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30th January 2020

World Employment Confederation-Europe (Michael Freytag) to speak at Expertentag Zeitarbeit in Germany

20th February 2020

Nordic Network meeting of the Nordic World Employment Confederation-Europe members

26th February 2020

Meeting of the European Business Services Alliance chaired by the World Employment Confederation-Europe

4th March 2020

WEC-Europe Event on cooperation between employment services

Upcoming Events

In case you have questions on the Advocacy Report:

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Global Public Affairs

Executive Summary

ILO appoints employment industry liaison

- The ILO has appointed Mr. Sangheon Lee, Director of the ILO Employment Department, as ILO liaison officer of the private employment services industry.
- The appointment resulted from an agreement with Guy Ryder, the ILO Director General, to better structure the relationship between WEC and the ILO Office.
- WEC will intensify the relationship with Mr Lee and start working on a common ILO/WEC agenda.

WEC Joins Business at OECD (BIAC) ELSA committee meeting

- In the latest BIAC ELSA committee meeting, the following topics were discussed OECD future priorities, labour migration and The Global Deal.
- The focus of the OECD ELSA department will be on research on three pillars: (1.) to what extent labour market protection works for people, (2.) whether labour market protections are sustainable and (3.) to what extent existing OECD policy recommendations are implemented.
- BIAC will highlight the importance of Skills Mobility as key input for the OECD Ministerial Meeting on Migration.
- The BIAC ELSA Committee has perpetuated its mandate not to engage with initiatives surrounding The Global Deal.
- The Committee will continue its work on the BIAC employment Strategy. WEC and its members have taken a key role in shaping this further.

2020 ILO World Employment and Social Outlook (WESO)

- The ILO has published its annual flagship report on global labour market trends, the WESO. It expects the number of unemployed to (slightly) rise this year following uncertain economic developments.
- Key finding is the underutilisation of the workforce. It calls to include underemployment into the definition of unemployment.
- Concerns are raised on young workers staying in temporary jobs, especially in European and Central Asian countries.
- The report is another global indicator of economies potentially slowing down in 2020. Specific concern to take note of as private employment services industry is the finding that young workers do not transition to better paid, less temporary work.

WEF White Paper and Charter on Platform Work

- As one of the many initiatives during the World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting in Davos, WEF launched a White Paper and Charter on 'Platform Work'.
- The report identifies platform work as a separate 'entity' in the platform economy and pushes for partnerships of businesses policymakers to improve the work quality of platform workers.
- The charter seeks to create principles for platform companies. These are mostly about transparency to their users and a call to action by governments. Out of the six signatories, five are taxi or delivery service providers.
- Key concern is the call in the charter for the development of specific regulation for platforms and platform workers.

Business Advisory Group on Migration launches

- Bundling and consolidating the various (previous) global business bodies on labour migration, the Business Advisory Group has been launched during the Global Forum on Migration and Development meeting in Quito.
- In its starting meeting the business priority of Responsible Recruitment was continued. WEC remains engaged via the Group's executive committee.

ILO appoints employment industry liaison

Following a conversation with ILO Director-General Guy Ryder, the ILO has appointed Mr. Sangheon Lee as ILO Liaison for the private employment services industry. Mr. Lee is the Director of the Employment Department of the ILO which covers Skills, Employment Policies and Development Policies. This includes Employment Services.

He will be the main contact point for WEC and the ILO Office and channel the different topics that WEC works on with ILO. WEC has welcomed this appointment and invited Mr. Lee to join the 2020 World Employment Conference as a speaker and an introduction into the industry. WEC will set up a meeting with Mr. Lee to start shaping an agenda of common activities and policy topics.

Assessment:

In the past, WEC has been connecting with the different parts of the ILO Office on different topics and projects without any single point of contact or coordination. This appointment is a positive step for WEC to streamline and take better control over ILO activities that impact the industry.

WEC has already had good contacts with Mr. Lee and has been working with him and his team since his appointment as Director of the Employment department in 2017.

