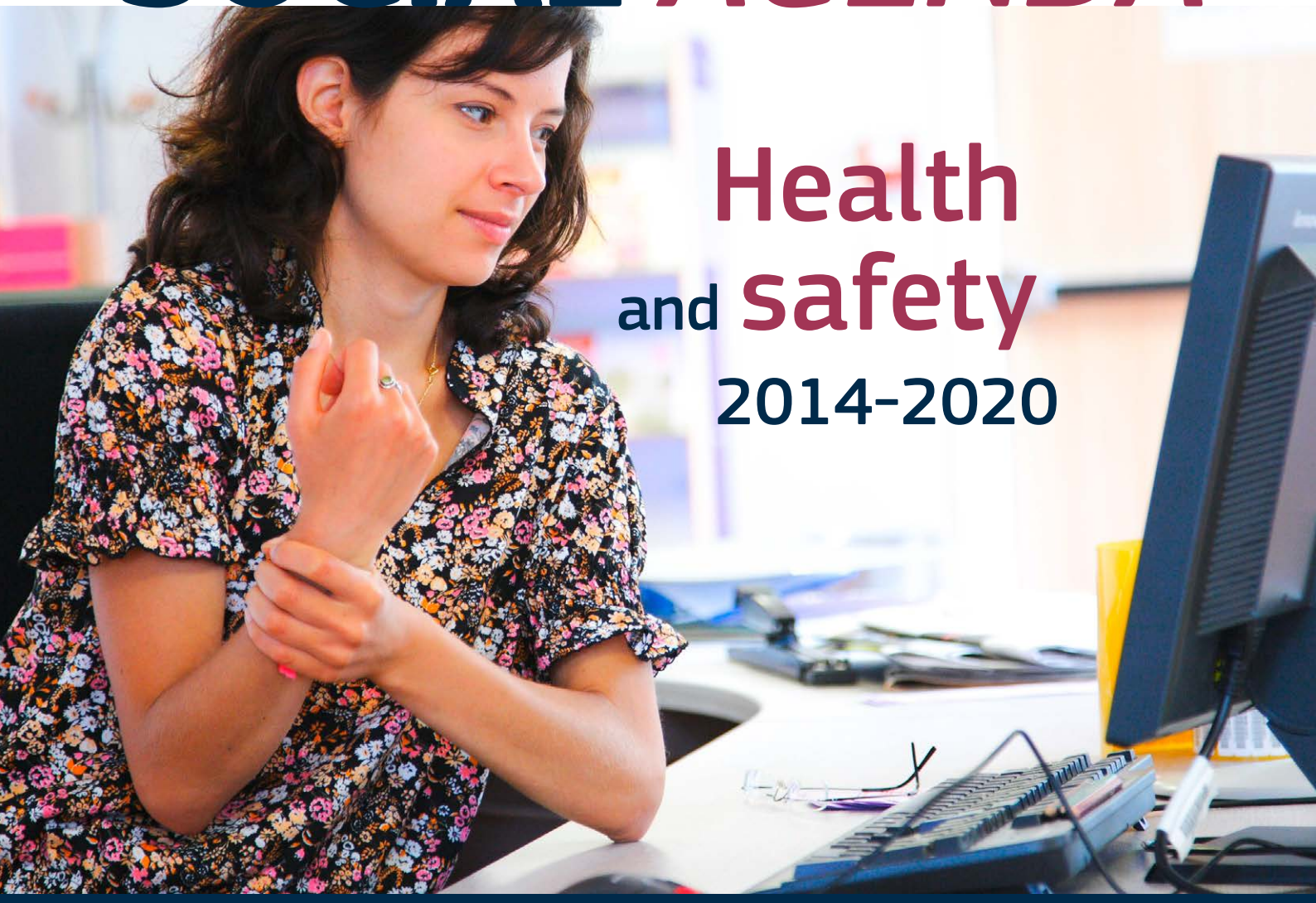
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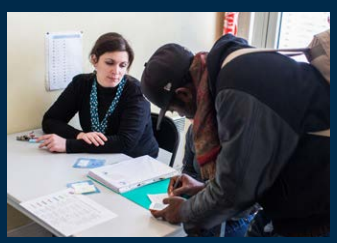
# SOCIAL AGENDA



## Health and safety 2014-2020

I focus on

6
**Out of poverty**
*A new European fund*



8
**2010-2014**
*László Andor's legacy*



# EDITORIAL


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*Prevention is an investment: this approach, which the social investment package adopted by the European Commission in February 2013 encapsulates, is well illustrated by the new EU occupational health and safety strategic framework for the years 2014-2020. It focuses on the need for all actors on the ground, whatever their job, rank or function and wherever they work, to take ownership of this policy and make prevention a reflex for all.*

*The national authorities are encouraged to use the European Social Fund and the Employment and Social Innovation programme to help SMEs acquire and use Information Technology (IT) risk assessment tools – the first step in developing a health and safety culture. The Member States are also urged to disseminate a prevention culture from primary school right through to adult vocational training courses.*

*The European Commission is doing its part. In particular, it is thoroughly checking the concrete impact of twenty-four EU occupational health and safety laws adopted since 1989, in view of making it easier for micro companies and SMEs to implement them. It has also gone as far as actually designing a free of charge on-line IT tool to make risk assessment accessible to all companies. Studies show that investing in health and safety prevention produces good ratios on return.*

**"Investing in health and safety at work"**

*This investment approach goes together with a holistic approach: considering EU workers from their very first to their very last job and not just as workers but also as citizens.*

*Indeed, health and safety is not just about accidents. It is also about adapting the workplace to a longer working life, in order to keep our social protection systems sustainable in the face of demographic change. It is about addressing new risks and tackling occupational diseases, both physical and psycho-social.*

*Properly implemented right through to the local and plant level, a holistic and preventive occupational health and safety policy can play a key role in facilitating economic recovery and achieving smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.*

*The legislation is there, the tools exist: it is now a matter of the maximum number of people taking ownership of one of the EU policies which has the greatest potential for improving the day to day life of people, the performance of companies and the sustainability of the European economic and social model.*

**Michel Servoz**
*Director General of the European Commission's Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion department*

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# NEWS IN BRIEF




***Youth employment initiative:*** *€ 1.1 billion from the EU in favour of Italian young people.*

## **11 July:** Youth unemployment in Italy

The European Commission adopted the national Operational Programme for the implementation of the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) in Italy. Under this Programme, Italy will mobilise €1.5 billion from various sources, including €1.1 billion from the European budget (Youth Employment Initiative and the European Social Fund), to help young people to find a job.

## **8 July:** Accelerated implementation

Experts from the European Commission and Member States met in Brussels to accelerate the programming arrangements and practical implementation of the Youth Employment Initiative at a special seminar organised by the Commission. This seminar aimed to assist Member States to accelerate the programming of measures to support young people financed by the Youth Employment Initiative and to put this money to the best use.

## **7 July:** Inland waterway workers

The European Commission presented a proposal setting specific rules on working time for the inland waterway transport sector. It would translate into EU law the agreement reached by the social partners of this sector on 15 February 2012. Over 75 % of inland waterway transport takes place across more than one Member State.

## **30 June:** Many people left behind

The Employment and Social Situation Quarterly Review indicates that economic recovery is leaving many people behind. The EU labour market is gradually recovering and, for the first time since 2011, GDP, employment and household incomes are growing. However, long-term unemployment is still increasing and the situation of households with low incomes has not improved. The Review also highlights persistent challenges for women in terms of unemployment and under-employment and provides an update on recent trends in worker mobility, confirming higher employment rates for mobile workers and their increasingly higher levels of education.




