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THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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## **PRESS RELEASE**

3019th Council meeting

### **Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs**

Luxembourg, 7 and 8 June 2010

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# **P R E S S**

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## Main results of the Council

*The Council held a policy debate on the **Europe 2020 strategy** and agreed on an **EU target on social inclusion, in particular through the reduction of poverty, and appropriate indicators**, as a contribution to the European Council meeting in June. It also reached a general approach on the **guidelines for the employment policies** of the member states for implementing the Europe 2020 strategy.*

*The Council endorsed the opinion of the Social Protection Committee on "**Solidarity in Health: reducing health inequalities in the EU**" and welcomed the interim joint report of the Economic Policy Committee (EPC) and the Social Protection Committee (SPC) on **pensions**, pending adoption of the report by the two committees later in the year.*

*Furthermore, the Council adopted conclusions on the following four aspects of employment and social policy:*

- ***new skills for new jobs;***
- ***sustainable social security systems achieving adequate pensions and social inclusion objectives;***
- ***active ageing;***
- ***advancing Roma inclusion.***

*The ministers agreed on the EU position to be taken within the respective (Stabilisation and Association Council with six third countries (Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Israel, Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) concerning the adoption of **provisions on the coordination of the social security systems**.*

*Finally, the Council adopted a resolution on the **new European Disability Framework 2010-2020**.*

*Without debate, the Council agreed on a draft regulation **extending the EU rules on the coordination of social security entitlements to nationals of third countries**.*

*Concerning Health and Consumer Affairs, the Council agreed on a draft directive concerning **patients' rights in cross-border healthcare**. The ministers held a policy debate on a draft regulation on the **provision of food information to consumers**.*

*The Council also adopted two sets of conclusions on:*

- ***equity and health in all policies: solidarity in health;***
- ***action to reduce population salt intake for better health.***

*The whole Council meeting was held in public (except of the any other business items for health and consumer affairs) and can be watched on the Council's videostreaming page:  
<http://video.consilium.europa.eu/>*

**CONTENTS**<sup>1</sup>

<b>PARTICIPANTS</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>ITEMS DEBATED</b>	
EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL POLICY .....	8
Directive on the principle of equal treatment .....	8
Preparation of the June European Council .....	9
Health inequalities and pensions .....	11
Sustainable social security systems for adequate pensions .....	11
New skills for new jobs: the way forward .....	12
Coordination of social security systems with six third countries .....	13
Advancing Roma inclusion .....	14
Active ageing .....	14
New European disability framework .....	15
Lunch discussion of ministers in charge of Employment and Social Policy .....	15
HEALTH AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS .....	15
Patients' rights in cross-border healthcare .....	15
Food information to consumers .....	18
Equity and health in all policies: solidarity in health .....	19
Reducing salt intake for better health .....	19

<sup>1</sup> Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks. Documents for which references are given in the text are available on the Council's Internet site (<http://www.consilium.europa.eu>). Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the Council's Internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

**OTHER ITEMS APPROVED***FOREIGN AFFAIRS*

- Restrictive measures against Liberia.....23
- Appropriate measures towards Madagascar.....23

*EMPLOYMENT POLICY*

- Mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Spain and Ireland.....23

*SOCIAL POLICY*

- Extension of EU rules on coordination of social security.....24
- Work in Fishing Convention.....24

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## **ITEMS DEBATED**

### **EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL POLICY**

#### **Directive on the principle of equal treatment**

On the basis of a progress report ([9535/10](#) + [9535/10 COR 1](#)), the presidency briefed the Council on the state of play in the discussions on the draft directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

The Spanish presidency made a series of drafting suggestions concerning the scope of the directive, the division of competences between the EU and the member states, and the disability provisions. More specifically, the presidency's suggestions are, inter alia, intended to bring the text into line with the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, to better define the concept of discrimination, to clarify the scope of the directive and to spell out the disability provisions more precisely. Despite some progress, further discussions are needed on numerous issues. These include the division of competences between the member states and the EU, the specific provisions on disabilities (e.g. the scope of the directive, its financial and practical implications and the interrelationship between the directive and more detailed sectoral specifications), the implementation calendar and the issues of legal certainty.