WEC joins Business at OECD (BIAC) ELSA Committee meeting

WEC has participated in the latest Business at OECD (BIAC) ELSA committee meeting. During this meeting the following items were addressed:

OECD ELSA Priorities

Stefano Scarpetta, Director of the OECD ELSA Department addressed the priorities for the 2022 – 2023. These are structured in three pillars: (1.) Human Centred: addressing to what extent labour market policies are fit for purpose, (2.) Future Ready: addressing whether labour market policies are sustainable and futureproof, and (3.) Implementation: Addressing to what extent OECD policy recommendations have been taken up by national policy makers.

The key ask Mr. Scarpetta had for the business community is on data on how businesses are adjusting their organisation of human resources. This to better fact check assumptions about increased transitions and changes in labour market demand and supply.

Migration

To input the OECD ministerial meeting on Migration, the BIAC ELSA Committee decided to highlight the importance of Skills Mobility for the business community and to make sure the

topic of migration should be clearly differentiated from the topic of refugees. Further input was drawn from the Business Advisory Group for Migration (see further in this Advocacy report).

Business at OECD ELSA Strategy

Follow-up discussions were held on the implementation and development BIAE ELSA advocacy strategy ([available on the online WEC Members Area](#)). Based on the overall framework that was agreed by BIAE ELSA, the Committee will now develop the topics and tools of the strategy to enable implementation.

OECD ELSA Department Reform

Discussions were held about rumors around the reorganization of the OECD ELSA department to be placed under the Chief of Staff of the OECD Secretary-General. The committee asked BIAE to be vigilant, liaise with Workers representatives to the OECD (TUAC) and if needed position and advocate against such a reorganization.

The Global Deal

Discussions were held on the engagement of BIAE with the activities of the 'The Global Deal Support Unit' that is housed in the OECD ELSA department. This support unit pushes a Swedish governmental initiative to push and promote collective bargaining and International Framework Agreements across the world. The Committee confirmed its standing position not to engage or participate in events given the lack of representativeness of the initiative and its redundancy with the other OECD ELSA activities. BIAE secretariat will align a position with the IOE to be shared with OECD members and staff to clarify positioning. At the same time BIAE will reach out to the ELSA department to get an overview of activities of the Support Unit.

Assessment:

OECD remains a crucial international player on labour market policies. BIAE as representative of the Business Community to OECD is a strategic partner to WEC. WEC's active role in the ELSA Committee continues to deliver business messaging that aligns with that of the HR services industry. WEC and its members also play a key part in concretely shaping and drafting the ELSA strategy.

The activities surrounding 'The Global Deal' remain of concern. This initiative provides a structured channel for trade unions to push workers' messaging into the OECD secretariat and membership. Indeed, also on topics close to the WEC agenda and priorities. Still, the position of WEC remains to stand united with the global business community to not legitimize this initiative.

ILO World Employment and Social Outlook 2020

On 20 January 2020, the ILO released its flagship [2020 World Employment and Social Outlook \(link\)](#), which analyses key labour market issues, including unemployment, labour underutilisation, working poverty, income inequality, labour income share and factors that exclude people from decent work. Overall, the report paints a gloomy picture in terms of achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1 (no poverty), 8 (decent work and economic growth) and 10 (reduced inequalities).

The report has identified the following ten key trends in the world of work.

- Half a billion people across the world are affected by labour underutilisation, including unemployed, underemployed and those who lack sufficient access to labour markets.
- The number of underemployed people (165 million) is nearly as high as the number of unemployed (188 million).
- As such, the report calls into question traditional measures of labour market underperformance, such as unemployment rates, in order to address current policy challenges.
- 2 billion people employed informally, amounting to 61% of the global workforce.
- Slowing economic growth at the global level, paired with a rising global labour force and a lack in new job creation, is expected to result in an increase in unemployment by 2.5 million this year. In comparison, unemployment remained relatively stable for the last nine years.
- Income inequality is higher than previously thought, especially in developing countries.
- Labour's share of national income has declined from 54% to 51% between 2004 and 2017, with the highest drops being seen in Europe, Central Asia and the Americas.
- 276 million young people (aged 15-24) are neither in employment, education or training (NEET).
- A growing incidence of temporary employment in Europe and Central Asia is seen as a reason for declining quality of employment for young people in those regions. The temporary employment rate among young people in the EU rose from 41.4% in 2007 to 43.5% in 2018.
- Picking up figures from Eurostat, the report also addresses a decrease in likelihood for workers aged 25-39 to transition from temporary to permanent contracts since 2011.