***Left behind:*** *women are facing persistent unemployment and under-employment challenges.*

## **24 June:** 200 million European Health Insurance Cards

Almost 200 million Europeans already have the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC), according to the latest figures available for 2013. This represents 37.4% of the insured population in the EU. The number of EHIC holders is steadily increasing, with 8 million more citizens carrying it in 2013 compared to the previous year (+4%).

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## 23 June: Low-skilled workers

Low-skilled workers encounter increasing difficulties to find a job, face lower job stability and are out-competed by medium-skilled workers even in elementary occupations. In contrast, job opportunities are growing in some high-skilled professions. These are the main findings of the European Vacancy and Recruitment Report 2014.

## 17 June: New European Skills Passport




***Facilitation:*** *A European Hospitality Skills Passport to facilitate contact between jobseekers and employers in the hospitality and tourism sector in Europe.*

The European Commission launched the European Hospitality Skills Passport, a tool developed to facilitate contact between jobseekers and employers in the hospitality and tourism sector in Europe. The Skills Passport allows workers and employers to overcome language barriers and to compare hospitality workers' skills in order to facilitate recruitment in the sector. Hosted on the European Job Mobility Portal EURES, the skills passport is available in all EU official languages. The passport will be extended to other sectors in the future.

## 11 June: Victims of forced labour and seafarers

The International Labour Organization (ILO) adopted two new international instruments to combat forced labour, and approved important amendments to the ILO's Maritime Labour Convention. The updating of the Forced Labour Convention is a big step towards the definitive suppression of this human rights violation. The new amendments to the Maritime Labour Convention will raise global standards and ensure relief and support to seafarers and their families in case of abandonment, or if death or long-term disability occurs as the result of occupational injury, illness or hazard.

## 6 June: Health and safety at work

To better protect the more than 217 million workers in the EU from work-related accidents and diseases, the Commission presented a new Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2014-20. It identifies key challenges and strategic objectives for health and safety at work and presents key actions and instruments to address these (see special feature page 14 onwards).

## 3 June: First Youth Employment Initiative programme

The Commission adopted the first Operational Programme with France to use the available funding from the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) to tackle youth unemployment. France will receive € 620 million from the YEI and the European Social Fund (ESF) to help young people not in employment, education or training to find a job, in those regions with youth unemployment rates over 25%. It is the first programme adopted in the EU for this € 6 billion initiative covering 20 Member States. The Youth Employment Initiative will directly benefit around one million young French people currently out of employment, education or training.




***First programme:*** *France is the first country to receive € 620 million of EU funding for young people not in education, training or employment.*

SOCIAL
INCLUSION

# Funding the first steps out of poverty

## New EU fund combines assistance to meet basic needs with social integration measures




***Material or non-material:*** *EU countries can decide whether to provide material or non-material assistance... or both.*

Close to 125 million people – almost a quarter of the EU population – were at risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2012. Almost 50 million were suffering from severe material deprivation. As a result of the present crisis, this number has increased by 8.8 million since 2008.

An estimated 4.1 million people are homeless across the EU, including young people, migrants and families with children. In 2011, 10 % of the EU population (40 million people) could not afford to put a basic meal (with meat, chicken or fish or a vegetarian equivalent) on their table every second day (see box page 7 for more figures).

### Divergence

Seen from a European perspective, there is an increasing divergence in terms of deprivation, both within and between EU countries. In 2011, the best EU welfare systems reduced the risk of poverty by 35 %, the least effective by less than 15 %.

Some of the people suffering from extreme forms of poverty are too far away from the labour market to benefit from the European Social Fund (ESF), which invests directly into people's competences in order to improve their standing on the labour market (see *Social Agenda* n°37). They first need to satisfy vital needs such as ensuring regular meals, wearing decent clothes and having access to essential goods such as shoes, soap and shampoo, or basic school supplies.

On 10 March 2014, the EU Council of Minister adopted a European Commission proposal to do just that, and more, through a new EU Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD). In practice, over €3.8 billion will be allocated to the Fund and each EU country will receive at least €3.5 million over the 2014-2020 EU budgetary period to fund a maximum



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***Reintegration measures:*** *assistance must be combined with reintegration measures such as guidance and support.*

of 85 % of a national seven-year programme in favour of the most deprived.

## Flexibility

Each national programme has to be approved by the European Commission, as is the case with the ESF and other EU funds under shared EU-Member State management. But FEAD gives EU countries plenty of flexibility.

It is the national authorities who decide which groups they want to target and how they want to reach out to them, either directly or through partner organisations (whether public or non-governmental). They can also decide whether to provide material (food, clothes, shoes, shampoo…) or non-material assistance (or both), so long as the latter does not overlap with ESF-funded measures. For example, they can take social inclusion measures in favour of retired people as, by definition, they are no longer on the labour market.

However, they must combine this assistance with social integration measures such as guidance and support – e.g. helping people manage their family budget or ensuring that FEAD beneficiaries are informed about training programmes co-funded by the European Social Fund and how to access them.

## Since 1987

FEAD takes over from the food distribution programme for the Most Deprived people (MDP) which, since 1987, made the EU agricultural surpluses available to Member States wishing to use them as food aid. Successive reforms of the Common Agricultural Policy led to the discontinuation of that Fund. However, FEAD is quite different from the MDP: in addition to providing material support, it also aims at alleviating social exclusion.

Financially, FEAD (including national co-funding) represents a significant increase compared to MDP. Whereas MDP was voluntary, FEAD involves all 28 EU Member States. Its multi-annual character allows for a more strategic approach. It also gives much more flexibility to EU countries in terms of procuring the food to be distributed. And it can be used, beyond food, for essential goods and non-material assistance. Finally, as it conditions material assistance on active social inclusion measures, it usefully complements the EU's cohesion policy, to which the new fund belongs.

## More information:

http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1089&langId=en

### *804 million meals*

*The European Federation of Food Banks brings together some 260 food banks in 21 countries in Europe. In 2013, it managed and distributed 402 000 tonnes of food, equivalent to 804 million meals, distributed to 5.7 million people in partnership with 31 000 charitable organisations and social centres in Europe.*

*Until now, nearly half of the food collected in Europe comes from the European programme of food aid for the most deprived, the rest is sourced from the food industry (22 %), retail stores (17 %) and individuals (14 %) through national and local collections.*

*Paul is a 63 year-old Red Cross food programmes volunteer in France. "In 2013, we participated in several events to promote the MDP with other associations, including the* Banque alimentaire, Restos du coeur and Secours populaire*. The EU food programme is vital to our business, including FEAD from 2014. But we also source supplies through supermarkets' unsold goods, donations from individuals, farmers and agro-food firms".*

Investing in people: EU funding for employment and social inclusion, Social Europe guide, volume 7, European Commission. ISSN 1977-2343.

**EMPLOYMENT,**
SOCIAL AND
INCLUSION POLICY

# László Andor: Continue reforming the Economic and Monetary Union

## Outgoing Employment and Social Affairs European Commissioner draws lessons from the last five years



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***Hottest issue:*** *the youth guarantee brought a brand new element to EU doctrine and practice in the area of employment.*

***Which measure was the most important one of your mandate?***

The Youth Guarantee (see page 13) stands out because we have seen a full cycle: the analysis, the preparation, the initial debates, the decision and the implementation. And it's also quite a complex issue because it's policy on the one hand but it is also about funding. So I think this is a good example where this process added a brand new element to the doctrine but also the practice of the EU in the area of employment.

***Youth employment was one of the hottest political issues during your mandate?***

It received a huge amount of attention. This is very important because such attention helps to ensure that high-level political support is provided to implementing the Youth Guarantee.

***Are you happy with the way the Youth Guarantee is being implemented?***

We work very closely with the Member States, step by step. We know where the weaknesses are in each country. Thanks to this cycle I mentioned, and also to the Youth Employment Initiative (see page 13), we were able not just to explore where the weaknesses are in specific countries but also to respond in a timely fashion.