The Commission's proposal ([11531/08](#)) seeks to extend the protection against discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation to areas outside the labour market (e.g. social protection, including social security and healthcare; social advantages; education; and access to goods and services, including housing).

Legal basis: Article 19 (on measures against discrimination) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union; unanimity required for a Council decision, following the consent of the European Parliament.

## **Preparation of the June European Council**

With a view to preparing the European Council of 17 June 2010 the ministers held a policy debate on Europe 2020 - A new Strategy for Jobs and Growth and agreed on a EU target on social inclusion/poverty reduction and appropriate indicators.

Based on a presidency note ([10025/1/10 REV 1](#)) and a contribution by the Social Protection Committee (SPC) ([9964/10](#)), the Council reached agreement on an EU social inclusion target/poverty target and appropriate indicators, and approved the following conclusions:

"The Council agreed to propose to the European Council:

- that the quantified target of the Europe 2020 Strategy to promote social inclusion, in particular through the reduction of poverty, be formulated in such a way that it would aim at lifting at least 20 million people from the risk of poverty and exclusion by 2020;
- to accept the three set up indicators established by the Social Protection Committee.

Likewise, the Council agreed that in the fight against poverty and exclusion it is necessary to boost inclusion in the labour market as well as in society. During the process of implementation of the EU 2020 Strategy, there will be scope for strengthening the current instruments for measuring progress in the reduction of poverty and deprivation and for understanding the phenomenon of exclusion from the labour market. The relationships between labour market exclusion and the situation of poverty at individual level will have to be better taken into account.

Member States are free to set their national targets on the basis of the most appropriate indicators taking into account their national circumstances and priorities. In this process they will take into consideration that their national targets should contribute to the achievement of the target at EU level.

The Council also considers that the mid-term review of the EU headline target in 2015, as suggested by the Social Protection Committee, would also include a review of the indicators, while fully respecting Member States' role. This review could further allow taking into account economic developments and improved measurement instruments."

The Commission informed the Council of the outcome of the bilateral meetings it held with member states on the national targets.

The Council also agreed a general approach on guidelines for member states' employment policies ([10380/10](#) + [10380/10 COR 1](#)) as part of the integrated guidelines, pending the receipt of the opinions from the European Parliament and the Committee of Regions. After receiving the outstanding opinions the Council will formally adopt the decision, most likely in October.

The Council was also briefed by the presidents of the Employment Committee, Mr Bruno Coquet, and of the Social Protection Committee, Mr Aurelio Fernandez, on their contributions to the Europe 2020 strategy ([10031/10](#) + [9964/10](#)).

### **Health inequalities and pensions**

The Council endorsed the Social Protection Committee's (SPC) opinion on "**Solidarity in Health: reducing health inequalities in the EU**" ([9960/10](#)). In its opinion, SPC welcomes the Commission's communication of October 2009 ([14848/09](#)), considering the reduction of health inequalities as a key issue for social protection and social inclusion. It also outlines a number of specific initiatives that require the support of the EU, including the definition of a restricted number of indicators, special actions for vulnerable groups, the exchange of best practices and funding of innovative action on health inequalities under the PROGRESS programme. According to the Commission, differences in living and working conditions and in access to public services result in a social gradient in health status, leading to gaps in life expectancy at birth between the lowest and highest socio-economic groups amounting to ten years for men and six years for women.

The Council also took note of the interim joint report on **pensions** by the Economic Policy Committee (EPC) and the SPC ([9989/10](#)). The EPC/SPC interim report aims to reassess the pension reforms in the EU in the light of the aggravated challenges and to develop an updated agenda for delivering adequate and sustainable pensions. More specifically, it seeks to take stock of progress in pension reform over the last 10-15 years and to reassess these advances in the light of crisis setbacks. The interim report will also be presented to the ECOFIN Council on 8 June 2010 and be finalised by the two committees with a view to its submission to the ECOFIN and EPSCO Council configurations under the Belgian presidency in the autumn.

