



# EPR Public Affairs e-bulletin

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## Social Affairs & Social Services

### **Commission New Skills profile tool to help non-EU nationals enter the labour market**

The European Commission has launched the EU Skills Profile Tool for Third Country Nationals. It is an off- and [online web editor](#) that will make it possible for non-EU nationals to present their skills, qualifications, and experiences in a way that is well understood by employers, education and training providers and organisations working with migrants across the whole European Union.

The EU Skills Profile Tool for Third Country Nationals will be a first instrument for organisations offering services to non-EU nationals to make sure their skills and education are recognised, and to further guide them to training, education or employment. It is part of one of the ten actions defined under the New Skills Agenda for Europe.

**Read more:** <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1223&intPageId=5019&langId=en>

### **European Semester 2017 Spring Package: Commission issues country-specific recommendations**

The European Commission has presented its 2017 country-specific recommendations (CSRs), setting out its economic policy guidance for individual Member States for the next 12 to 18 months.

The economy in the EU and the euro area is proving resilient, but challenges, such as slow productivity growth, the legacies of the crisis – including persisting inequalities – uncertainty arising mostly from external factor continue. Member States should therefore use the window of opportunity offered by the economic recovery to pursue structural reforms, boost investment and strengthen their public finances. Priorities vary across the EU but further efforts across the board are essential to achieve more inclusive, robust and sustainable growth.

EPR will provide an analysis of this year CSRs having a close look to any improvements and/or opportunities for VET, health and social service providers. EPR last year analysis can be read [here](#).

**Read full fact sheet:** [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_MEMO-17-1005\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-17-1005_en.htm)

### **European Vocational Skills Week: #CedefopPhotoAward 2017**

The Cedefop photo competition this year is built around the collective experiences that learners go through while training in VET.

The European Commission is organising the 2nd European Vocational Skills Week from 20 to 24 November 2017, in order to showcase the numerous opportunities that Vocational Education and Training (VET) can provide for young people and adults to "discover their talents" and develop specific skills and knowledge for the jobs of today and tomorrow.

One of the activities allowing to showcase excellence in VET is the #CedefopPhotoAward, an international competition run by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) – a European Union agency.

Learners of all ages engaged in vocational training are invited to participate in the Cedefop photo story competition by producing a series of photographs, which will showcase their collective experience in the world of VET. Please note that different teams of learners can represent the same school/institution, as stated in the competition rules.

The deadline for submission is 15 July at 23.59 CET.

**Read more:** <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2797&furtherNews=yes>

## Employment & Disability

### Three years on: report shows success of enhanced collaboration between Public Employment Services

The European Commission has published a report on the European Network of Public Employment Services (PES), set up three years ago.

It shows that thanks to this Network, European Public Employment Services are working closer and more systematically together, to the benefit of jobseekers and employers across Europe.

The Network allows Public Employment Services to collaborate, share good practice, participate in learning events to constantly improve and provide a better and more effective service for jobseekers across Europe.

This enhanced collaboration does not only benefit the more than 27 million people registered with a public employment service in their country, but it also contributes to facilitating intra-EU mobility, through the public employment services' participation in the EURES network.

**Read more:** <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2817&furtherNews=yes>

### The G20 Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting look at making labour markets future-proof, productive and fair

Labour and employment ministers of G20 economies have met in Bad Neuenahr on 18-19 May to draw up recommendations for making labour markets future-proof, productive and fair. The EU was represented by Commissioner Marianne Thyssen.

Social partners (Business20 and Labour20), G20 engagement groups (Women20, Youth20 and Think20) as well as heads and representatives of international organisations (ILO, OECD, IMF and World Bank Group) also participated at the meeting.

[The ministers' declaration entitled "Towards an Inclusive Future: Shaping the World of Work"](#) makes pledges to shape the future of work by harnessing opportunities of structural change for new and better jobs and reducing risks through a focus on policies for skills development, effective social protection for all, and job quality.

The declaration contains policy measures with a view to putting women and men on an equal footing in terms of job quality and pay with in order to reach the G20 goal to reduce the gender gap by 25 per cent by 2025.

**Read more:**

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2814&furtherNews=yes>

### European Solidarity Corps: Commission proposes more than €340 million to enable 100 000 placements by 2020

The European Commission has put the European Solidarity Corps on a firm footing by proposing a budget for the next three years and a dedicated legal base.