***In a speech on labour mobility in June, you said that the most contentious legislative file you had to deal with were the rules on the posting of workers.***

It has been a very polarised and ideological debate, with entrenched positions. For some, it was like a war of attrition rather than a war of motion. We wanted motion... and not a war but a compromise! 2010 and 2011 were practically spent exploring the possible areas of compromise. The proposal put forward in spring 2012 by the European Commission for an enforcement directive (see page 13) was an opportunity to compromise. Another year and a half was spent having very dynamic debates in the European Parliament, in the EU Council of Ministers and among stakeholders at large. It was not an easy dossier and it's very encouraging that, first within the Council and then between Council and Parliament, a compromise was achieved. So now I think it's important to give a little bit of time for implementing this enforcement directive, which in my view will bring concrete, visible improvements in the protection of posted workers and the functioning of the Single Market.

***The free movement of workers was also a very hot file for you. You were even personally attacked...***

It's interesting that it became so hot despite the fact it did not bring any new elements into the free movement issue! Full freedom of movement was granted in 2011 for the countries that joined the EU in 2004, under well-known conditions. There was no new legislation, nor were there any shocks as far as what it meant in real terms, on the ground. Nevertheless, especially from the UK but also from some other countries, we received an increasing flow of concerns or complaints which had sometimes a very loose connection with reality. In this context, the fundamental task has been to defend the principle and the right of free movement of persons but also to demonstrate that the Commission was working on a number of initiatives which would ensure that labour mobility delivers more and better results in the EU. And we have taken many such initiatives: the posting of workers but also the portability of pensions (see page 13) which guarantees that there are no first-class or second-class workers and that everybody is entitled to the same long-term savings. We also put forward a proposal for reforming EURES, the European network of employment services, in order to ensure that people and companies are well informed about the supply and demand of jobs and that EU funds can help people prepare for job opportunities. The reform will also help matching offers and demand across borders and the funds can also help addressing short term difficulties – if, for example, a large number of people arrive in a small area due to cross-border mobility. So these initiatives have already been taken. We just need to ensure that people are aware of them.




***Missed opportunity:*** *Under European Commission President J.Delors, a lot of progress was achieved with the social dimension of the single market and social dialogue was elevated at EU level but the same effort was not made with economic and monetary union.*




***6 children, 52 m² flat:*** *damage has been done, delay has been caused but Europe cannot afford "lowering" its ambitions in terms of inclusive growth.*

***You also wrote in an article that the Barroso II Commission has always paid attention to employment and social developments, although they were not always treated with the same urgency as the financial sector crisis. Do you think this is going to change?***

Well the point is that the employment and social objectives have been there from the very start of European integration, not just in the Treaty of Rome of 1957 but in the Schuman declaration of 1950. But it has never been on the same footing as for example trade or economic integration. The question is: how we can ensure that the social outcome of economic integration corresponds to what the people want to see and that there is a sense that economic integration helps Member States move towards their own respective social objectives? That's why it is significant that the treaty speaks about the EU as a social market economy. When Jacques Delors chaired the European Commission, a lot of progress was achieved in strengthening the social dimension of the single market, such as the Directives on working time and the posting of workers. It was during that period that social dialogue was elevated to the EU level. The problem is that the same effort was not made with monetary union. And with the Eurozone crisis, we have been suffering the consequences of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) not having a stronger social dimension. This is what we need to strengthen through better analysis, governance and in my view, also, with a fiscal capacity.

***You have said also that the preparation of the first EU Annual Growth Survey (AGS) report (which launches the European Semester economic coordination process), at the end of 2010, was probably the toughest debate you ever saw in the Barroso II Commission. What were the terms of the debate?***

It was a long, complex and difficult debate because it was a first: the first AGS report and the first European Semester. We all wanted to make sure we got it right in the face of an unprecedented crisis; that we send the right messages and get the right balance out of this discussion. We even discussed issues which became the focus of attention in later European Semester cycles, e.g. wages. Another question was the level of concreteness when giving some specific orientations. It was not only about getting the orientation right but also the approach and the style.

***There have been some breakthroughs, like the adoption of the employment and social policy scoreboard, which was used for the first time in the European Semester 2014 cycle, and the Commission's Communication on social EMU. Employment and social affairs are catching up with economic and financial ones?***

It's not simply about social policy in comparison with economic policy. It is also about ensuring that within the

process of reconstructing the EMU, which started in 2012, we have the capacity to control the social outcomes. That is why this employment and social affairs scoreboard is important. Not only does it help understand what is happening but it also helps develop the right proposals, both at the level of each country and at EU level. So this is certainly a very important step. And since the Communication on the social dimension of EMU was adopted in October 2013, we have seen a Europe-wide debate unfolding. It shows that we managed to launch something which facilitates the emergence of a different narrative, a different approach to EMU – potentially a more social one.

***In 2010, with the Europe 2020 strategy, the EU took the risk of putting forward precise targets for reducing unemployment and poverty. You have stated that to reach those targets by 2020, we need to find new ways.***

My message is: continue reforming the EMU, rebalancing it, because overcoming divergences between countries is the key. In the last four years, instead of the convergence that we had previously witnessed for years and even decades, we have experienced massive divergence. This is an EMU-level problem. It is measured through the scoreboard I mentioned earlier and other major instruments. To overcome these divergences, you need to find new ways. Reforming the EMU would restore the chance to make progress towards the Europe 2020 targets. However, it is not a guarantee in itself because, even before the deepening of the Eurozone crisis, the Member States did not set sufficiently high targets for themselves, especially in the area of poverty reduction. So of course the crisis had an impact but before the Eurozone crisis deepened, there was already a problem with the national ambitions. Perhaps some countries wanted to be cautious. Originally, in 2010, we said that we need to be both ambitious and realistic at EU level but also at national level. Still in 2010, we were told that the Europe 2020 targets were not sufficiently ambitious and shortly after, we were told that they were not realistic. For example, some NGOs thought that lifting 20 million people out of poverty or social exclusion, i.e. 4 % of the EU population, is not enough but then shortly after, people started to say that it's not realistic anymore! What we need now, as we review the Europe 2020 strategy, is to recognise that damage has been done, delay has been caused but I don't think Europe can afford "lowering" its ambitions in terms of inclusive growth.

***You are suggesting creating automatic stabilisers, a basic European unemployment insurance scheme for Eurozone countries or a reinsurance of national unemployment insurance schemes. Are you optimistic about this ever happening?***

After the July informal Council of Employment and Social Affairs ministers in Milan, I am more optimistic than before because the Council Presidency explicitly called for the Commission to present a green paper on automatic stabilisers. It also said that, most likely, the Economic and Finance Ministers' Council would also address this topic. So after two years or so of expert analysis and explorations, social EMU has entered the political phase and can therefore gain momentum. The European Commission President-elect, Jean-Claude Juncker, has also recognized the importance of some form of fiscal capacity for the monetary union.




***Brick by brick:*** *After two years of expert analysis and explorations, social Economic and Monetary Union has entered the political phase and can therefore gain momentum.*

Of course, it's not something where you would expect things to come very quickly. There is no consensus in terms of solutions but there is a widely shared understanding that, first of all, the Eurozone crisis is not over. The reconstruction of the EMU has to be part of the EU recovery strategy. Also, more and more people understand that some form of automatic stabiliser must play a role. There is a legitimate discussion about the concrete forms this could take but for economic and also social reasons, having a kind of safety net for the national welfare systems is a logical proposal. This is not only about social policy. It is also about economic policy, because the economic recession would be less deep and shorter if such a solution was introduced.

