

# EMPL Bulletin

8<sup>th</sup> legislature – issue I, November 2014

Committee on Employment and Social Affairs – European Parliament



## Welcome words by Thomas Händel



I would like to welcome the readers of the EMPL Bulletin, the newsletter of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL Committee), of which I am the Chair.

In the 8<sup>th</sup> legislative term, the EMPL Committee will continue its work on employment and social policies including working conditions, social security, social inclusion and social protection. Our committee is also in charge of policies related to workers' rights and health and safety at the workplace. EMPL is the responsible committee for the European Social Fund and also covers the areas of vocational training policy, including professional qualifications. The free movement of workers and pensioners and social dialogue will be under the focus of the committee. EMPL has been and will continue to be active on dealing with the discrimination at the workplace and in the labour market.

EMPL Committee in this term consists of 55 members representing the various political groups and the Committee's functioning is ensured by the Chair, 4 Vice-Chairs and the coordinators appointed by the political groups, in order to link the committee's work with the priorities of the respective political family.

Our committee will continue to closely cooperate with the Council, the European Commission, and other relevant institutions and representatives of the civil society to influence and to determine the development of the legislative framework in the fields of employment and social policy in the European Union.

During this term, EMPL will be particularly active on the fight against unemployment, especially youth unemployment, the fight against precarious jobs, the tackling of situations of abuse, such as undeclared work or the circumvention of laws designed at protecting employees, or the improvement of rules on health and safety at work.

The committee meeting on 4 November will already cover a number of these issues, as well as other topics, about which you can read further details in this Bulletin.

I would like to thank you for your interest and I hope that you will read interesting and useful news about the work of EMPL in this regular publication!

Thomas Händel, Chair

## POINTS ON THE COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

### Reports

[Establishment of a European Platform to enhance cooperation in the prevention and deterrence of undeclared work](#)

### Motion for a resolution / oral questions

[Employment and social aspects of the EU2020 strategy \(Vote\)](#)

[EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2014-2020 \(Vote\)](#)

[Implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin \('Racial Equality Directive'\) and the general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation \('Employment Equality Directive'\) \(Vote\)](#)

### Opinions

[European Central Bank – Annual Report for 2013](#)

[European Investment Bank – Annual Report 2013](#)

[Mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund: application EGF/2014/008 FI/STX Rauma – Finland \(Vote\)](#)

### Exchange of views

[Unemployment insurance scheme for the Euro area: The Cost of Non-Europe](#)

[Directors of Agencies: CEDEFOP, Eurofound, EU-OSHA and ETF](#)

[The Russian Embargo: Impact on the Economic and Employment Situation in the EU](#)

### Presentation

[Wage dispersion in the EU - study](#)

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### Meeting date and venue:

4.11.2014: 9.00-12.30 and 15.30-19.00 in Brussels, József Antall (4Q2)

## Establishment of a European Platform to enhance cooperation in the prevention and deterrence of undeclared work

### Exchange of views



The Commission's legislative [proposal](#) aims to establish a European Platform which will enhance cooperation at EU level in the prevention and deterrence of undeclared work, supporting and adding value to the efforts of Member States, without envisaging any harmonisation of their laws and



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regulations. The Platform shall facilitate the exchange of best practices and information, develop expertise and analysis and coordinate cross-border operational actions. The Platform shall work in cooperation with other relevant Union level expert groups and committees, whose work has a link with undeclared work. The funding for the Platform will come from the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation ("EaSI"), the PROGRESS axis.

In preparation of the EMPL legislative draft report, the committee will hold an exchange of views with Commission representatives and relevant stakeholders.

Rapporteur: **Georgi Pirinski** (S&D, BG)

## Employment and social aspects of the EU2020 strategy

### Vote on the motion for a resolution and the oral question

EMPL committee has been working on a motion for a resolution (MfR) and an oral question (to the Commission and to the Council) on the employment and social aspects of the EU2020 strategy, with the aim to initiate a debate in the Plenary in November on this issue. The draft MfR – among others – criticises that the Country-Specific Recommendations have not been sufficiently aligned with the EU2020 employment targets, and calls for the organization of joint meetings of the EPSCO and ECOFIN Councils in order to put employment and social considerations at equal footing with the macroeconomic ones. Members will vote on the [draft MfR](#), the 166 [amendments](#) and the [draft oral question](#).

## EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2014-2020

### Vote on the oral question



On 6 June 2014 the Commission adopted the follow-up to the 2007-2012 EU Occupational Health and Safety Strategy identifying outstanding problems and major challenges for promoting occupational

safety and health in the EU and setting out key strategic objectives and a range of actions and possible instruments to address these issues.

The [communication](#) lists the following instruments: legislation, EU funds such as the ESF and the Employment and Social Innovation Programme, social dialogue, communication and awareness-raising, and synergies with other policy areas (e.g. public health and education). EMPL will vote on a draft [oral question](#) to the Commission with the aim to table it to the second plenary session in November.

## Implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin ('Racial Equality Directive') and the general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation ('Employment Equality Directive')

### Vote on the oral question

EMPL will vote on a draft [oral question](#) to the Commission, to be tabled to the second plenary session in November, linked

to the [report](#), released by the Commission in January 2014. The report is based on information provided by the Member States and on the results of the consultation of the national equality bodies and other relevant stakeholders. This is the first report prepared after all 28 Member States have transposed the Directives and gained some experience in their application. According to the Commission, all Member States have already taken the necessary steps to transpose the directives, but more should be done to increase awareness of the already existing protection and to ensure better practical implementation and application of both directives.

