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**NewsFlash**  
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## SOCIAL AFFAIRS BOARD

### **European Commission launches the second Phase consultation of the social partners on minimum wage**

The European Commission launches on 3 June the [2<sup>nd</sup> stage social partners' consultation on minimum wages](#). The deadline to respond is 4 September.

In the consultation documents, the Commission concludes that there is a need for EU action on this topic. This is also clearly influenced by the COVID-19 crisis, as the Commission sees an EU initiative on minimum wage as a key part of the recovery. It also points to the majority of low-wage earners being women, and having worked on the front-line during the crisis. The Commission reiterates that it does not aim to set a uniform European minimum wage, nor to harmonise minimum wage setting systems and to fully respect national competencies and social partners' contractual freedom. However, it already states that the initiative would be based on Article 153 (1) (b) of the Treaty, which allows the EU to support and complement activities of Member States in the area of working conditions. The Commission highlights one overarching objective: to ensure that all workers in the Union are protected by a fair minimum wage, allowing for a decent living wherever they work. However, as in the first-stage consultation, many diverse objectives are also mentioned, including: improving the fairness of the EU labour market, promoting economic and social progress and cohesion, helping reduce the gender pay gap, upward social convergence, better level playing field for businesses in the single market, and increasing employment and productivity.

## PROJECTS & EVENTS

### **CEEP Meeting with Commissioner for Equality Helena Dalli**

On Tuesday 9 June 2020, CEEP General Secretary will meet Helena Dalli, European Commissioner for Equality, to exchange on the new Gender Equality 2020-2025 measures that were published by the Commission on 5 March 2020. This new package includes a [Communication](#), a [public consultation on pay transparency](#) and [open calls for proposals](#) on closing the gender pay gap.

CEEP secretariat carefully analysed and assessed the different measures announced in the communication for the period 2020-2025, and this meeting will be an opportunity to share CEEP progress in setting up an Equality Task Force, and to take on board the demand of CEEP members to be very proactive, especially ahead of the consultation on the binding Pay Transparency measures, and to the DG Justice dedicated social partners hearing on the issue. CEEP last exchanged informally with Commissioner Dalli back in January 2020, at the occasion of the European Institute for Gender Equality's (EIGE) 10 years anniversary. In this frame, CEEP highlighted the several topics that are high on our agenda, and namely the role public services' employers should play to help ensuring a proper transposition and implementation into national law of the new EU directive on Work-Life balance, as well as our endeavour to support the unblock of the Women on Board Directive.

Should you wish to receive any further information regarding the outcome of the meeting, do not hesitate to contact CEEP Project Manager, [Carlotta Astori](#).

## SUSTAINABILITY BOARD

### **EU Sustainability Energy Week 2020 takes place fully online and focuses on Recovery and Growth**

This year, the [EU Sustainability Energy Week \(EUSEW\)](#) will take place fully online from 22-26 June. The theme for this year will be "Beyond the crisis: clean energy for green recovery and growth".

In different sessions and policy conferences, topics like sustainable energy issues, new policy developments, new technologies and exchanges of best practices will be discussed and openly debated with the public. CEEP member EDF will also be represented by their policy and technical

experts talking about [new ocean and water technologies](#) and [discussing future market designs and flexibility options](#) for a more sustainable energy sector.

In the context of the current COVID-19 crisis, there will be EUSEW self-initiated debates on the resilience and best practice of the energy sector during pandemics as well as debates on the latest publication of the Next Generation EU package and how clean energy policies can help Europe rebound from the crisis.

### **European Commission's DG Energy publishes a guide to reduce energy sector risks during pandemic**

On 2 June, the European Commission, DG ENER has published a new report that outlines good practices to reduce energy sector risks during a pandemic. You can access the report [here](#). Even though the energy sector has shown resilience during the COVID-19 crisis, the Commission advises to remain vigilant. Following an online meeting of the Energy Ministers on 28 April discussing the preparedness and recovery in the energy sector, the European Commission has compiled the experience shared by experts from the Member States, energy companies and network operators. The report also outlines a range of 20 good practices to deal with these risks such as the importance of establishing business continuity and contingency plans, and cross border assistance, cooperation and training for operators.

## **PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD**

### **WTO and European Commission reports on the impacts of COVID-19 on trade**

The WTO published last week an information note on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on trade in services. According to the information note, the services sector has been heavily impacted by the current crisis. Tourism, transport and the service sector have been hit hard by mobility restrictions and social distancing measures imposed for public health reasons.

The report also underlines that services trade will be key to economic recovery globally. The crisis has resulted in increased reliance on online supply in sectors such as retail, health, education, telecommunications, and audiovisual services. Furthermore, the fact that suppliers are accelerating efforts to expand their online operations and that consumers are adopting new habits may contribute to a long-term shift towards online services. The complete report can be consulted [here](#).

On top of this report, the European Commission DG TRADE released its second report on the impact of the COVID-19 health crisis on EU trade. The report highlights that the COVID-19 pandemic will result in a decrease in global trade between 10%-16% in 2020 and, as far as the EU is concerned, between 9% and 15% for exports and 11% and 14% for imports from non-EU countries. The report can be accessed [here](#).

## LOOKING AHEAD...

### **Next Meetings:**

- 8 June: Energy Task Force (online meeting)
- 16 June: Social Affairs Board (online meeting)
- 25 June: Social Protection Task Force (online meeting)
- 25 June: Water Task Force (online meeting)
- 25 June: Environment Task Force (online meeting)

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