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IN BRIEF

2007 'European Year of Equal opportunities for All'

The decision of the European Institutions to proclaim 2007 as the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All is part of the framework strategy of the European Commission intended to guarantee an efficient fight against discrimination, valorisation of diversity and promotion of equal opportunities for all.

For Vladimir Špidla, European Commissioner for employment, social affairs and equal opportunities, it is indispensable to make all groups and strata of society benefit from the advantages resulting of the European project. This initiative will give the necessary impetus for equality to become a reality.



Indeed, despite being one of the most protective in the world, the European anti discrimination legislation is not fully applied and the Court of Justice of the European Communities already condemned four Member States (Austria, Finland, Germany and Luxembourg) because they did not implemented it correctly.

The European Year will be organized around the following four key themes:

- Rights – Raising awareness on the right to equality and non-discrimination and on the problem of multiple discrimination
- Representation – Stimulating debate on ways to increase the participation of groups in society which are victims of discrimination and a balanced participation of men and women
- Recognition – facilitating and celebrating diversity and equality
- Respect – Promoting a more cohesive society

CEC wants to support this initiative through actions promoting equal opportunities for all in 2007.

More info: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equality2007/index_en.htm

The European Parliament adopts a report on the future of the European Social Model

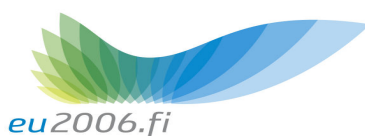
According to MEP's, the European Social Model 'reflects a common set of values, based on the preservation of peace, social justice, equality, solidarity, the promotion of freedom and democracy and respect of human rights'. They underline that social policies should not be considered as a cost but as a positive factor in the EU's economic growth.

The report also insists on the necessity of reforming this model in order to preserve the high social standards achieved and invites the EU and the Member States to engage the necessary actions in their respective fields of competence.

More info: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/default_en.htm

Conclusions of the informal meeting of employment, social affairs and health ministers

During this summit held on 7 July in Helsinki, 41 ministers of EU countries focused on the challenges arising from globalisation and demographic changes.



The Ministers underlined the necessity to adopt long term measures allowing to maintain working ability of older workers, life-long learning, while guaranteeing health and quality at work. More over, the respect of gender equality and of the balance between work and private life should be ensured to relaunch the birth rate. the need for flexicurity, one of the themes of the informal summit in October, was also addressed.

More info:

http://www.ue2006.fi/calendar/vko27/en_GB/1129729503392/?calYear=2006&calMonth=6

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EUROPEAN AFFAIRS SPECIAL PAGE MOBILITY

After the conference on managers' mobility and employability organised with the support of the European Commission last May in Vienna, the European Confederation of Executives and Managerial Staff continue its action and inform you about the news in this field with a special page on mobility.

CONFERENCE: 'WORKERS' MOBILITY, WHAT ROLE FOR THE SOCIAL PARTNERS ?'

European Year of Workers' Mobility 2006

Within the context of the European Year of Workers' Mobility, the European Commission will organize on September 14th in Brussels a conference with the participation of the employers' organizations and trade unions.

This conference will deal with geographical and professional mobility and its objec-

tive is to launch a debate among the social partners on the results and conclusions of the European Year, to examine the issues linked to mobility, to exchange the practices and to present innovative tools facilitating mobility.

The CEC will obviously be present as a European Social Partner. It will actively participate to the debates and

present the conclusions and the good practices exchanged during its conference on mobility held in Vienna on May 5.

More info:

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/workersmobility_2006/

THE NEW EUROPEAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK WILL ENHANCE STUDENTS AND WORKERS' MOBILITY

The European Commission recently adopted a proposal for a Recommendation establishing a European Qualifications Framework for life-long learning (EQF).

This system will create common references which will help the Member states, companies and citizens to compare the qualifications of the various different European systems of education and training.

This proposal which is part of the « Education and Training 2010 » work programme of the Lisbon Strategy was elaborated after an extensive consultation of the

stakeholders.

The European Framework of Qualifications is a set of eight reference levels describing what a learner knows, understands and is able to do.

Thus this system shift the focus away from the traditional approach, which emphasises learning inputs (length of a learning experience, type of institution) and favour, on the contrary, the learning outcomes.

