

Media Advisory

Informal Meeting of EU Ministers for Employment and Social Policy

17-18 April 2018

The informal meeting of EU ministers for employment and social policy (EPSCO) will take place on 17-18 April 2018 in the National Palace of Culture in Sofia. The two-day meeting will discuss the principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights and how they can be applied in order to improve workforce skills and qualifications and ensure equal opportunities and access to the labour market. The delegates will visit the Seventh European Social Entrepreneurship Forum as part of the event.

The meeting will be chaired by Dr Biser Petkov, Minister of Labour and Social Policy of the Republic of Bulgaria.

Agenda

17 April 2018 | Tuesday

- 8:30 – 9:30 Arrivals at the National Palace of Culture, doorsteps and handshake (*broadcast live*)
- 9:20 – 9:30 Roundtable (*broadcast live*)
- 9:30 – 10:10 **Opening plenary** (*broadcast live*)

Dr Biser Petkov, Minister of Labour and Social Policy of the Republic of Bulgaria

Ms Marianne Thyssen, EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills, and Labour Mobility, European Commission

Mr Heinz Koller, Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia, International Labour Organisation

Ms Renate Hornung-Draus, Vice-Chair of BusinessEurope's Social Affairs Committee

Ms Valeria Ronzitti, General Secretary of CEEP

Ms Véronique Willems, Secretary General of UEAPME

Mr Luca Visentini, General Secretary of ETUC

- 10:10 – 10:20 Digital World: Set Apart by Gender
Ms Virginija Langbakk, Director, European Institute for Gender Equality
- 10:20 – 10:30 Early Childhood Development
Ms Ulrika Hall, Chair of the Social Protection Committee

Working Session 1: Delivering on the principle 1 of the European Pillar of Social Rights: Education, Training and Life-long learning

- 11:00 – 11:20 Implementation of the Council Recommendation on Upskilling Pathways
Ms Ann Branch, Director, Skills, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, European Commission
- 11:20 – 11:30 Overview of reform activity in Member States
Ms Ilze Zvidrina, Chair of the Employment Committee
- 11:30 – 12:50 Panel Discussion: New opportunities for upskilling of adults - good practices and future challenges
- 12:50 – 13:00 Family photo (*broadcast live*)
- 13:00 – 14:30 Lunch debate: Contribution of the social dialog towards income growth and the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights
- 14:30 – 15:40 Panel discussion – continuation
- 16:00 – 18:00 Future of employment and social policies – high level group

18 April 2018 | Wednesday

Working Session 2: Delivering on the principle 4 of the European Pillar of Social Rights: Active support to employment

- 9:00 – 9:20 Implementation of the Council Recommendations on the integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market *and* the Youth Guarantee - taking stock and future development

Mr Joost Korte, Director General, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, European Commission



- 9:20 – 9:35 State of play of youths and long-term unemployed on the labour market – remaining challenges
Mr Juan Menéndez-Valdés, Director of Eurofound
- 9:35 – 9:50 Best practices and achieved results on the implementation of the Youth Guarantee in Bulgaria
Mr Lazar Lazarov, Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Policy of the Republic of Bulgaria
- 10:20 – 12:40 Panel Discussion: Integration of the youth NEET and the LTU into the labour market - good practices and future challenges
- 12:40 – 12:50 Closing remarks
Ms Marianne Thyssen, EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills, and Labour Mobility, European Commission
- 12:50 – 13:00 Wrap-up of the working sessions and closing remarks
Dr Biser Petkov, Minister of Labour and Social Policy of the Republic of Bulgaria
- 13:00 – 13:30 **Press Conference (broadcast live)**
Dr Biser Petkov, Minister of Labour and Social Policy of the Republic of Bulgaria
Ms Marianne Thyssen, EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills, and Labour Mobility, European Commission

Accreditation information

Accredited journalists can pick up their badges on Monday, 16 April 2018 at the Registration Desk at Entrance B-2 of the National Palace of Culture between 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. Members of the press arriving in Sofia on the day of the event will be able to get their badges at the same entrance upon their arrival at the National Palace of Culture. Only accredited members of the press will have access to the National Palace of Culture.

Photos and videos

All media opportunities during the event (doorstep statements, handshake, roundtable, press conference) will be streamed live on the [Website of the Bulgarian Presidency](#). Throughout the day, photos and videos



will be uploaded in the [Photo](#) and [Video](#) sections of the Website. All official photos from the event are also available for download in high resolution on the [Flickr](#) account of the Bulgarian Presidency. Videos can be downloaded from [Vimeo](#).

Press contacts

In Sofia: Veselin Jeleu, v.jelev@government.bg, +359 883 990 247

In Brussels: Elitsa Zlateva, elitsa.zlateva@bg-permrep.eu, +32 476 996 634