This will help consolidate the initiative and create more opportunities for young people. As well as offering volunteering, traineeships and job placements, the European Solidarity Corps will now also provide participants the opportunity to set up their own solidarity projects or to volunteer as a group.

During a first phase launched in December 2016, eight different programmes were mobilised to offer volunteering, traineeship or job opportunities under the European Solidarity Corps. More than 30,000 young people have already signed up and the first participants have now started their placements.

Under the leadership of Commissioners Oettinger, Navracsics and Thyssen, the Commission is today proposing to equip the European Solidarity Corps with one single legal base, its own financing mechanism and a broader set of solidarity activities. This will help further increase its coherence, impact and cost-effectiveness. The Commission proposes to allocate €341.5 million to the European Solidarity Corps over the period 2018-2020, to enable 100,000 young Europeans to take part by the end of 2020.

**Read more:** <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2795&furtherNews=yes>

### **ESPN Synthesis Report on “Access to social protection for people working on non-standard contracts and as self-employed in Europe: A study of national policies”**

Despite a number of recent national reforms which seek to improve their social protection, the self-employed still have lower coverage and benefits than salaried workers, and run a much higher risk of falling into poverty, according to a new Synthesis Report by the European Social Policy Network (ESPN). The Work Forum on the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN Convention) was meeting in Brussels on 19 May.

**Read more:**

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2798&furtherNews=yes>

### **Work Forum on the implementation of the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities in the EU and the Member States**

The implementation of the UNCRPD means EU member states shall organise, strengthen and extend comprehensive rehabilitation services and programmes, particularly in the areas of health, employment, education and social services. On these regards, the Forum brought together representatives of those responsible for implementing and monitoring the implementation of the UN Convention, both at EU and national level; these are Focal Points, Coordination Mechanisms and Monitoring Mechanisms. Civil society and disabled people's organisations also actively participated in the Work Forum.

**Read more:**

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=88&eventsId=1207&furtherEvents=yes>

## Education & Vocational Training

### **Awards for VET Excellence-European Vocational Skills Week 2017**

The award ceremony of the first European Vocational Skills Week 2017 was one of the major highlights of this dedicated week and showcased examples of excellence in vocational education and training (VET).

A further series of awards will be given during the closing event of the second [European Vocational Skills Week](#) on 24 November 2017 by Marianne Thyssen, European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility.

The award ceremony will highlight some of the best VET examples in Europe and will: recognise excellence, provide visibility and recognition for good work done, enable the building of networks and new career opportunities, enable the winners to become ambassadors in their field of expertise, reach out to citizens by mobilising VET actors at all levels.

**Read more and find out the criteria and awards categories:**

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2824&furtherNews=yes>

## **Council adopts revision of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) for lifelong learning**

The Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council has adopted the revision of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) for lifelong learning.

The purpose of the EQF is to improve the transparency, comparability and portability of people's qualifications. The EQF was originally created in 2008 as a common reference framework of eight European generic levels of learning, which serves as "translation grid" between national qualifications systems. The adoption of the revision today ensures the continuity as well as a further deepening of the EQF so it can keep up with future developments.

All types and levels of qualifications are covered including qualifications from higher education, vocational education and training and general education, but also qualifications awarded by the private sector and international sector organisations.

In addition to adopting the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning, a progress report on Europass was discussed.

**Read more:**

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2808&furtherNews=yes>

## **Commission launches public consultation on promoting social inclusion and shared EU values through education**

How should education in Europe help young people to thrive in increasingly diverse societies faced with rising social and economic inequality, polarised debate and violent extremism? That is the central question of a public consultation recently launched by the European Commission. Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, Tibor Navracsics, said: "Shared values such as mutual respect and freedom of expression are fundamental to the functioning of our democracies. I believe that education can play a stronger role not only in equipping young people with skills but also helping them to become engaged citizens who can live together respecting their differences and being able to distinguish facts from propaganda."

Replies to the public consultation can be submitted via the online questionnaire until 11 August and will contribute to shaping a draft Council Recommendation on the issue to be presented before the end of this year. The Recommendation was announced in the Commission's Communication on Supporting the prevention of radicalisation leading to violent extremism.

**Read more:** [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_MEX-17-1403\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEX-17-1403_en.htm)

## **Council and Commission set to discuss modernisation of education systems, life-long learning, cultural diplomacy and the review of the audiovisual media services directive**

On Monday 22 May, the European Commission was represented at the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council by Commissioner Navracsics as well as Commissioner Thyssen for the education points and by High Representative/Vice-President Mogherini and Vice-President Ansip, for the culture and audio-visual points.