### **Sustainable social security systems for adequate pensions**

The Council adopted a set of conclusions on "Sustainable social security systems achieving adequate pensions and social inclusion objectives" ([9413/10](#)). These conclusions concern the specific issue of minimum pensions, or minimum income provisions. By adopting them, the ministers gave a political signal that, beyond the broad issues of adequacy and sustainability of pensions, the EPSCO Council wishes to concentrate on citizens' concerns from a social protection perspective. The Council also invited the member states to continue to pay particular attention to the issue of minimum pensions as a tool for combating poverty.

**New skills for new jobs: the way forward**

The Council adopted conclusions on "New skills for New Jobs: the way forward" ([9183/1/10 REV 1](#)), urging member states to increase their efforts in order to adapt citizens' skills to new challenges (e.g. by modernising their education and training systems, increasing flexibility of education and training programmes, developing the links between education and training and the labour market, promoting the participation of the younger and older generations as well as low-skilled and other disadvantaged groups in the labour market and enhancing the role of public employment services). The conclusions also call on the Commission to propose, during the autumn of 2010, further steps to develop the "New Skills for New Jobs" initiative and to consider strengthening the role of the EU funding mechanisms in the development of measures to anticipate skills demand and supply.

The conclusions are based on the Commission's communication "New Skills for News Jobs - Anticipating and matching labour market and skills need" ([17537/08](#)). Despite their confusingly similar names, the conclusions are separate from the flagship initiative "An Agenda for New Skills and Jobs" announced by the Commission in its Europe 2020 Communication.

The Council took also note of the Employment Committee's contribution on the "New Skills for New Jobs" initiative ([8815/1/10 REV 1](#) + [8815/1/10 REV 1 COR 1](#)).

### **Coordination of social security systems with six third countries**

The Council reached political agreement on six draft decisions on the EU position to be taken within the respective (Stabilisation and) Association Council between the European Union and six third countries (Algeria, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Israel, Morocco and Tunisia), based on presidency compromise proposals (10215/10, 10216/10 + 10216/10 COR 1, 10217/10, 10219/10, 10223/10, 10225/10) and presidency suggestions on the issue of the verification of the beneficiaries' entitlements to benefits.

The Euro-Mediterranean Agreements between the EU on the one hand and Algeria, Israel, Morocco and Tunisia on the other and the Stabilisation and Association Agreements between the EU and Croatia as well as the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia contain provisions for limited coordination between the social security systems of member states and the six third countries. In order for these provisions to take effect, a decision of the Association Councils and the Stabilisation and Association Councils established with the different countries is required.

Council regulation 859/2003 extends the provisions of regulation 1408/71 (on the application of social security schemes to employed persons and their families moving within the Community) and its implementing regulation 574/72 to nationals of third countries who are not already covered by those provisions solely on the grounds of their nationality. This regulation already covers the principle of aggregation of insurance periods acquired by third country workers in the various member states regarding entitlement to certain benefits, as set out in the agreements.

The draft decisions submitted to the Council contain implementing provisions which are not already covered by regulation 859/2003. This concerns, in particular, the export of certain benefits to one of the six partner countries as well as the granting of equal treatment to third country workers legally employed in the EU and to their family members. Moreover, the draft decisions ensure that the provisions on the export of benefits and the granting of equal treatment also apply, by way of reciprocity, to EU workers legally employed in one of the six partner countries and to their family members.