This focusing on results will ensure a better match between education and training provisions and the needs of the labour market, facilitate

the validation of non-formal and informal learning as well as the international comparison and the academic and professional qualifications transparency.

The text recommends to Member States to relate their own systems of qualifications with the EQF by 2009.

The proposal will now be examined by the Council and European Parliament. The adoption is foreseen before the end of 2007.

More info:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/eqf/index_en.html

THE NEW EUROPEAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK WILL ALLOW STUDENTS AND WORKERS TO BE MORE MOBILE BY FACILITATING THE RECOGNITION OF THE DIFFERENT QUALIFICATIONS ACCROSS EUROPE

HOTLINE ON FREE MOVEMENT RIGHTS

The action service of the European Citizens (ECAS) has launched on 31 July 2006 a new Hotline to inform the migrant workers about their rights.

The many calls received also enabled to collect information and to analyse the obstacles to free movement.

Three main obstacles were highlighted: 'information and advice deficit', 'administrative confusion and poor application of rules' and 'illegal working practices and denial

of European citizenship free movement rights'.

A report on these conclusions will be presented to the European Parliament.

The hotline can be reached by calling: +32 512 59 68 or by E-mail: hotline@ecas.org

More info:

<http://www.ecas.org/news/667/default.aspx?id=169>

FIRST EUROPEAN JOB FAIR

Organized in the framework of the European Year of Workers' Mobility, this job fair will take place on 29 and 30 September 2006 simultaneously in hundred of European cities, with the participation of thousands of people

More info:

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/workersmobility_2006/index.cfm?id_page_category=EV&language=EN



WORKING TIME DIRECTIVE: STILL NO AGREEMENT REACHED

SOCIAL AGENDA

The social partners, who met on 7 July just before the informal meeting of employment and social affairs ministers, confirmed their deep divide over the working time directive.

For reminder, after a consultation of the social partners, the European Commission proposed to update some essential aspects of the working time directive (2003/88/EC) in order to ensure a greater flexibility in the management of working time while continuing to preserve workers' health and security.

The review of the some of the provisions is imposed by the directive itself and refers to the derogations to the reference period for the application of maximum weekly working time (48 hours/week) and to the possibility of not applying this article if the worker gives his agreement to carry out such work (the 'opt out').

More over, the objective is also to take into account the case law of the Court of Justice of the European Communities, in particular, the SI-

MAP and Jaeger cases regarding the qualification into working time of the on-call duty performed by doctors.

In first reading, the European Parliament voted the end of the derogations to the legislation setting the maximum weekly working time to 48 hours.

The Parliament thus disagree with the European Commission which proposed to keep the individual opt-out while tightening up the conditions for its application.

However, the Parliament approves the Commission proposal to extend the reference period for the calculation of the average weekly working time from 4 to 12 months.

The Parliament also asks that the working time of a person having more than one employment contract should be calculated as the sum of the periods under each contract.

More over, according to the MEP's, on-call duties should, in most of the case, be counted as working time.

The modified legislative proposal of the Commission accepts most of the amendments proposed by the Parliament but it maintains its position on the definition of on-call duty and on the possibility for a worker to exceed the maximum weekly working time, on an individual basis.

The discussions now continue within the Council. However, given the differences in the labour market situations and in Member States' views on the necessity and the conditions to maintain the opt-out, it was not possible to reach a overall political agreement at this stage.

Indeed, many Member States, led by the UK, wish to maintain national derogations to the principle.

More info:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/file.jsp?id=5202562>

WORKING TIME:
AN EIRO REPORT
SHOWS THAT LAW
AND COLLECTIVE
AGREEMENTS ARE
NOT RESPECTED

EUROPEANS WORK MORE THAN COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT AND LAW FORESEE

This was revealed by a new study of the European Industrial Relations Observatory (EIRO).

The research was carried out in the 25 Member States, in the accession countries Romania and Bulgaria and in Norway. It compares the working hours as laid down in collective agreements and in the law with the hours actually worked.

Concerning the weekly working time, the record is held by the Dutch and the Germans who work on average 4.6 hours more per week than their respective collective agreements foresee. In 9 countries, the average working time even exceed the

maximum legal working time per week.

Workers from the new Member States work on average 41.9 hours a week as compared to 40.8 hours in the 'old' Member States.

Concerning overtime, the Finnish work on average 7.8 hours more per week than stipulated in their contracts. For Hungarians, this average was 10.1 hours and 13 hours for Maltese.