### *Has the connection between social and economic issues now been achieved?*

At least this is my endeavour: to ensure that social policy is not seen in isolation from economic policy. That's why it's very important that the employment and social area is part of the core group which manages the European Semester process and that the European Semester itself is debated in two EU Council of Ministers formations: that of employment and social affairs ministers and that of economic and finance ministers. This is, in my view, extremely significant because welfare systems need a material base to function.

### *You said in your half term assessment that the European social model should not be a victim of the crisis. At the end of your mandate, what is your assessment in this respect?*

We cannot say that we are fully out of the risk zone. The fact is that the EU, for about a year now, is emerging from recession. The fact that unemployment has started to come down in many countries which went through a long recession is also very good news. But the risk of poverty and of increasing poverty is still extremely high. As I keep on repeating, Europe is emerging with greater imbalances from the crisis than what we had before. That's why the risk of a serious damage to a European social model is still very serious. And that's why this has to be a part of the high-level political debate.




***Defending a long-established right:*** *the fundamental task has been to defend the principle and right of free movement of persons and demonstrate that the Commission was striving to ensure that labour mobility delivers more and better results.*

## 2010-2014, from the Europe 2020 strategy to social EMU

**March 2010:** launch of the Europe 2020 strategy with concrete targets for unemployment and poverty reduction.

**January 2011:** first Annual Growth Survey (AGS) Report marks the beginning of the first cycle of coordination of the Member States' macro-economic, budgetary and structural reform policies, known as the "European semester".

**December 2011:** Youth Opportunities Initiative helps Member States work on preventing early school leaving, helping youngsters developing skills relevant to the labour market, ensuring work experience and on-the-job training and helping young people find a first good quality job.

**February 2012:** adoption of the White paper on pensions: "An Agenda for Adequate, Safe and Sustainable Pensions".

**April 2012:** Employment package looks into how EU employment policies intersect with a number of other policy areas in support of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

**December 2012:** Youth Employment Package, including a proposal for a Council Recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee in each country, i.e. a comprehensive scheme ensuring that everyone under 25 receives a good-quality offer of a job, apprenticeship, traineeship or continued education within four months of leaving school or becoming unemployed.

**February 2013:** Social Investment Package sets out ways of further modernising welfare states and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of social policies.

**February 2013:** the European Council decides to ring-fence an initial €6 billion within the EU budget - the Youth Employment Initiative - to support the Youth Guarantee's implementation in regions with particularly high youth unemployment rates.

**April 2013:** EU Council of Ministers adopts the Youth Guarantee proposal.

**July 2013:** EU Alliance for Apprenticeship brings together key actors to improve the quality and supply of apprenticeships across the EU and change the mind-sets towards apprenticeship-type learning.

**October 2013:** proposal to strengthen the social dimension of the Economic and monetary Union (EMU), including creating a new scoreboard of key employment and social indicators. The scoreboard was used for the first time in the framework of the 2014 European Semester.

**January 2014:** new EU Multiannual Financial Framework for 2014-2020 comes into force. The role of the European Social Fund is strengthened. The European Globalisation Adjustment Fund is maintained. A new Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived is created, as well as an EU-Level Programme for Employment and Social Innovation.

**January 2014:** Proposal to reform the system of the European network of Employment services (EURES) in order to turn it into a pan-European placement and recruitment service.

**March 2014:** Member States agree on a Quality Framework for Traineeship to enable trainees to acquire high-quality work experience under safe and fair conditions, and to increase their chances of finding a good quality job.

**April 2014:** European Commission obtains a final agreement from the EU Council of Ministers and from the European Parliament on new rules to ensure that the pension rights an employee builds up in one country remain valid if he/she moves to another EU country.

**April 2014:** enforcement directive on the posting of workers in the context of free movement of services, clarifying the rules of the 1996 directive. It will make it easier to ensure that posted workers' rights are protected and to combat the use of letterbox companies and abuses of subcontracting arrangements.

**June 2014:** European Commission adopts a strategic framework for occupational health and safety 2014-2020 (see special feature page 14 onwards).

**July 2014:** The Italian Presidency of the EU Council of Ministers calls on the European Commission to prepare a Green paper on a European unemployment scheme or other similar macroeconomic stabilisation systems for the euro zone.

SPECIAL
FEATURE

# Health and safety at work 2014-2020

## A new EU strategic framework to boost effective prevention for all

On 6 June 2014, the European Commission adopted a Communication on an EU strategic framework on health and safety at work for the years 2014-2020.

This special feature presents the novelties it contains: a new emphasis on work-related diseases, tackling new risks, reaching out to micro and small companies, addressing demographic change, contributing to economic recovery, improving data, reinforcing the global dimension…

### Achievements

It also explains the achievements of the previous 2007-2012 strategy - especially in reducing the number of accidents at work and inciting EU countries to design or reinforce their own national strategy.

### Agencies

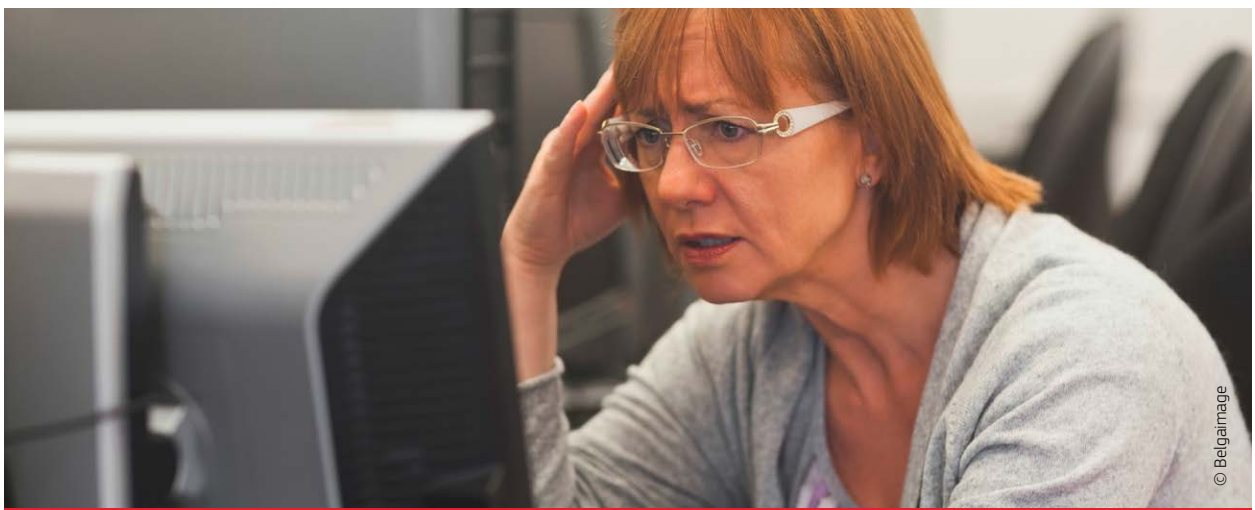
And it turns the spotlight onto the two agencies which support the European Commission by carrying out research, disseminating information and raising awareness of occupational health and safety (OHS) policy: EU-OSHA, specialised in the OHS area, and Eurofound, which takes a wider view by including living conditions.

### Ownership

A joint interview rounds up this special feature, with Teresa Moitinho, head of the unit in charge of OHS in the European Commission's Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, and with her deputy Jesus Alvarez-Hidalgo. Both explain in detail how the new EU strategy was conceived and what it seeks to achieve - in particular, encourage people on the ground to take ownership of OHS policy so that prevention becomes a reflex for all.

### Values

In the "Other Voices" section, page 26, *Social Agenda* gives the floor to Paul Weber, Honorary Secretary of the International Association of Labour Inspectorates. He places the whole issue of health and safety at work in a more philosophical and historical perspective and explains the values that are at stake.