Assessment:

The annual ILO flagship report provides for latest figures and new estimates on key labour market issues across the world. It acts as important indicator on labour market performance around the world. As such, it will feed into ILO policies and priority-setting. Key is that the editors of the report have very much highlighted developments in developed economies, where usually developing countries receive more attention. Key point for the industry to recognize in the WESO Report is the decrease of temp-to-perm for younger workers as well as the overall concern on the quality of temporary employment.

World Economic Forum presents charter and report on 'Platform Work'

The World Economic Forum (WEF) has presented a white paper on Platform Work ([link](#)). The paper was accompanied by a Charter with principles on 'platform work'. It maps the different types of 'platform work', 'platform workers' and 'online work platforms'. Furthermore, it identifies the potential of online platform work but concludes with a call for policy reform and better business practice to address work quality. To push the latter a charter for platform companies was presented, signed by six companies.

The paper takes an appropriate granular approach to digital work platforms and sets them apart from the broader 'platform' economy. It identifies four types of platform work (Location-based staffing; Online freelancing; Location based services; Online microtasking) and identifies opportunities and challenges in them for workers and businesses. Next, it

identifies legal diversity and uncertainty on 'platform work' as key challenges in the regulatory context. Based on its findings, and consistent with WEF's mandate to promote public private partnership, the report calls leadership in business and government to create better securities in 'platform work'.

The Charter of Principles for Good Platform Work

The report is complemented by a charter with principles for platform work ([link](#)). It is signed by six companies (Cabify, Grab, Postmates, Deliveroo, MBO Partners, Uber) which according to the report itself are mainly in the 'location-based services' category (MBO partners is not). The charter starts with an overall call to action for societal players to act. Key in this is the call to classify platform workers appropriately under the law, and suitable regulation for platform work and platform work services. The charter then sets overarching principles for 'platform work' as well as calls to actions to policymakers on Inclusion, Safety, Conditions, Pay, Social Protection, Learning, Voice & Data Management. Generally, the 'hardest' commitments in the charter is to transparency. Also, it identifies the differing the responsibilities of the workers, the client and the platform

Assessment:

The White paper does not bring new information or analysis. It draws from existing research and analysis. Positive of the paper is the granularity of the assessment and the awareness this could bring to having a more specific (policy) discussion on platform work. In terms of recommendations the report roughly aligns with overall WEC narrative that labour market protections need to be refit for a new labour market. Yet, it is also explicit on the responsibility of businesses to deliver on these protections.

The charter accompanying showcases commitment of six companies to that end. Still, apart from the small number of signatories, these companies are mostly companies that have some form of location-based / physical element to their service (taxis; delivery). One key call in the charter is the call for specific regulation for platform work services and platform workers. This recommendation is something to monitor and follow-up.

Still, the main assessment of the charter is that 'platform work' somehow operates outside of regulatory and policy context. This does not align with our industry interest for a level playing field between similar services and could lead to new labour market regulation and opacity.

In a final stage of the development of the charter, WEC was consulted for input. In this it addressed the necessity for WEF not to repeat ongoing work in the global business community and the ILO. If this report, the charter or the recommendations gain further traction (so far, traction has been limited) WEC will follow up with WEF and/or individual signatories of the charter.

