrants in the European Union (EU)? How do the native-born descendants of immigrants perform in contrast to their counterparts with native-born parents? How do they develop compared with first generation immigrants? Does the origin of their foreign-born parents influence their performance? The answers to these questions and many more can be found in the series of Statistics Explained articles on second generation immigrants that have just been published by Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union. A larger range of data is available in the Eurostat database.

Full text: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/7724025/3-28102016-BP-EN.pdf/6e144b14-d5e1-499e-a271-2d70a10ed6fe>

A New Europass Framework: helping people make their skills and qualifications more visible

On the 4th of October, the Commission has adopted a proposal to revise the Europass Decision.

Europass is a suite of tools and services which support the transparency of skills and qualifications across the European Union.

With this revision, the Commission aims to simplify and modernise these tools for the digital age and to add a new feature using big data to map and anticipate labour market trends and skills needs.

Europe's prosperity depends upon our most valuable asset – our people. In a fast-changing global economy, it is people's skills which will be a motor for our competitiveness and growth. Europass is one of Europe's most used and well-known skills resources.

Read more:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2638&furtherNews=yes>

Employment and Social Developments in Europe - Quarterly Review - Autumn 2016

This review confirms the strengthening of employment growth in the EU observed over the last two and a half years. Employment increased in almost all Member States (except for Croatia, which registered a small decline, and in Finland where it stagnated).

Unemployment is at its lowest rate (8.6%) since March 2009, with 1.6 million (0.7 pp) fewer unemployed people in the EU compared to last year.

Download data and charts:

- Statistical Annex
- Recurrent analysis - latest update (Excel)
- See also: Employment and Social Developments in Europe 2015

Read more:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=737&langId=en&pubId=7930&type=1&furtherPubs=yes>

Research & Development

Statement by Vice-President Ansip and Commissioner Oettinger welcoming the adoption of the first EU-wide rules to make public sector websites and apps more accessible

European Commission Vice-President Andrus Ansip, responsible for the Digital Single Market, and Commissioner Günther H. Oettinger, in charge of the Digital Economy and Society, welcome the decision by the European Parliament to formally approve the Directive on the accessibility of the websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies.

Vice-President Ansip and Commissioner Oettinger said:

"Everyone should benefit from the opportunities offered by the internet and fully participate in the digital society. Today's adoption is an important step in the right direction. New rules will ensure that people with disabilities – especially blind, deaf and hard of hearing persons – can more easily access and use the websites and mobile applications of public services.

Today's adoption is the culmination of several years of hard work with the European Parliament and Member States. We have particularly appreciated the strong engagement of associations representing the disabled community and consumers. Their help in preparing the Directive greatly contributed to the quality of the legislation. We will ask the European Standardisation Organisations to quickly develop the harmonised standard on the accessibility requirements required for the Directive.

The rules adopted today are part of the Commission's ongoing work to build an inclusive European Union. We proposed in December 2015 the European Accessibility Act - with common accessibility requirements for ATMs and banking services, PCs, telephones and TV equipment, telephony and audio-visual services, transport, e-books and e-commerce. More recently, we also proposed draft legislation to implement into the EU law the Marrakesh Treaty. The aim of this Treaty is to facilitate access to published works for persons who are blind, visually impaired, or otherwise print disabled. We rely on the

European Parliament and Member States that to show equal support for these proposals and to adopt them swiftly."

Read more: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-16-3549_en.htm

Other relevant EU Affairs

ILGA-Europe: It's official – France adopts a new legal gender recognition procedure!

The French parliament has voted to introduce a legal gender recognition procedure that is free from sterilisation and medicalisation. The National Assembly met in a plenary session on Wednesday 12 October to debate and vote on the 21st century justice law (La loi sur la justice au XX1eme siècle), which included provisions relating to legal gender recognition.

Under the updated process, trans people will no longer have to be sterilised before being legally recognised in their true gender. In addition to this, there will be no requirement to provide proof of medical treatment, as had been proposed in amendments introduced by the Senate several weeks ago. Emancipated minors will also be able to access the updated procedure.