*Legal basis: Article 79(2)(b) (on immigration policy) and Article 218(9) (on the position to be taken in a body set up by an agreement) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU; qualified majority required for a Council decision (instead of unanimity under the Nice Treaty); the European Parliament needs to be informed.*

### **Advancing Roma inclusion**

The Council adopted conclusions on "Advancing Roma Inclusion" ([10058/10](#) + [10058/10 COR 1](#)), inviting the Commission and the member states, inter alia, to make progress in mainstreaming Roma issues into European and national policies, to advance the social and economic integration of Roma and to ensure that existing EU financial instruments and especially the structural funds are accessible to Roma. The conclusions also acknowledge that, in many cases, the living conditions of Roma (many of whom face extreme poverty, discrimination and exclusion, including poor housing, lack of access to employment and precarious health) have been worsening in the past years, and that anti-Gypsyism and violent attacks against Roma are intensifying. The conclusions also welcome various recent initiatives, including the revision of regulation 1080/2006 on the European Regional Development Fund, the Commission's communication on "The social economic integration of the Roma in Europe" and the Second European Roma Summit, which took place in Córdoba on 8 and 9 April.

### **Active ageing**

The Council adopted conclusions on "Active Ageing" ([9489/10](#) + [9489/10 COR 1](#) + [9489/10 COR 2](#) + [9489/10 COR 3](#)), calling for the increased involvement of older people in society, which represents potential for Europe's future competitiveness and prosperity in economic and social life, by removing employment obstacles, improving employment conditions, fighting against discrimination and investing in continued learning. By adopting the conclusions, the Council also acknowledged that in the framework of the Lisbon Strategy (which set the goal of achieving an employment rate of older workers of 50% by 2010) the member states have reversed the trend towards earlier retirement; thus the EU-27 employment rate of people aged 55-64 has increased from 36,9% in 2000 to 46,2% in the third quarter of 2009. The conclusions recall that the population aged 60 and above will increase at a much faster rate than ever before in the EU and that the largest increase is expected to occur during the period 2015-35 when the population aged 60 and above will be increasing by 2 million people every year.

### **New European disability framework**

The Council adopted a resolution on a new European disability framework ([10173/10](#)), calling for, inter alia, the enhanced inclusion of people with disabilities and their families in society by means of mainstreaming disability issues across different policy areas and by launching initiatives in the areas education, employment and social affairs, international affairs and development.

This resolution follows the resolution on the situation of persons with disabilities adopted by the EPSCO Council on 29 February 2008 ([6769/08](#)). The Commission is expected to adopt, during the course of 2010, the new European disability strategy 2010-2020, replacing the previous strategy launched in 2004. The new strategy is expected to focus on the implementation of the United Nations convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (UNCRPD). On 26 November 2009, the Council adopted a decision on the conclusion, by the European Union, of the UNCRPD.

The Spanish presidency held an informal meeting of ministers responsible for disability policies and a conference on disability and personal autonomy in Zaragoza from 19 to 21 May 2010.

### **Lunch discussion of ministers in charge of Employment and Social Policy**

During lunch, ministers for Social Policy and Employment were briefed on the G-20 Employment ministers' meeting in Washington on 21-22 April 2010 ([10542/10](#)) and on a joint EMCO/Commission background paper on "The employment crisis: policy responses, their effectiveness and the way ahead" ([10184/10](#)).

## **HEALTH AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS**

### **Patients' rights in cross-border healthcare**

The Council today agreed on a draft directive concerning the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare, on the basis of a compromise proposal by the Spanish presidency ([9948/10](#) + [9948/10 COR 1](#)).

During the Council meeting the discussions focused on four issues:

- the definition of the member state of affiliation with regard to pensioners living abroad;
- reimbursement and prior authorisation;
- the legal basis;
- the provisions on e-health.

The two first issues remained open at the EPSCO Council meeting of 1 December 2009.

With regard to the **member state of affiliation** (which concerned in particular the reimbursement of healthcare costs of pensioners living in the EU outside their home country and receiving healthcare in a third member state), the Council agreed that as a general rule the member state competent to grant a prior authorisation according to regulation 883/2004 (i.e. the member state of residence) should reimburse the cost of cross-border healthcare for pensioners. If a pensioner is treated in his country of origin, this country would have to provide healthcare at its own expenses.