***What's wrong?*** *2014-2020 strategy places a new emphasis on work-related diseases, whatever the type of work.*



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***Focus of attention:*** *Special attention will be given to risks affecting particular groups of people (such as young people) and to the industrial application of new technologies (such as nanotechnologies).*

# Promoting the health status of all workers

## New EU strategy puts more focus on prevention of work-related diseases and new risks from first to last job

After the success of the 2007-2012 EU strategy in reducing the number of accidents at work (see page 18), the new 2014-2020 EU occupational health and safety (OHS) strategic framework shifts the focus to even more challenging but also more complex objectives: addressing work-related and occupational diseases, preventing new risks, managing the consequences of demographic change and improving the implementation of OHS legislation on the ground, particularly in micro and small enterprises.

### Tracking diseases

Special attention will be paid to occupational cancers, lung diseases, skin diseases and other chronic conditions. They are more difficult to detect than work accidents and are addressed very differently from one country to another.

The new strategy will also grant specific attention to the impact of changes in work organisation on physical and mental health which could result in musculo-skeletal disorders, stress, anxiety and depression. Good practices on preventing mental health problems at work will be identified and disseminated.

Risks due to the industrial application of new technologies (nanotechnologies, biotechnologies, green technologies) need to be checked. Targeted attention will be given to risks affecting particular groups: older workers, inexperienced young workers (including those employed in different forms of temporary contracts, apprenticeships…), workers with disabilities and women (who can face risks such as musculoskeletal disorders or specific types of cancer as a result of the nature of the jobs where they are over-represented).

### An ageing workforce

Due to the demographic changes affecting the EU, working lives need to become longer in order to ensure that EU citizens will carry on enjoying decent pensions. Work places will need to be adapted to an ageing workforce. In so doing, it is crucial to give due consideration to OHS issues such as workplace accessibility, work organisation and working time.

Addressing demographic change also calls for a holistic approach to working life and ensuring that working conditions are appropriate from the first job onwards. This entails, for example, taking reintegration and rehabilitation measures allowing for an early return to work after an accident or disease, to avoid early exclusion from the labour market.

Such a holistic approach requires that the EU OHS prevention culture be mainstreamed into other policies, such as education, so that prevention becomes a reflex for everybody, everywhere.

# SPECIAL FEATURE




***Facilitating economic recovery:*** *investments in health and safety (here an asbestos removal training programme) have a direct impact on productivity and competitiveness.*

## *Global benchmarking*

***The EU has become a reference in the field of occupational health and safety (OHS). Its new framework for 2014-2020 aims at reinforcing the international dimension of its OHS policy.***

***The European Commission will launch a review of the memorandum of understanding with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) so that it better reflects OHS policy. Together with the ILO, it will contribute to G20 initiatives on safer workplaces.***

***It will also strengthen cooperation with the World Health Organisation and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.***

***One of the EU's major but often overlooked achievements is to spread its OHS requirements to the countries which join it over the years.***

## Better compliance

Micro and small enterprises struggle to comply with OHS rules. They need support, such as the free on-line tool to assess risks, designed and produced by the EU Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA, see page 20). Member States are therefore encouraged to make greater use of EU funding, such as the European Social Fund, to help micro and small enterprises use such IT-based tools.

Guidance and examples of good implementation practice, to be developed by the Commission and EU-OSHA, will promote better compliance. Larger enterprises should support SMEs within the contractor-supplier-purchaser chain in order to improve OSH. Moreover, 24 EU OHS directives are being evaluated and possibilities for simplifications and/or unnecessary administrative burden will also be assessed.

Implementation of OHS legislation needs to be generally improved. The 20 000 labour inspectors who operate within the EU have a crucial role to play and adequate

# SPECIAL FEATURE

training is essential in this regard. The existing exchange programmes of labour inspectors between EU countries will be evaluated and the current tools for cooperation within the EU Senior Labour Inspectors Committee (SLIC) will be enhanced. The European Commission will assess the effectiveness of sanctions and administrative fines imposed by Member States in case of breach of OHS rules.

## More data

Statistical data on work-related accidents and diseases, occupational exposures and work-related ill-health needs to be improved in terms of reliability, comparability and timeliness. National and EU statistical experts should intensify efforts to improve data collection and develop common approaches in identifying and measuring risks.

The quality of data on accidents at work transmitted by Member States via the European Statistics on Accidents at Work will be assessed. So will the availability and comparability of data on occupational diseases at EU level and the feasibility of a simplified data transmission. Information on the costs and benefits of OSH measures should also be improved. A specific tool with policy and performance indicators will be developed to monitor the way the EU strategic framework 2014-2020 is being implemented.

## Economic recovery

Better implementing occupational health and safety policies is key for facilitating economic recovery. Indeed, estimates show that investments in the OHS area can produce high ratios of return, averaging 2.2 and has a direct impact on productivity and competitiveness. They also contribute to the sustainability of social security systems, in line with the objectives of the EU 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth (Europe 2020, see *Social Agenda* n°37).

## Taking ownership

EU health and safety policy has a strong tradition of involving representatives of employers' and workers' organisations at EU level, as required by successive EU treaties. The challenge now is to help all the relevant actors, including at local and plant level, take ownership of OHS policy: one of the EU policies which has the greatest impact on everyday life. Member States are invited to consider reviewing their national strategies in light of the new Strategic Framework.

The EU strategic framework will be reviewed in 2016 to take full account of the results of the evaluation of 24 OSH directives and of the review of the EU 2020 strategy.

## More information:

http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2053&furtherNews=yes

### *Comprehensive coverage*

*Occupational health and safety (OHS) has been addressed at European level since 1951, when the European Coal and Steel Community was created. In 1987, the Single Act treaty explicitly established a specific legal basis for OHS. It also acknowledged the European Commission's role in promoting social dialogue at European level.*

*This proved to be a turning point as in 1989, the EU adopted an OHS framework directive (89/391/EEC) which encourages improvements in all sectors of activity. It lays down general principles of prevention, promotes workers' rights to be informed and consulted and seeks to adequately protect workers.*

*Since then, the EU has adopted more than 24 directives on the OHS aspects of specific risks at work (e.g. exposure to dangerous substances or physical agents), workplaces and sectors (e.g. temporary work sites, extractive industries, fishing vessels), groups of workers (e.g. pregnant women, young workers), work equipment, etc...*

*In 1997, the EU treaty gave the trade unions and employers' organisations the right to negotiate agreements at European level, which could eventually be turned into EU law. Since then, the social partners have reached a series of OHS agreements, e.g. most recently on the fisheries sector. Some of which have been turned into EU legislation.*

SPECIAL FEATURE

# Marked decrease in the number of accidents

## A 28 % reduction rate between 2007 and 2011




***Unprotected:*** *the rate of accidents went down by 27.9% in the EU between 2007 and 2011, although every year 4 000 people still die in workplace accidents.*

Every year in the EU, more than 3 million workers are victims of a serious accident at work and 4 000 die in workplace accidents. Moreover, it is estimated by the International Labour Organisation that 160 000 workers die of work-related diseases, including occupational cancers for 95 000 of them.

Work related accidents and diseases affect all sectors and professions, irrespective of whether people are sitting behind a desk, driving a truck or working in a mine or on a construction site. They not only cause personal suffering but also impose high costs on companies and society as a whole (see box on page 19).

The main objective of the occupational health and safety (OHS) strategy 2007-2012 was to reduce the number of accidents at work and of outbreaks of occupational diseases. A reduction of 27.9 % in the incidence rate of accidents leading to absences of more than three days was achieved in the EU between 2007 and 2011. However, work-related diseases remain a challenge, on which the 2014-2020 strategy will therefore concentrate (see article page 15).