## European Central Bank – Annual Report for 2013

### Consideration of draft opinion



In the [draft opinion](#) to the ECON committee, the Draftsperson reflects on the employment and social aspects of the 2013 [report](#) of

the ECB. The draft opinion agrees with the recommendation that growth-friendly fiscal consolidation over the medium term should ensure compliance with the fiscal compact, while at the same time boost potential growth and generating employment opportunities. The Draftsperson also repeats that ex-ante coordination of major economic reform plans would be necessary.

Draftsperson: **David Casa** (EPP, MT)

## European Investment Bank – Annual Report for 2013

### Consideration of draft opinion



The [draft opinion](#) is based on the [2013 annual report](#) of the EIB. In his text, the Draftsperson welcomes, among others, the 9.1 billion Euros spent by the EIB to

promote skills training and employment opportunities for young people. He recalls the enormous job creation potential of the SMEs and welcomes the increased EIB financing in this context. The draft opinion also stresses the importance of the Microfinance Facility in fighting against social exclusion.

Draftsperson: **David Casa** (EPP, MT)

## Unemployment insurance scheme for the Euro area: The Cost of Non-Europe

### Exchange of views

The European Parliament has called for a "social dimension" to the Economic and Monetary Union to tackle unemployment and restore growth following the recent economic crisis. Among various alternative options, automatic stabilisers could potentially be means of stabilising the Eurozone, while at the same time addressing social problems associated with the financial crisis. The [study](#) prepared by the EP's DG for Parliamentary Research Services explores the prospects for introducing an automatic stabilizer in the form of an Unemployment Insurance Scheme for the euro area, which will provide the monetary union with greater stability in the medium and long term.

EMPL committee will hold an exchange of views with the experts, on whose research the assessment is built.

## Directors of Agencies: CEDEFOP, Eurofound, EU-OSHA and ETF

### Exchange of views

Directors of the four agencies within the remit of EMPL will come to the committee to provide adequate information to the newly elected committee by presenting their mission and activities to the Members. The presentations of CEDEFOP, EUROFOUND, EU-OSHA and ETF will be followed by a questions and answers session with the Members.

## The Russian Embargo: Impact on the Economic and Employment Situation in the EU

### Exchange of views



EMPL decided to discuss the effect of the Russian embargo of food export from the European Union. The embargo especially affects countries which export high percentage of their production to Russia. In the wake of this embargo,

companies which are involved in production and transportation of the goods banned by Russian sanctions, face huge challenges. In several countries hundreds of workers have already been made redundant as a result and more will follow in the upcoming months. Members will have an opportunity to discuss the issue with representatives of the Commission and possibly hear about the available instruments to address these adverse effects of the embargo on the EU labour market.

## Wage dispersion in the EU

### Presentation of a study

The authors will present to the committee the recently finished study on Wage dispersion in the EU. The study was requested earlier by the committee in order to have a critical assessment of the recent developments in labour income dispersion in EU Member States. The study evaluates the relation between wage dispersion and the role and level of centralization of collective bargaining processes, the existence of national minimum wage and atypical employment contracts.

## Recent studies, briefing notes

- Pension schemes – [study](#)
- Reform of the European Network of Employment Services (EURES): Initial Appraisal of the Commission's Impact Assessment – [briefing](#)
- Austerity and Poverty in the European Union – [study](#)

## News from the Agencies

### European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop)

Valuing diversity: guidance for labour market integration of migrants – Arguing for guidance to ease the integration of third country immigrants into the European labour market may seem untimely given today's high youth unemployment,

but anticipating future developments and informing policy-makers are one of Cedefop's main tasks. Cedefop's latest study, *Valuing diversity: guidance for labour market integration of migrants* discusses the critical contribution guidance services can make to integrating migrants by analysing all aspects which affect the quality of their provision. [More](#).

### European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound)

Policy lessons from the fifth EWCS: The pursuit of more and better jobs – This report examines the evidence and policy lessons that can be drawn from the findings of the fifth European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) carried out in 2010. The focus is on the links between working conditions and labour market participation in the light of the EU's longstanding policy pursuit of more and better jobs. The report also assesses how the EWCS is valued by policy users and researchers, and where its further development or usage could enhance EU policy on employment and social developments. [More](#).

### European Training Foundation (ETF)

VET reforms in EU candidate countries: What does 2014 Enlargement Package say? – Better aligning education and skills with labour market needs is one of key economic challenges in the Western Balkans, says the European Commission's 2014 annual enlargement strategy paper. This year's EU enlargement progress reports devote considerable space to the assessment of the reforms in vocational education and training. Each year the Commission adopts its "Enlargement package" - a set of documents explaining its policy on EU enlargement and reporting on progress achieved in each candidate and potential candidate country. [More](#).

### European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA)

New report shows how healthy workplaces are managing stress – EU-OSHA and Eurofound launch the collaborative, state-of-the-art report "Psychosocial risks in Europe: Prevalence and strategies for prevention" at a two-day seminar in Brussels. The report gives a broad overview on psychosocial risks at European workplaces and gives examples on the way forward at political as well as company level—all illustrated with real-life examples and case studies. This report is essential reading for policy-makers and advisers, OSH professionals, and employers' and workers' representatives. [More](#).

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### Twitter

You may follow the activities of the EMPL committee on twitter: [@EPSocialAffairs](https://twitter.com/EPSocialAffairs)

### Meetings online

Watch the Committee meeting live on the [EP web site](#). Past meetings are available via the [EP Live multimedia library](#) and you can also download the extracts of speakers.

### Further information

For any further information, please contact the EMPL secretariat at [empl-secretariat@ep.europa.eu](mailto:empl-secretariat@ep.europa.eu) or visit the [EMPL Committee website](#).

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