Concerning **healthcare providers**, the compromise seeks to ensure that patients looking for healthcare in another member state will enjoy the quality and safety standards applicable in that country, independently of the type of provider. Furthermore, the Council agreed that member states may adopt provisions aimed at ensuring that patients enjoy the same rights when receiving cross-border healthcare as they would have enjoyed if they had received healthcare in a comparable situation in the member state of affiliation.

Concerning the **legal basis**, the Council agreed on a double legal basis, striking a balance between the case law of the European Court of Justice on the application of Article 114 to health services and the member states' competencies recognized by the Treaty as regards the organisation and provision of health services (according to Article 168 on public health).

As far as **e-health** is concerned, the ministers agreed on close collaboration between the member states and the Commission in this field.

The draft directive also contains the following key elements:

- as a general rule, patients will be allowed to receive healthcare in another member state and be reimbursed up to the level of **reimbursement** applicable for the same or similar treatment in their national health system if the patients are entitled to this treatment in their country of affiliation;
- in case of overriding reasons of general interest (such as the risk of seriously undermining the financial balance of a social security system) a member state of affiliation may limit the application of the rules on reimbursement for cross-border healthcare; member states may **manage the outgoing flows of patients** by requiring prior authorisation for certain healthcare (those which involve overnight hospital accommodation, require a highly specialised and cost-intensive medical infrastructure or which raise concerns with regard to the quality or safety of the care) or via the application of the "gate-keeping principle", for example by the attending physician;

- in order to **manage ingoing flows of patients** and ensure sufficient and permanent access to healthcare within its territory a member state of treatment may adopt measures concerning the access to treatment where this is justified by overriding reasons;
- member states of treatment will have to ensure, via **national contact points**, that patients from other EU countries receive on request information on safety and quality standards on their territory in order to enable patients to make an informed choice;
- **cooperation** between member states in the field of healthcare **is strengthened**, for example in the field of e-health and through the development of European reference networks which will bring together, on a voluntary basis, specialised centres in different member states;
- the **recognition of prescriptions** issued in another member state is improved; as a general rule, if a product is authorised to be marketed on its territory, a member state must ensure that prescriptions issued for such a product in another member state can be dispensed within its territory in compliance with its national legislation;
- sales of medicinal products and medical devices via the **Internet, long-term care services** provided in residential homes and access to and allocation of organs for the purpose of **transplantation** fall outside the scope of the draft directive;

The draft directive aims to facilitate access to safe and high-quality cross-border healthcare and to promote cooperation on healthcare between member states. The compromise reflects the Council's intention to fully respect the case law of the European Court of Justice on patients' rights in cross-border healthcare while preserving member states' rights to organise their own healthcare systems. The draft directive provides clarity about the rights of patients who seek healthcare in another member state and supplements the rights that patients already have at the EU level through the legislation on the coordination of social security schemes (regulation 883/04).

After the legal-linguistic revision of the draft directive, the Council will adopt its position at first reading and forward it to the European Parliament for its second reading.

The draft directive is part of the social agenda package of 2 July 2008, focusing on a triple objective: to guarantee that all patients have care that is safe and of good quality, to support patients in the exercise of their rights to cross-border healthcare; and to promote cooperation between health systems. The aim of the second objective is in particular to codify the case law of the Court of Justice relating to the reimbursement of cross-border healthcare, avoiding a "third method" of reimbursement (in addition to regulation 883/2004 and the draft directive).

## **Food information to consumers**

On the basis of two questions suggested by the presidency concerning legibility and responsibility ([10273/10](#)) the Council held a policy debate on a draft regulation on food information to consumers and, more specifically, the information given by labels.

Concerning legibility, ministers pleaded in favour of a mandatory minimum font size, while recognizing that other criteria such as contrast, colour of the letters, distance of the letters, etc. are relevant.

As far as the responsibility of food operators is concerned, some member states supported the approach of the Commission, according to which an Article should be included in the regulation specifying the responsibility of food operators in accordance to their role in the food chain, whereas a significant number of other countries consider Article 17 of the general food law (regulation 178/2002) to be sufficient.