Another success of the 2007-2012 strategy, according to an independent assessment carried out in 2012 and 2013, was the way it focused on actually implementing OHS policy in EU countries, through national strategies. Some countries' strategies would not otherwise have evolved to their current level.

Several EU-wide campaigns have been successfully implemented by the EU OHS Agency (EU-OSHA, see page 20). OSHA has also developed a free on-line risk assessment tool for small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs).

# SPECIAL FEATURE

## Implementation gaps

On the more negative side, the independent assessment points to gaps in the implementation of the 2007-2012 strategy. The main one being that individual companies, especially SMEs, are not taking up this policy sufficiently. Crucially, national strategies do not sufficiently reflect the strategy's objectives related to the health surveillance of workers, probably due to differences in the way national systems recognise and compensate for occupational diseases.

Moreover, integrating OSH into their education and training programmes has not so far been a primary concern for EU countries. They have made limited use of the financing opportunities the EU strategy offered for this precise purpose, especially through the European Social Fund.

## Tangible results

Based on this evaluation, the European Commission carried out in 2013 an on-line public consultation on the future EU OHS policy. Employees' organisations and public institutions were the most positive regarding the strategy's results, while employers' organisations and enterprises were the most sceptical. Overall, 44.4 % of respondents agreed that the strategy had produced tangible results, while 25 % did not agree.

Most of those who gave a positive assessment underlined the role that the strategy had played in establishing a level playing field across the EU and in contributing to a better implementation of OHS legislation across Member States. Many of them underlined the strategy's role in contributing to diminishing the number of accidents at work.

93 % of the respondents deemed it necessary to continue coordinating OSH policies at EU level. 75 % actually called for a new strategy. However, respondents were split about the need for further OHS regulation, as well as on the issue of reducing the regulatory burden on small and medium-size enterprises.

**More information:**
http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=148

## *Wide disparity between countries*

- *Although most workers are satisfied with their own working conditions (77 % on average in the EU), there is a very wide disparity across EU countries, ranging from 94 % in Denmark to 38 % in Greece.*
- *In Belgium, diseases caused by mechanical vibrations (mainly back injuries that occur in the transport and construction sector) account for the largest number of submitted compensation applications of all occupational diseases.*
- *In the Czech Republic, occupational musculoskeletal disorders represent about 33 % of all reported occupational diseases.*
- *In Spain, occupational musculoskeletal diseases are the most prevalent of all occupational diseases.*
- *In Germany, 460 million days' sick-leave per year resulted in an estimated loss of productivity of 3.1 % of GDP (2011 statistics)*
- *In the 2010-11 fiscal year, the net cost for social security attributable to sickness or accidents in the United Kingdom was estimated at £2 381 million.*
- *It is estimated that between 4 % and 8.5 % of the total number of cancers is attributable to occupational exposure.*
- *Fatalities associated with chemical substances accounted for almost half of all work-related deaths.*
- *Stress is the second most frequently reported work-related health problem, affecting 22 % of workers from the EU 27 (in 2005), and the number of people suffering from stress-related conditions caused or made worse by work is likely to increase.*
- *24.7 % of the European workers complain of backache, 22.8 % of muscular pains, 45.5 % report working in painful or tiring positions while 35 % are required to handle heavy loads in their work.*
- *The working population aged between 55 and 64 is expected to increase by about 16 % between 2010 and 2030.*

SPECIAL FEATURE




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*Managing stress: Occupational Safety and Health Agency (EU-OSHA) director Christa Sedlatschek at the launch of the Healthy Workplaces Campaign against stress, the second most reported work-related problem in the EU after musculoskeletal disorders.*

# Two supporting agencies

## One is specialised in health and safety at work, the other deals with living and working conditions at large

The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) and the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working conditions (Eurofound) are two agencies which support the European Commission in the area of occupational health and safety (OHS). Both have government, employers and workers representatives on their governing boards.

EU-OSHA, based in Bilbao, Spain, was set up in 1996. Its task is to collect, analyse and disseminate technical, scientific and economic OHS information. It has a Prevention and Research Advisory Group, runs a European Risk Observatory and carries out a European enterprise survey on new and emerging risks.

### Free risk assessment

In September 2011, EU-OSHA created an online interactive risk assessment project (OiRA), which provides an easy-to-use and cost-free web application allowing users to create on-line assessment tools. It is interactive and can be used by any micro or small enterprise to carry out a risk assessment - a pre-condition for the prevention of work accidents and ill health in any company.

EU-OSHA is also renowned for its "Healthy Workplace" two-year campaigns, which it has been running since 2000 with numerous partners, including its own network of national focal points (usually the OHS authorities in each country). The latest one, on "healthy workplaces manage stress" (the second most reported work-related problem in the EU, after musculoskeletal disorders) was launched in April 2014 (see *Social Agenda* n°36). It will end in November 2015 with a Healthy Workplaces closing summit. Another highlight of these campaigns is the Healthy Workplaces Good Practice Awards competition, which recognises organisations that have found innovative ways of promoting safety and health.

### Quality of life survey

Eurofound, based in Dublin, Ireland, was set up in 1975 to contribute to the planning and design of better living and working conditions in Europe. It conducts research, monitoring operations and surveys - including the European Quality of Life Survey, which brings together a whole range of issues such as employment, income, housing and living conditions, family, health, work-life balance, life satisfaction and the perceived quality of society (see *Social Agenda* n°33). More specifically in the OHS area, it has a Working Conditions Advisory Committee. It runs a European Observatory of Working Life and carries out a European Working Conditions Survey.

### More information:

On Eurofound: http://www.eurofound.europa.eu
On EU-OSHA: https://osha.europa.eu/en

SPECIAL FEATURE

# Making prevention a reflex for all

## Teresa Moitinho, in charge of health and safety at work in the European Commission, and her deputy, Jesus Alvarez-Hidalgo, explain the new EU strategy




***Developing a prevention culture on the ground:*** *Teresa Moitinho, head of the unit in charge of occupational health and safety in the European Commission, and deputy-head Jesus Alvarez-Hidalgo.*

***There is a time lag between the end of the 2007-2012 EU Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) strategy and the adoption of the new 2014-2020 EU Strategic Framework. Why is that?***

First of all, we needed time to evaluate the previous strategy. The evaluation was published in 2013. We have also sought the opinion of our advisory bodies and stakeholders on the content of a new strategy and we decided to consult the general public too. We did so during the summer of 2013 and we organised two major conferences, one on occupational diseases in December 2013 and one on working conditions in April 2014. And in June 2014 the European Commission put forward its Communication on an EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2014-2020.

***How did the public consultation go?***

We obtained more than 500 replies, which was deemed a major success. A large majority of the respondents were in favour of carrying on coordinating efforts at EU level in the area of occupational health and safety. A majority was also in favour of adopting a new strategy.

***What emerged from the consultation?***

It confirmed the major challenges that we identified when we assessed the 2007-12 strategy: fostering implementation, in particular within micro and small enterprises; tackling the issue of demographic change and of the ageing of the EU working

# SPECIAL FEATURE

population; and preventing occupational diseases by tackling new risks.

***Can you expand on the issue of occupational diseases?***

It is more challenging to collect reliable and comparable data on diseases than on accidents. Statistical criteria related to accidents are more homogenous between EU countries, whereas the national systems for diagnosing and recognising occupational diseases, and compensating for them, differ totally from one Member State to another. Moreover, an accident is something that happens in a given moment, which is easy to identify. Whereas for occupational diseases, there may be a very long time lag between exposure to an agent and the outbreak of a disease: in the case of asbestos, it can take more than 20 years! It can also take quite some time to establish a causal link between a disease and a particular agent.