Following the Youth Council where the main point was a policy debate on building Europe's future with and for young people, Education Ministers had a policy debate on improving and modernising education

systems and how to involve learners in this process; they discussed a progress report on Europass; and were set to adopt a general approach on the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning. Commissioner Navracsics updated the Education Council on recent and upcoming developments in the Erasmus 30th anniversary campaign.

Sport Ministers are set to adopt the EU Work Plan for Sport (1 July 2017 – 31 December 2020) and hold a policy debate on sports media and its role in strengthening social inclusion.

**Read more:** [http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/news/20170424-a-road-to-entrepreneurship\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/news/20170424-a-road-to-entrepreneurship_en)

## **Have your say on European education and employment online tools and services**

A public survey to better understand end users' needs for online tools in the field of skills and qualifications has just been published by the Commission.

This survey will help shaping the future developments of existing European tools and services related to education and employment, such as Europass. Individuals, organisations and other stakeholders are all welcome to participate.

**Read more:** [http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/news/20170424-knowledge-alliances-building-bridges-between-universities-and-business\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/news/20170424-knowledge-alliances-building-bridges-between-universities-and-business_en)

## **Other relevant EU affairs**

### **Commission welcomes European Parliament vote on extension and reinforcement of the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), the heart of the Juncker Plan**

The European Commission welcomes the vote by Members of the European Parliament's Budgets and Economic and Monetary Affairs committees to agree their position on extending, expanding and reinforcing the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), the so-called "EFSI 2.0".

The European Fund for Strategic Investment has proved to be an important tool to boost investment, support jobs creation and growth around the 28 EU countries. Its extension represents an opportunity to keep building on that success. The plan is to extend the EFSI's initial three-year timeline (2015-2018) to 2020, the end of the current Multiannual Financial Framework. The target of investment mobilised is to be increased from EUR 315 billion to at least half a trillion euro by 2020.

**Read more:** [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-17-1327\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-17-1327_en.htm)

### **Commission welcomes European Parliament vote on new EU reform support programme**

The European Commission welcomes today's European Parliament vote to greenlight the Structural Reform Support Programme, a new EU programme to provide technical support to Member States. Today's vote paves the way towards the roll-out of the technical expertise the Commission provides for supporting Member States as they carry out reforms that help economies to grow, strengthen competitiveness, encourage investment and offer job opportunities and a better standard of living.

**Read more:** [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-17-1122\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-17-1122_en.htm)

## EU funded programmes

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

## Calendar of upcoming events

| Date                    | Title  | Venue    | Contact   |
|-------------------------|--|----------|---|
| 26-27/06/2017           | European Economic and Social Committee: Civil Society Days 2017                                  | Brussels | <a href="http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.events-and-activities-civil-society-days-2017">http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.events-and-activities-civil-society-days-2017</a>   |
| 26/06/2017 - 28/06/2017 | European Social Services Conference: Transforming lives through innovation and technology!       | Malta    | <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=88&amp;eventsId=1212&amp;furtherEvents=yes">http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=88&amp;eventsId=1212&amp;furtherEvents=yes</a>   |
| 26/06/2017              | Cedefop Brussels seminar - Addressing and preventing low skills                                  | Brussels | <a href="http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/events/3rd-edefop-brussels-seminar-addressing-and-preventing-low-skills">http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/events/3rd-edefop-brussels-seminar-addressing-and-preventing-low-skills</a> |
| 28/06/2017              | Delivering higher effective retirement ages  | Brussels | <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=88&amp;eventsId=1213&amp;furtherEvents=yes">http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=88&amp;eventsId=1213&amp;furtherEvents=yes</a>   |
| 24/25/10/2017           | Social Innovation – Research and Policy of the Future: towards a comprehensive innovation policy | Brussels | <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/index.cfm?pg=events">http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/index.cfm?pg=events</a>   |
| 20-24/11/2017           | European Vocational Skills Week  | Europe   | <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=1261&amp;newsId=2754&amp;furtherNews=yes">http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=1261&amp;newsId=2754&amp;furtherNews=yes</a>   |
| 5/12/2017               | Access City Award 2017   | Brussels | <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=88&amp;eventsId=1208&amp;furtherEvents=yes">http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&amp;catId=88&amp;eventsId=1208&amp;furtherEvents=yes</a>   |