Some member states also mentioned their wish to have mandatory indication of origin of certain products.

The draft regulation seeks to introduce mandatory nutrition labelling, to specify the responsibility corresponding to the role of each food operator in the supply chain and to improve the legibility of the information provided to consumers.

*Legal basis: Article 114 (on the internal market) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU; qualified majority required for a Council decision; ordinary legislative procedure with the European Parliament's first reading opinion expected on 15 June 2010.*

### **Equity and health in all policies: solidarity in health**

The Council adopted conclusions on "Equity and Health in All Policies: Solidarity in Health" ([9947/10](#)), setting out a framework for action by the Commission and the member states.

By adopting the conclusions, the Council invited the Commission to assess the effectiveness of interventions aimed at reducing inequalities in health. The member states are called on to further develop policies and actions to reduce health inequalities and implement policies aiming at ensuring a good start in life for all children, including actions to support pregnant women and parents. Ministers also expressed their concern that vulnerable and socially excluded groups such as the unemployed, the homeless, people with mental health problems, people with disabilities and ethnic minorities such as Roma experience particularly poor average levels of health.

The reduction of health inequalities is one of the priorities in the 18-month programme of the Spanish, Belgian and Hungarian presidencies in the field of public health.

During their informal meeting in Madrid on 22-23 April, the EU health ministers stressed the need to move forward on the monitoring of social determinants of health and to work on the reduction of health inequalities.

### **Reducing salt intake for better health**

The Council adopted conclusions on "Action to reduce population salt intake for better health" ([9827/10](#)), calling on member states, inter alia, to strengthen or develop national nutritional policies to reduce salt consumption to an appropriate level, for example by encouraging food producers to achieve the highest possible reduction in the salt content of foods. The Commission is invited to regularly identify the lowest salt levels currently being achieved at EU level in the different food categories as a tool to identify what is technically feasible in each category.

According to the conclusions there is strong scientific evidence that the current high consumption of salt throughout Europe is a major factor increasing blood pressure and thereby cardiovascular diseases (most Europeans' daily intake is around 8-11 g of salt and exceeds by far the daily recommended intake of 4-5 g of salt). The high salt intake in Europe may also have direct harmful effects apart from its effect on blood pressure, increasing the risk of stroke, left ventricular hypertrophy and renal disease. According to the European cardiovascular statistics of 2008, cardiovascular disease causes nearly half of all deaths, namely 42%, in the EU, accounting for over 2.0 million deaths; in 2006, cardiovascular diseases caused total costs of EUR 192 billion in the EU.

## *Any other business*

### Employment and Social Policy

#### *Social protection of self-employed workers and assisting spouses*

The presidency informed the Council on the agreement between the European Parliament and the Council at second reading on the draft directive ([10443/10](#)). The new piece of legislation will provide for significant improvement in terms of the social protection accorded to self-employed workers and assisting spouses of self-employed workers who often contribute to their spouse's self-employed activities without enjoying the corresponding rights. It is therefore of major help in removing barriers to female entrepreneurship and in improving the status of assisting spouses by granting them protection on their own right. In addition, female self-employed workers and assisting spouses will be granted a maternity allowance for at least 14 weeks. The directive also covers life partners when recognised by national law. After the legal-linguistic revision of the text the Council is expected to adopt the directive, without discussion, on 24 June.

#### *European Social Fund: simplification of procedures*

The Council took note of the information on the simplification of the procedures of the European Social Fund (ESF) provided by the Commission at the request of the Italian delegation. At the EPSCO session on 8 March 2010, the Italian delegation submitted a note titled "European Social Fund: Simplification-oriented ideas and future prospects" ([6968/10](#)).

### Health and Consumer Affairs

#### *Framework convention on tobacco control*

The Council took note of the information provided by the presidency on the state of preparation for the conference of the parties (CoP 4) to the framework convention on tobacco control to be held in Uruguay on 15-20 November 2010. The discussions at this conference will focus in particular on the protocol concerning illicit trade in tobacco products.