Business Advisory Group on Migration officially launched

Consolidating various business initiatives on migration, the Business Advisory Group on Migration has been launched during Global Forum on Migration (GFMD) held this January in Quito, Ecuador. A first meeting of its Executive Committee was held 21 January. It replaces the on GFMD Business Mechanism. It will continue to work on its four advocacy positions: Skills Mobility, Responsible recruitment, Skills Development & Matching, and Technology &

Migration. On behalf of the Employment Industry The Adecco Group's Menno Bart and WEC's Jochem de Boer have taken a seat in the Executive Committee of the Business Advisory Group.

Assessment:

The Business Advisory Group on Migration is the continuation of existing business initiatives WEC was involved in to monitor and engage on industry interest in the Migration policy area. With this new body and an explicit position in the executive committee for the industry, WEC can have a reactive approach to the topic of migration while maintaining connection with the broader business community when scale up is warranted.

European Public Affairs

Executive Summary

The European Commission published in January a strategic **Communication on “A strong social Europe for just transitions”**, setting out European employment and social priorities for the coming years.

Jointly with the Communication on “A strong social Europe for just transitions”, an **EU Social Partners’ Consultation on fair minimum wages in Europe was launched**, to which the World Employment Confederation-Europe will contribute. A first discussion on the topic was held in the WEC-Europe Public Affairs Committee of January 2020.

The **UK lawmakers approved the Brexit deal following the general elections held in the UK**. The Brexit withdrawal agreement was also endorsed and signed by the EU institutions. The Brexit will now take effect on 31st January 2020, after which a 12 months transition phase will start.

The **EU sectoral social dialogue project on “social Innovation in the temporary agency work industry is progressing smoothly** with a second workshop and the third steering committee, which took place in January. The second social innovation workshop focused on social innovation in working conditions, with several presentations of best-practices case studies from European countries.

A World Employment Confederation-Europe delegation implemented a meeting with the new chair of the European Network of Public Employment Services, Johannes Kopf, to introduce the World Employment Confederation-Europe and call for more cooperation between public and private employment services.

European Commission Communication “A strong social Europe for just transitions

On 14th January 2020, the European Commission published the strategic Communication “A strong social Europe for just transitions”, setting out the priorities of the European Commission for the next mandate in the area of employment and social affairs and presenting the vision of the new EU Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights, Nicolas Schmitt.

Starting point of the Communication is that labour markets and economies are in a moment of change including climate change, the digitalisation of the economy which requires a people centred approach (including a reference to the impact of artificial intelligence on the world of work) and the changing demographics in Europe with people living longer and healthier.

The von der Leyen Commission underlines its intention to implement the European Pillar of Social Rights adopted under the Juncker Commission, which requires action at European level, by the Member States and by social partners. To this end, an Action Plan on the Pillar will be developed. The European Semester for labour market reform shall be the key framework for monitoring progress. As of 2020, it shall be more closely linked to the UN

Sustainable Development Goals. Every year, an Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy Communication will be published.

The remainder of the Communication looks at the three main areas of the pillar of Social Rights:

1. Equal opportunities and jobs for all with a focus on the importance of skills for the future with an emphasis on the key importance of education and training including career guidance. More attention shall be devoted to skills anticipation and to developing a European Education area by 2025. Furthermore, the European Youth Guarantee shall be reinforced, enhancing opportunities for young people. A further area of EU policy intervention identified is to promote professional mobility and economic convergence, including the need to support those in transition. The focus of supporting those in transitions is closely linked to the European Green Deal Investment Plan proposed by the Commission. This chapter focuses on creating more jobs, including a focus on a strong social market economy, a strong EU single market and a focus on the social economy. In this context, the Communication makes explicit reference to the importance of social innovation to create jobs, including for those with a distance to the labour market. Finally, a focus is laid on fostering equality with a focus on the situation of women on the labour market and the need to support people with disabilities.
2. The second chapter on “Fair working conditions” addresses challenges linked to the changing world of work, including a commitment that workers in Europe should have a fair minimum wage that allows for decent living, as reflected in the European Pillar of Social Rights. Furthermore, adequate social protection needs to be ensured for diverse forms of work. The European Commission underlines that “technological innovation needs to go hand in hand with social innovation”. Special attention must be given to the platform workers where a new Digital Services Act will focus on liability and safety rules for digital platforms and a platform summit will discuss priority issues and solutions. The Commission underlines that fair working conditions are also about strong social dialogue and the ability of social partners to find solutions.
3. A third section centres on social protection and inclusion, including a focus on the need for solidarity addressing the announced European unemployment reinsurance scheme and the necessity to adopt social protection to the realities of the world of work and new vulnerabilities. The Commission underlines that in several Member States some self-employed and persons in non-standard forms of work do not have access to adequate social protection, which should be addressed by implementing the Council Recommendation on access to social protection for works and self-employed adopted under the Juncker Commission. Social protection needs to focus on affordable health care, adequate social protection for the ageing society and a broader discussion on the impact of demographic challenges for the economy and society. Social protection and inclusion also means fighting poverty.