Those differences are also for the annual paid leave. The average collectively agreed annual paid leave varies between 20 days in Slovenia and Cyprus and 33 days in Sweden.

Half of the new Member States and three old ones (Belgium, Ireland and Spain) do not have collective agreements on annual paid leave.

Only nine Member States have statutory annual paid leave exceeding the 4 weeks foreseen by the Working time Directive.

Finally, the average for the EU 15 and Norway stands at 26.8 days, showing a slight increase comparing to the 25.6 days in 2000.

More info:

<http://www.eiro.eurofound.europa.eu/2006/08/update/tn060810iu.html>

SPRING RECEPTION OF ULA IN BERLIN

On May 18, ULA (German Managers' Confederation) held its annual "Fruehlingsfest" (spring reception) in Berlin. Following a well-established tradition the venue for this highlight in May is always an embassy.

After the Estonian, Austrian, Italian and Mexican embassies in the years 2002-2005, this year's 250 guests enjoyed the opportunity to spend an evening in the Spanish Embassy, situated in the pristine diplomatic quarter of Tiergarten, Berlin's "Central Park".

His Excellency, Ambassador Gabriel Busquets-Aparicio, and Dr. Joachim Betz, President of ULA, formed the receiving line for Members of Parliament, Undersecretaries of State, other government representatives, journalists and lobbyists.

Many of them were in company of their partner/spouse and their children. The latter were – much to their delight – entertained by professionally trained servicepersons.

This year's reception again was a unique opportunity to enlarge and tighten the network of contacts so essential for any kind of successful lobby work.

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MEDI@MANAGERS

"Reorientation, Efficiency and Development" was the objectives of the Steering Committee held by Mediamanagers on June 28 in Paris.

To boost its development, Medi@managers decided to re-focus its activities on the sector of Information and Communication Technologies and Telecommunications. Medi@managers launched a socio-economical survey to have a clear picture of these sectors at European Level. A deep knowledge of this field of activities will make it easier to set out its future objectives. It will be the base for the adoption of a more efficient strategy for its role of European sectorial social actor.

Medi@managers will also pursue its development:

- Within the framework of the project "the Future of CEC", its network of European Works Council will operate in coordination with the CEC Network.
- It will start a subscription campaign among the CEC national organisations to expand geographically.

Medi@managers' General Assembly will take place on September 28 in Brussels.

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CZECH MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION: 13TH YEAR OF 'MANAGER OF THE YEAR' AWARD

The event held on April 20th in Žofín palace is the most prestigious competition of personalities active in the field of management and economy in the Czech Republic.

The founders of the competition are the Czech Management Association, Confederation of Employers and Entrepreneurs' Union of the Czech Republic and The Union of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic. It is a public competition, open to all managers working in Czech Republic – it is therefore open also for foreigners living and working in this country. The aim of the award is to find, promote and appreciate personalities of management and to present their managerial skills, professional and personal qualities, modern methods of management, original paths to success and contribution to the effectiveness of companies.

The competition is organised in the following categories:

Manager of the Year; Female Manager of the Year; Manager of a Particular industry; Outstanding Manager of a Small Company (up to 50 employees) and Medium Sized Company (up to 250 employees); TOP 10

More than 500 personalities participated in the competition up to date, among which 56 women. To date, 35 managers received the award.

Manager of the year 2005 was awarded to General Director of Siemens ČR, Ing. Pavel Kafka, dr.h.c. The Female Manager of the Year was awarded to Mrs. Jana Malá, Moravská ústředna Brno, d. u.v.

The Committee of Czech Management Association.

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ABOUT CEC

The CEC represents over 1 million executives and managerial staff in Europe organised into national federations and European branch federations. Since the end of the 1980s, the CEC contributes, as a social partner, to the European social dialogue. The CEC has made the task of defending the managers' specific interests its own, while maintaining dialogue with other parties.

CEC is consulted by the European Commission on all initiatives in the field of employment and social affairs (articles 138 and 139 EC Treaty). It is also part of the employees delegation in the negotiation with the employers' organisations at European level.

The CEC promotes a European integration clearly in favour of the principle of performance and competition, but also the social market economy and a value-oriented way of conducting business, since the respect of social obligations is an added value for economy in the long run.