***Pharmaceutical package***

The Council took note of a presidency progress report on the state of play in the negotiations on the prevention of falsified medicines from entering into the legal supply chain of medicinal products ([10469/10](#)). The presidency also provided the Council with oral information on the progress in the discussions on the strengthening of the current pharmacovigilance system (aimed at protecting patients from adverse reactions to medicinal products). With regard to the pharmacovigilance part of the pharmaceutical package, the presidency will endeavour to reach an agreement at first reading with the European Parliament before the end of June.

***Working party on public health at senior level***

The ministers took note of the presidency's briefing on the conclusions of the working party on public health at senior level concerning the quality of healthcare and patient and healthcare quality ([10392/10](#)).

***Mutual recognition of qualifications for health professionals***

The Danish delegation, supported by the Swedish delegation, drew the Council's attention to its wish to strengthen the exchange of information between member states concerning the licensing of health professionals ([10766/10](#)).

***Protection of children with regard to toys***

The German delegation, supported by the Austrian and the Italian delegations, called on the other member states and the Commission to undertake joint efforts to make further improvements to the toys directive and achieve a high level of protection for children ([10605/10](#)).

***Internet cost trap - directive on consumer rights***

The Council took note of the German delegation's wish for European legislation against Internet cost traps ([10604/10](#)).

**Horizontal issues*****Conferences***

Spain informed the Council of the outcomes and conferences during its presidency in the field of employment and social policy ([10504/10](#)) and of health and consumer protection ([10393/10](#)).

***Work programme of the incoming presidency***

As the incoming presidency, the Belgian delegation briefed the ministers on its work programme for employment, social policy, health and consumer protection in the next semester.

## **OTHER ITEMS APPROVED**

### **FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

#### **Restrictive measures against Liberia**

The Council adopted a regulation concerning restrictive measures against Liberia. The new regulation aims to bring regulation 234/2004 into line with the UN Security Council's regulation 1903 (2009) which amended the UN restrictive measures on arms and related material, and the provision of assistance, advice and training relating to military activities, by confining the effect of these restrictive measures to non-governmental entities (9241/10).

#### **Appropriate measures towards Madagascar**

The Council took appropriate measures towards Madagascar in accordance with article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement.

For more information, see press release [10475/1/10 REV 1](#).

### **EMPLOYMENT POLICY**

#### **Mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Spain and Ireland**

The Council adopted four decisions mobilising a total amount of EUR 12.2 million under the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF), providing support for workers made redundant in Spain and Ireland as well as for technical assistance. An amount of EUR 6.60 million is allocated for workers made redundant in the Spanish ceramic products manufacturing industry, and EUR 1.95 million for dismissed workers in the Spanish doors and door-frames manufacturing industry. A further EUR 2.57 million is intended for workers made redundant in the Irish enterprise Waterford Crystal and three of its suppliers. The support measures must be co-financed by the member states and include, inter alia, training, professional orientation, job-search and assistance for entrepreneurship. An amount of EUR 1.11 million is mobilised for technical assistance, in particular monitoring, information and advice to member states, expert meetings and seminars, the creation of a knowledge base and the mid-term evaluation of the EGF.

## **SOCIAL POLICY**

### **Extension of EU rules on coordination of social security**

The Council agreed on a draft regulation designed to ensure that third country nationals who are legally resident in the EU and who are in a cross-border situation are subject to the same rules for coordinating social security entitlements as European citizens ([10442/10](#)).

### **Work in Fishing Convention**

The Council adopted a decision authorising member states to ratify the Work in Fishing Convention of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in matters within the exclusive competence of the EU ([16923/1/09 REV 1](#) + [10355/10 ADD 1](#)).

The Work in Fishing Convention ("Convention 188"), which was adopted in June 2007 at the International Labour Conference in Geneva, is aimed at improving the working conditions of fishers on board fishing vessels. It establishes, in particular, minimum international standards for the fishing sector, such as conditions of service, the right of repatriation, rules on accommodation and food, occupational health and safety, medical care and social security.

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