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First Social Protection Floor Advisory Group Meeting



The Social Protection Floor (SPF) Advisory Group, chaired by former Chilean President Michelle Bachelet, has been established to enhance global advocacy activities and to further elaborate the conceptual policy aspects of the SPF approach. The SPF initiative promotes access to essential social security transfers and social services in the areas of health, water and sanitation, education, food, housing, life and asset-savings information. The first meeting of the Advisory Group was held in Geneva on 11 and 12 August. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) Director-General, the World Health Organisation (WHO) Director- General and the Chair of the European Union (EU) Social Protection Committee are also members.

A [special fact sheet on the SPF](#) is available on our website.

ILO-IMF Conference Calls for Commitment to Recovery Focused on Jobs



On 13 September 2010, a [high level conference](#) on “The Challenges of Growth, Employment and Social Cohesion” took place in Oslo. The heads of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the ILO, along with other leaders, called for a broad international commitment to a jobs-



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focused policy response to the global economic downturn. The conference was hosted by the Prime Minister of Norway, Jens Stoltenberg, and co-sponsored by the IMF and the ILO. At the conference, leaders from government, labour, business and academia discussed near-term policy responses to the sharp rise in unemployment and underemployment since the 2008 global financial crisis as well as ways to promote sustainable growth and development. The EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, László Andor, addressed the Conference.

The IMF and ILO agreed at the conference to work together on policy development in the area of the social protection floor and on policies to promote employment-creating growth. There was also an agreement on the central role of effective social dialogue. Both institutions will continue and deepen their cooperation in support of the G20. The meeting is equally relevant for the ongoing EU debate on strengthening EU economic governance.

MDG September 2010 Summit



With only five years left until the 2015 deadline to achieve the MDGs, the [High-level Plenary Meeting of the United Nations \(UN\) General Assembly](#) was held, in New York, from 20 to 22 September 2010, to accelerate progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) target of 2015.

Employment and decent work are part of MDG 1 (eradication of extreme poverty and hunger) since 2008. The decent work agenda is also very

relevant for the other MDGs such as health, education, gender, environmental sustainability and the global partnership on development.

At the end of the Summit a special report on the achievements, challenges and the way forward of the [MDGs in Europe](#) and Central Asia was officially launched. The poor quality of education in many countries of Emerging Europe is jeopardizing the employment chances of millions of young people, the report states.

In addition, the ILO has published, with EU support, information folders on decent work and the MDGs. ILO has cooperated with FAO and WFP on the UN progress report on MDG 1. The ILO has noted with great interest that promoting decent work and its constitutive objectives are part of the EU position at the Summit and that they are included in the outcome document presented at the Summit. Now we have to work on the acceleration of the implementation and we have to ensure that commitments are respected.

Global Youth Unemployment has reached its Highest Level on Record



Global youth unemployment has reached its highest level on record and is expected to increase through 2010. The report [ILO Global Employment Trends for Youth 2010](#) indicates that among 620 million economically active young people, aged from 15 to 24 years, 81 million were unemployed at the end of 2009, the highest number ever.



According to the ILO projections, the global youth unemployment rate is expected to continue its increase through 2010, followed by a moderate decline in 2011. The report also points out that the unemployment rates of youth have proven to be more sensitive to the crisis than the rates of adults and that the recovery of the job market for young men and women is likely to lag behind that of adults.

Youth in the European Union and developed economies were hit hard. Youth unemployment rates increased by 4.6 percent between 2008 and 2009. This is the largest annual increase in youth unemployment rates ever recorded in any region.

In some countries, including Spain and the United Kingdom, there was an increase in inactivity among youth in the crisis years. This implies an increase in discouragement, whereby growing unemployment has led some young people to give up the job search.

The issuing of the report coincided with the launch of the [UN International Youth Year](#) on 12 August. "Through this year's themes of dialogue and mutual understanding, we will be better placed to shape viable policies that respond to the need and aspirations of young people for decent work," said the ILO Director-General Juan Somavia.

Informal meeting of EU Ministers of Employment and Social Affairs



On 8 and 9 July 2010, an informal meeting of Ministers of Employment and Social Affairs of the European Union was held in Brussels to address the role of the employment and social policies in stimulating growth and competitiveness as well as in the future economic governance. At the meeting the European Employment Strategy and the Social Protection and Inclusion Strategy within Europe 2020 was discussed and a broad common understanding emerged on the need for an integrated macro-economic surveillance and long term reforms, including employment and social policies.

Given the key role of employment policies in preventing macro-economic imbalances on the labour market as well as ensuring the success of the long term structural reforms, employment policies and the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO) play a key role in the macroeconomic surveillance and surveillance of structural reforms that the Commission has proposed for the economic governance structure. EPSCO Council is best placed to provide input on the employment, labour market and social issues, including the adoption of recommendations of a preventive nature which aim to address the main weaknesses and challenges. Moreover, EPSCO needs to be fully prepared to take part in the surveillance of the longer-term structural reforms.

Ownership of the Europe 2020 Strategy, as learned from the past, is a pre-condition to achieve an effective implementation of the recommendations. Therefore, a stronger involvement of the social partners at the national and the European level will also contribute to a better ownership in the implementation of the Europe 2020 Strategy.