A further chapter looks at promoting European values in the world (e.g. trade relations & agreements). In the concluding section of the Communication, the European Commission stresses the need for action at European, national and social partner level. The EU Commission therefore invites all relevant actors (EU, national, regional and social partners to present their views by November 2020 on further action needed and to pledge their commitments to implement the pillar. Throughout 2020, the Commission will seek active engagement and participation of all actors.

Assessment and next steps:

The Communication “A strong social Europe for just transitions” outlines an overall positive and constructive agenda of the European Commission for the next years. The reference to social innovation including the focus skills, social protection, working conditions and labour market reforms reflect priorities and ideas also put forward by the World Employment Confederation-Europe, even if the private employment services industry is not specifically mentioned in the Communication.

A consultation phase on the Communication from January to November 2020 will be a key opportunity for the World Employment Confederation-Europe to illustrate its thought leadership on social innovation and the future of work, to put forward recommendations of the private employment services industry and thus work towards a political environment that allows for industry growth. The planned WEC-Europe White Paper to be published in 2020 should be the main, strategic response to the Communication.

EU Social Partners’ Consultation on fair minimum wages

Jointly with the Communication “A strong social Europe for just transitions”, a first stage social partners consultation under Article 154 TFEU has been launched on possible actions addressing challenges related to fair minimum wages. This forms part of the regular procedure when proposing new legislation on employment and working conditions, which require a two-stage consultation of the EU Social Partners. The Consultation document starts of the commitment in the European Pillar of Social Rights that adequate wages are a key element of fair working conditions and decent living standards. It refers to the reference to minimum wages in the European Pillar of Social Rights and the political guidelines of Ursula von der Leyen.

The EU Commission considers that minimum wages in Europe matter, as the situation of low wage earners has worsened in some countries and wage inequalities have increased. The Commission also underlines that low-wage workers in non-standard forms of work (including part-time, fixed-term, agency work and on-call work are particularly affected).

Minimum wages are put forward as a key tool to protect workers with low wages and low bargaining power. At present 22 countries have statutory minimum wages and 6 have wages determined by collective labour agreements, which includes minimum wages in some countries.

The EU Commission consultation document then outlines the following four key challenges: Minimum wage adequacy, minimum wage coverage, involvement of social partners in setting statutory minimum wages, national mechanisms guiding the adjustments of statutory minimum wage.

An EU policy intervention on minimum wages aims to promote the well-being of people and builds on previous initiative in the area of employment and working conditions. It builds on the political commitment of the European Pillar of Social Rights. Furthermore, the Commission refers to commitments related to minimum wages taken by EU Member States under ILO instruments and the European Charter of the Council of Europe.

The Commission underlines that an EU action on minimum wages would contribute to ensuring fair minimum wages, provide renewed momentum for related discussions at national level, facilitate upward convergence and be in line with the objective of fostering an

economy that works for people, one of the key principles of the new von der Leyen Commission. The Commission finally stresses that EU action could focus on ensuring that minimum wages are set at an adequate level considering the national context, ensure effective protection, involvement of social partners in the setting of minimum wages and clear conditions for setting statutory minimum wages.