Full Article: <http://ilga-europe.org/resources/news/latest-news/france-adopts-new-legal-gender-recognition-procedure>

Statement of First Vice-President Timmermans and Commissioners Thyssen and Jourová on European Equal Pay Day

Thursday 3 November 2016 was European Equal Pay Day, representing the day in the year when women across Europe stop being paid due to the gender pay gap; with the average hourly wage for women in Europe being 16.7 % lower than it is for men, they in effect work 16% of the year for free.

Read more: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-16-3578_en.htm

Juncker Commission presents third annual Work Programme: Delivering a Europe that protects, empowers and defends

The Commission Work Programme for the coming year focuses squarely on delivery of the 10 priorities outlined in the Political Guidelines in order to address the biggest challenges which Europe faces today.

On the basis of the Work Programme, the Commission, European Parliament and Council will now work on a Joint Declaration on commonly agreed objectives and priorities for 2017, to swiftly turn proposals into action and bring concrete results for citizens.

President Jean-Claude **Juncker** said: *"We are focusing on the things that matter, concrete actions that improve people's lives. With the 60th Anniversary of the Rome Treaties coming up next March, we must unite around a positive agenda. This is what the Commission's Work Programme is about. In the coming weeks I will – together with the European Parliament and Council – select a number of initiatives of major political importance that should receive priority treatment in the legislative process in the months to come. This is the Europe that delivers."*

Read more: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-3500_en.htm

Close to EUR 2.4 million awarded to support cultural projects for integration of refugees

In response to the refugee situation in Europe and in line with the Commission's Action Plan on integration of third country nationals under the European Agenda on Migration, the European Union, through its Creative Europe programme, has awarded over EUR 2 million in funding for cultural projects to help refugees integrate into European societies. The transnational projects will involve 62 organisations in 20 countries. The organisations involved come from a whole range of sectors, including creative writing, publishing, libraries and museums, dance, music, theatre, digital arts, film, video, graphic arts, painting, drawing and photography. The projects will focus on promoting mutual cultural understanding, intercultural and interreligious dialogue, tolerance and respect. They will primarily seek to tell the stories of refugees, but many also focus on refugees working with host communities to promote the sharing of experiences. The projects will be led by organisations from Croatia, Denmark, France, Italy, Poland, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

Full read: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-is-new/news/news/2016/20161007_1_en.htm

EU funded programmes

- Erasmus+ [new calls 2016](#) and [New calls for proposals 2017](#)
- DG EMPL – PROGRESS / EaSI [calls](#)
- Horizon 2020 – various [new calls](#)

Calendar of upcoming events

Date	Title	Venue	Contact
06-07/10/2016	First EU Mental Health Compass Forum	Luxembourg	http://ec.europa.eu/health/mental_health/events/ev_20161006_en.htm
10-13/10/2016	European Week of Regions and Cities	Brussels	http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=88&eventsId=1139&furtherEvents=yes
12/10/2016	Networking Seminar on Motivation Strategies	Dublin	http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=88&eventsId=1130&furtherEvents=yes
13/10/2016	FreSsco seminar: Key issues relating to social security coordination and free movement of workers in Romania	Romania	http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=88&eventsId=1101&furtherEvents=yes
20-21/10/2016	Conference - Counterfactual Methods for Policy Impact Evaluation	Milan (Italy)	http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=88&eventsId=1154&furtherEvents=yes
27/10/2016	Making the European Pillar of Social Rights a reality for Europe's families: mind the gap	Brussels	http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=88&eventsId=1162&furtherEvents=yes
27-28/10/2016	Reinforcing coordination of employment and social services	Brussels	http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=88&eventsId=1153&furtherEvents=yes
28/10/2016	FreSsco seminar: Social tourism within the EU; legal and practical reflections on a political debate	The Netherlands	http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=88&eventsId=1102&furtherEvents=yes
04/11/2016	FreSsco seminar: Recent developments in the coordination of family benefits, unemployment benefits and student aid	Luxembourg	http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=88&eventsId=1103&furtherEvents=yes
29-30/11/2016	European Day of People with Disabilities	Brussels	
5-9/12/2016	The European Vocational Skills Week	Brussels	http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=88&eventsId=1125&furtherEvents=yes