***A lot of emphasis is put on prevention, on creating a preventive culture...***

Our strategic approach has always been based on prevention, rather than corrective measures. Indeed, the OHS framework directive of 1989 itself is based on prevention. But we would like prevention to become a reflex. This entails developing a prevention culture among workers, employers and the public at large. Health and safety should be mainstreamed into other policies such as education, right from primary school onwards.

***Are people on the ground taking ownership of the EU strategy?***

We want the social partners at local level to fully own the strategy. Successive EU treaties have given social partners a say in the development and in the implementation of occupational health and safety. Our aim is to involve all the relevant actors so that they feel that the strategy also belongs to them. We need to improve the synergies between European and national social dialogue as well as between sectoral social dialogue committees and our occupational health and safety advisory bodies, while of course fully respecting the social partners' autonomy.

***How can you reach out to small and micro companies?***

Micro and small enterprises are those that show lower levels of compliance. The EU Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA), which is based in Bilbao (Spain, see page 20), carries out pan-European awareness-raising actions to support and promote the implementation of the strategy. On 7 April 2014, it launched a campaign on managing stress and psychosocial risks. These actions are particularly focused on supporting small and micro enterprises. Not only do they raise awareness but they also provide practical tools to better implement EU legislation. For example, EU-OSHA has created a free of charge on-line interactive risk assessment tool to make it easier to perform risk assessments, which is one of the key elements of prevention: you have to better assess and know the risks before combating and preventing them and establish adequate risk management. This is why the action of EU-OSHA is highlighted in the new strategic framework.

***The new framework also places a lot of emphasis on demographic change and the need to adapt the workplace to an ageing workforce...***

Our aim is to create a safe and healthy environment throughout the whole of working life, to increase the health status of the workers in a preventive approach. Focusing more on keeping workers healthy will reduce the need for expending public and private money in treating and compensating work-related accidents and diseases. There are studies that prove that investing in health and safety at work has very positive financial returns for the employers. These studies also show that the brunt of the cost of work-related accidents and diseases is born by society and by the workers. Investing in health and safety at work is therefore a win-win approach.

***What has been the impact of the present crisis, both on the previous strategy and on way the new one was conceived?***

Part of the reduction in the number of work accidents achieved under the previous strategy could be due to the economic crisis. There was a decline in certain risk activities, like the construction sector. However, the trend is there independently from the crisis. Of course, in times of crisis, people tend to consider that they have to make some savings and that these could be done by cutting down on preventive measures. However, studies show that, even in times of crisis, if you invest 1 euro in health and safety, you can get a return of over 2 euros.

***Has the crisis created or worsened other kinds of health and safety hazards, such as psychosocial risks?***

Yes, certainly. We don't have yet the full perspective of the overall impact of the crisis on health and safety but it is easy to imagine that in a context where so many people are

without jobs or are losing their job, workloads and psychosocial risks increase substantially for those who still have a job. One of the key messages is that, specially in times of crisis, sound health and safety at work can make a very substantial contribution to the economic recovery process, in terms of overall productivity and competitiveness. The new occupational health and safety strategy can contribute substantially to the objectives of the EU strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth by 2020 (Europe 2020).

***The new strategy will be reviewed in 2016, taking into account the Europe 2020 review (see* Social Agenda *n°37) and the evaluation of the EU occupational health and safety legislation adopted over the last 25 years?***

Yes. We did not want to wait until 2016 to launch the new strategy because we have identified new challenges that require continued EU-level coordinated action. Fundamentally, in contrast with the previous 2007-12 strategy which focused on reducing accidents at the workplace, the new framework is putting more emphasis on improving health. We need to foster our efforts towards the common objective of improving working conditions in EU countries, in particular in small and micro enterprises, but also worldwide as the EU is playing a leading role in this area.

***How long will it take before the new strategy actually gets going?***

Our intention is to start implementing the new strategy immediately. The European Commission will hold an open debate with key stakeholders in the relevant fora about the views and proposals contained in its Communication. It will involve them in implementing actions where appropriate. The views of the European Parliament and of the EU Council of Ministers, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the new strategy will be of particular importance, for instance when it comes to the concrete design of the implementing measures: some actions need to be undertaken by the Member States, who will need to adapt their national strategies. At EU-level, we will activate our advisory committees so that they adapt their own working programmes to the key objectives of the new strategy.



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***From first to last job:*** *"Our aim is to create a safe and healthy environment throughout the entire working life".*

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# Anna – crèche owner

## After a degree in law, Anna created her own kindergarten thanks to help from the ESF




***Born for this job:*** *"My budget wouldn't allow me to renovate the property and buy all the equipment. An association co-funded by the ESF helped me financially and trained me in fields I didn't know a lot about".*

*Anna comes from Lublin, Poland. During her law studies, she worked as an assistant in a day-care centre for children. She liked it so much that she decided to organise her study schedule around her working hours, rather than the other way round. However, in her final year, Anna had to quit that job as she had to concentrate on her studies. Having obtained her law degree, she found premises to create her own crèche and got in touch with an association co-funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) which helped her financially renovate the property and buy all the equipment. It also provided her with training in various areas. Her crèche has been running for some time now and she has children on the waiting list!*

### *Over to Anna:*

"While working as an assistant in a day-care centre for children during my studies, I realised that I was born for this job: I really love it. I feel fulfilled and free, and love being around children every day. In my family, my parents and grandparents were teachers, looking after children. For this reason, I didn't really think I would go down the same road as they did, or even look after children in general. I didn't have any experience in this field. I had just done a bit of babysitting when I was a teenager: I'd looked after my cousins.

I started to look for premises outside Lublin because there were already enough private crèches in the city. I did all of



Agnieszka Kolodynska – European Union

***Positive energy:*** *"Children give you positive energy all day long!"*

this secretly. I didn't want to tell my parents about the decision until everything was ready. My budget wouldn't allow me to renovate the property and buy all the equipment I would need. So I got in touch with an association co-funded by the ESF, which helped me financially and trained me in fields I didn't know a lot about.

I invested a lot of time in this project but it's brought me such happiness, I don't regret it at all. When I compare my lifestyle to that of my former classmates, I realise that my life is both less stressful and more rewarding. Children give you positive energy all day long!

My favourite part of the day is when I get to have a break and spend time with the children in their room. This is what I really enjoy each day. I sit down and play with them. And all of a sudden, my worries seem so insignificant and my problems fade away. When I watch the children and am sharing in their world, I always smile. That's the magic of childhood.

The majority of my work is linked to my responsibilities as the manager: administration, insurance, contracts… I am in close contact with the parents, of course, but also with my employees. In this way, they can tell me what they need and what the kindergarten needs.

It's enormously satisfying for me to have been able to create a space that meets a real need in the region. I did, however, feel under a lot of stress when I, for the first time in my life, paid my employees' salaries. I realised, all of a sudden, that the financial security of the three people I work with depends on me. It's a heavy burden. But, at the same time, it motivates me to always keep improving.

I've never regretted not becoming a lawyer. Lublin is a small city and there are two universities that teach law, so it's difficult to get a job in the field without leaving the region. Lots of people try their luck in Warsaw. There is a lot of competition to get a job. I needed a more relaxed, less stressful job. When I see the amount of tension my university friends' experience, I tell myself that I am lucky to find a sense of fulfilment in what I do".

### *Initiative is a woman*

*Anna was helped by the "Initiative is a woman" programme, run by the Marii-Curie-Sklodowskiej Foundation and supported by the European Social Fund. It helped her finance her project and provided her with training. Through the foundation, she was able to meet other active and independent women who have set up their own company. They have stayed in touch and support each other.*

**Taken from:**

*"Seven lives – on the road to success with the European Social Fund"*, ISBN 978-92-79-30126-1

**Video:**

http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=564&langId=en&portraitId=253

**More information:**

http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=564&langId=en

OTHER VOICES

# Beyond the EU strategic framework




***Health is about ensuring quality of life, well-being and mindfulness:*** *Paul Weber.*

Health must be perceived as an indispensable resource for everyday life, rather than as the aim of life. It therefore goes beyond healthy lifestyles as such and aims at quality of life, well-being and mindfulness.