Workshop on Employment, Social Protection and Decent Work in Africa - Sharing experience on the informal economy

From 30 June to 2 July 2010 ILO-Brussels participated in a workshop on Employment, Social Protection and Decent Work in Africa, organised by the European Commission (EuropeAid Co-operation Office and DG Development) and the African Union Commission (AUC), in Dakar, Senegal. Representatives of the European Commission, the AUC, international organizations and civil society gathered to reflect on the employment component of the strategic partnership on Migration, Mobility and Employment of the joint Africa-EU Strategy.

At the end of the workshop an outcome document was presented. It specifically highlighted that a consensus exists on the need for a balanced economic growth that is economically and socially inclusive and the fundamental role of employment, social protection and social dialogue in development. Specific recommendations were formulated for all levels of interventions (continental, national, regional and local) which will be submitted to follow up meetings.

Belgium largest ILO RBSA Contributor for 2010-11



Since 2009, Belgium contributes to the ILO with full core funding through the so-called Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA). The RBSA was established to finance ILO activities that fall under the core mandate of the organization but cannot be implemented because of resource or capacity gaps in the International Labour Office. It is a third source of funding, in addition to the regular budget and extra-budgetary resources. Belgium decided to fund the ILO through the RBSA up to the amount of €6.4 million. That makes it currently the largest contributor to the RBSA for the biennium 2010-11.

In the framework of the partnership agreement, the yearly consultation between Belgium and the ILO took place on 25 June 2010 in Geneva. Representatives from the government, social partners and ILO Office entered in a direct dialogue on the current and future cooperation of Belgium with the ILO.

Social Economy in Africa



The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) adopted on 15 July 2010 an Opinion on



“What role and perspectives for Africa's social economy in development cooperation?” The EESC proposes a series of possibilities to promote the African social economy in development cooperation as “social economy, due to its inherent characteristics, contains within itself the means to create new jobs, increase compliance with core labour standards and promote social protection and social dialogue.” As this fits perfectly with the strategic objectives set by the ILO to achieve and guarantee decent work, the EESC suggests “that the ILO should be the first to open the international debate on Africa's social economy.”

In October 2009, the ILO held a conference on “The social economy – Africa’s response to the global crisis” in Johannesburg, South Africa. This conference resulted in the adoption of a Plan of Action for the Promotion of Social Economy Enterprises and Organisations in Africa”.

“The impact of the global economic and financial crisis came on top of the food and energy crises, making the Johannesburg plan of action's objectives all the more urgent”, states the EESC Opinion.

Employment Week - The European Employment Forum, 24-25 November 2010, Brussels



The 2010 edition of [Employment Week](http://www.employmentweek.com) will take place on 24 and 25 November 2010 at the Management Centre Europe, in Brussels. In November DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities will publish its

“Employment in Europe” report. Employment Week 2010 will provide a forum for discussion of the outcomes of the report. It will also focus on the key EU themes for 2010 and 2011 - tackling poverty and social exclusion and exploring the EU wide benefits of volunteering. The event attracts a wide range of individuals, businesses, social partners and government policy makers from across the EU and beyond. Mme Joëlle Milquet, Deputy Prime Minister for Belgium, will share the Closing Plenary with the DG Employment Commissioner, László Andor.

The Global Crisis: special issue of the International Labour Review

ILO-Brussels would like to draw the attention on a recently published [special issue of the International Labour Review](#) which is entirely devoted to the global crisis. This publication contains articles on the causes and results of the global financial and economic crisis. Contributions were made by a variety of authors, including Raymond Torres, Director of the International Institute for Labour Studies.

“Building Effective Wage Policies” course, 29 November–3 December, Turin, Italy

A new course on “Building Effective Wage Policies” will be organised by the International Training Centre of the ILO from 29 November to 3 December 2010 in Turin, Italy.

The course is a 5-day event offering a unique learning experience on how to develop more effective and coherent wage policies. The course examines the latest developments and new country experiences in the area of analysis of wage data, wage bargaining and public sector pay. It will also build on the relevant technical assistance programs delivered by the ILO. The course will balance lecturers by practitioners and trainers with practical participatory

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sessions, where participants will have the opportunity to present and discuss a policy challenge they face and work toward solutions with others.

This course is intended for staff from the Ministries of Labour and Employment, experts affiliated with Employers' and Workers' organizations, as well as researchers dealing with wage policies. It will be held in English and French (simultaneous interpretation will be provided). For further information, please contact: Ms Michela Ripandelli on tel. + 39 011 69 36 888 or e-mail: m.ripandelli@itcilo.org. The deadline for application is 18th October 2010.

Global launch World of Work Report

The annual flagship report "World of Work" will be launched in Brussels on Thursday morning 30 September 2010. The key subjects of the report are dealing with growth and job recovery in times of social, financial and economic crisis and constrained public finances. The report will be presented by Raymond Torres, director of the ILO Institute for International Labour Studies.

Call for participation: ILO Brussels International Labour Standards training

As announced in the July newsletter, ILO-Brussels will organise a half-day training course on the fundamental international labour conventions and the ILO's supervisory system. The training course aims to better disseminate the functions and possibilities of this supervisory system to the public and policy makers. It will take place on Friday 8 October in Brussels at UNRIC-Residence Palace from 9:30 am to 12:30 am. The training course is open to the public and will be given in English by ILO-Brussels' director Rudi Delarue. Background documents will be available in

English and French and Q&A are possible in both languages. Registration for this free course should be done before 6 October at brussels@ilo.org.

Scheduled meetings

[List of scheduled ILO meetings](#)

Contact us

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