The more than 24 EU health and safety at work directives must be categorised, structured, completed and consistent within a global and integrated concept. In order to prevent the primary causes of risks, the origin of those risks – which stem from many causes – must be perceived through the concept of mindfulness, applying practical techniques which have proved their worth whatever the size of the enterprise concerned (whether micro, small and medium or large size) and which are valid in the short, medium and long term.

## Cultural change

We are witnessing a cultural change from the New Deal consensus of JM Keynes (1929) – cooperation, mutual respect, long term preservation of resources, equality, tripartite functioning – to the Shock Strategy of the Chicago corporate ideology (M.Friedman): privatisation, whole sale corporate deregulation and drastic reduction in public spending. This trend towards the superiority of the Market, of mercantile productivity and of competition leads to anxiety, burnout, domination, exploitation, easy money, power, concentrated richness, privatisation, liberalisation and stabilisation after the crisis disaster.

Previously, there was talk of "personnel management", then of "human resources", "human capital" and finally of "salaried individuals". This negative evolution of the perception of workers may lead to a growing informal sector of unemployed people, disposable interim jobs, fixed- term and worryingly precarious work contracts. Fear and overwork is now at the origin of the reaction not to endure psycho-social risks.

Spurred on by this affective thrust for change, prevention-related ideas appeared and gave rise to action programmes which also sought to prevent such bad mental habits. Implementing such anticipatory programmes has led to the creation of integrated prevention cultures which respect the qualities of workers' characters and favour their professionalism, or possibly enable them to achieve their individual vocation in a way which is beneficial both to their personal development and to their companies' objectives.

## Planetary constitution

Respecting international conventions (in particular ILO 187) as representing a "planetary constitution of the social rights of workers", a strategic framework for the EU aims to distil national strategies on the part of the Member States, which in turn lead to European-level coordination through a systemic approach based on tripartite dialogue (the Advisory Committee on Safety and Health). The implementation of any new legislation, standard or rule requires its supervision by a neutral and impartial labour inspectorate – at EU level, the Senior Labour Inspectorates Committee plays a fundamental role towards equivalent and effective application of EU Health and Safety Directives. The workers in charge of health and safety will be introduced into this by successive iterations, according to the "Plan-Do-Check-Act" cyclical concept.

It is only on the basis of concerted action at each of the four levels of necessary and sufficient action (law, strategy, inspection and compliance) that a global and integrated system will ensure excellence beyond the legal constraints, rooted in the moral values of mankind as they have evolved across cultures and throughout history, such as: care, fairness, freedom, loyalty, authority and purity – Jonathan Haidt' s modular and non-normative Six Pack.

***Paul Weber***

Honorary Director, Luxembourg Labour and Mines Inspectorate and honorary Secretary of the International Association of Labour Inspection


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***Listening to the different levels of authority and civil society:*** *Stefan Olsson.*

INTERVIEW

Stefan Olsson is Head of the European Commission's social inclusion and poverty reduction service since 1 June 2014

# Working with, not against...

***Back to employment and social affairs after a stint in maritime policy?***

Yes, I was very fortunate to join the maritime department just when it was going through a major policy and internal reform, due to declining stocks and to the challenge of managing an EU exclusive competence policy area in an enlarged Union. It was tough and quite emotional but the final result is impressive. I learnt a lot from this, both in terms of policy development and as a manager. Mobility across departments is tough but very enriching. However, the Commission continues to struggle with far too little mobility, notably for middle managers.

***Previously in the Employment and Social Affairs department, you were assistant to the Director General and then you addressed issues such as equal opportunities and anti-discrimination. And now, social inclusion and the fight against poverty...***

Yes, these are fascinating areas! I like dealing with issues which involve a mix of policy-making, legal complexity and funding management. They entail a lot of negotiating, as national, regional and local competencies are very strong in these areas. It is crucial to listen to the different levels of authority and to civil society and act with them, rather than against them. We always need to convince them with facts showing that our proposals have an added value, otherwise they will simply reject them.

***Anti-discrimination, though, is an area where EU legislation is very strong..***

Yes, but it can only be adopted by unanimity in the EU Council of Ministers so the same principle applies *de facto*.

***Anti-discrimination comes back to you as your present team deals with the integration of Roma people.***

Yes but from a different angle: we are not targeting a group. Here we look at social protection systems and social investment across society. That includes the Roma people. The European Commission's Justice department is in the driving seat for implementing the European framework for the integration of the Roma people. We try and see how we can integrate poverty reduction and EU funding within this framework, as part of an overall poverty reduction approach.

***In 2010, the EU adopted the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Yet poverty has increased, rather than diminished at EU level. Can the trend be reversed?***

We have to be realistic. We are very much dependent on how the economy develops. It is very interesting to see, though, that the situation varies a lot from country to country. It comes down to the efficiency and effectiveness of social protection systems. The EU can make a big difference by providing its Member States with Europe-wide data and analysis, enabling them to compare each other. We need to do that not by preaching to the Member States but by working with them. With the same amount of money, countries achieve very different results. Some might realise in the near future that they have no other choice than to spend a lion's share of their social budget on pension and pre-retirement schemes, with little left for investing in services for children or youth. Social investment can only be based on a very sound analysis and the European Commission's social data collecting and analysis has improved considerably over the last few years.




## Investing in people: Social Europe guide - Volume 7

The Social Europe guide is a bi-annual publication aimed at providing an interested but not necessarily specialised audience with a concise overview of specific areas of EU policy in the field of employment, social affairs and inclusion. It illustrates the key issues and challenges, explains policy actions and instruments at EU level and provides examples of best practices from EU Member States. It also presents views on the subject from the Council Presidency and the European Parliament. Volume 7 focuses on EU funding instruments used to help people into employment or out of poverty and social exclusion. The guide outlines the aims and objectives of four specific funds: the European Social Fund (ESF); the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD); the EU programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI); and the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF). There is a particular focus on priorities for the EU's new financial period, which runs from 2014-2020, and on how these funds will support Europe 2020, the EU's economic strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The guide is available in printed and electronic format in English, French and German.

Catalogue No.: KE-BC-14-001-EN-N




## PROGRESS Annual Performance Monitoring Report 2013

The 2013 PROGRESS Annual Performance Monitoring Report looks at how PROGRESS has helped the Commission make proposals on evolving policy priorities such as improved performance of public employment services, social investment for inclusive growth and handling occupational pensions. Programme outputs were driven by employment and social objectives of Europe 2020, with activities focused on major challenges such as unemployment, social impact of the crisis and demographic changes. This publication is available in electronic format in English only.

Catalogue No.: KE-XC-14-001-EN-N




## Stimulating job demand: the design of effective hiring subsidies in Europe - EEPO Review

Hiring subsidies are an important measure, extensively used by Member States, to promote employment in disadvantaged-worker categories such as young and older people, the long-term unemployed and women. This review maps out the design of such subsidies, and identifies good and effective practices in targeting, funding, monitoring and integrating incentives with other policies. It is intended as a source of mutual learning and transfer of good practices between Member States. This publication is available in electronic format in English.

Catalogue No.: KE-AZ-14-001-EN-N

### Useful websites

The website of Commissioner Andor: http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/andor/index_en.htm
The home page of the Commission's Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion: http://ec.europa.eu/social/
The website of the European Social Fund: http://ec.europa.eu/esf

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