Assessment and next steps:

While the principle of fair minimum wages was included in the (not legally binding) European Pillar of Social Rights, the Commission initiative of January 2020 has received a rather mixed feedback. EU level social partners have underlined the need to respect the autonomy of social partners and collective bargaining. Several EU Member States stressed the need to respect the principles of proportionality and subsidiarity when considering EU action in this field. The World Employment Confederation-Europe Public Affairs Committee meeting of January 2020 discussed the initiative and agreed that a World Employment Confederation-Europe submission shall be drafted. This shall illustrate that in most EU Member States, minimum wages in the agency work industry are already established either by law or through collective labour agreements. Furthermore, the principle of equal treatment and equal pay, which is applicable in all EU countries ensures the social protection and fair remuneration of agency workers. Finally, the World Employment Confederation-Europe submission to the consultation will illustrate that in many countries, the agency workers actually obtain more than the legally guaranteed minimum pay.

UK lawmakers approve Brexit deal

The UK Parliament and the EU institutions have approved the agreement on the withdrawal of the UK from EU membership. The Brexit will take effect on 31st January 2020, after which the UK will enter into a transition phase of 11 months. This transition phase will be used to negotiate an agreement on the future EU – UK relationship, including trade relations, but also aspects linked to the labour market and work mobility. The EU has agreed and published in January 2020 first guidelines and a roadmap for the negotiations on the future EU-UK relations. The transition period may be extended to December 2021 or even December 2022, if so requested by the United Kingdom.

Assessment:

With the ratification of the withdrawal agreement by both sides, the Brexit will formally take place end of January 2020, while the political implications will only become fully visible at the end of the transition period, when it becomes clear whether or not an agreement on the future UK/EU relations could be reached and formalised.

Update on the project on Social Innovation in the temporary agency work industry

The WEC-Europe/UNI-Europa joint project on social innovation in the temporary agency work industry is progressing smoothly. A third steering committee and a second social innovation workshop took place in January, focusing on social innovation in working conditions, with experts from Belgium, The Netherlands, Spain and Poland presenting social

innovation examples developed at national level. The aim of the project is to build up a compendium of practices of social innovation in the area of training, working conditions and social protection. A third workshop focusing on social innovation and social protection will be held in March 2020. The research report will then be finalized by July and a pan-European Conference be organised in October 2020.

Assessment:

The joint project on social innovation in the temporary agency work industry is a key tool to identify, present and discuss social innovation practices with UNI-Europa and to build up a compendium of social innovation practices. The two workshops organised so far have been instrumental to influence and shape a better understanding of the trade unions regarding the social role of the temporary agency work industry. The project is also instrumental to contribute to policy debates at EU level on the changing world of work, social protection and social innovation.

Meeting with the Chair of the European Network of Public Employment Services

In November 2019, a World Employment Confederation-Europe delegation (Sonja von Lieshout (WEC-Europe Executive Committee), Femke Koojiman (ABU) and Michael Freytag (WEC-Europe Public Affairs Manager)) had a high-level meeting in Vienna with the chair of the European Network of Public Employment Services, Johannes Kopf from the Austrian Public Employment Services.

The WEC-Europe delegation introduced the World Employment Confederation-Europe, its mission and objectives, presented the Vision Paper “Making Europe the best place to work” and highlighted the need for more and better cooperation between public and private employment services at national level in the EU Member States.

Based on the discussion during the meeting, it has become clear that reaching European Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation between employment services with the EU PES Network will not be feasible. Instead, focus should be laid on dialogue and cooperation in addressing specific labour market challenges, such as skills shortages, digitalisation and the changing world of work.

The WEC-Europe Managing Director Denis Pennel shall be invited to a PES Network Board meeting in 2020 to exchange experience and practices of the private employment services industry in addressing current labour market challenges. The WEC-Europe/UNI-Europa project on social innovation can be an important building block for these discussions.

Assessment:

The meeting was instrumental to open up a dialogue and working relationship with the new chair of the European Network of public employment services and to illustrate to him the positive role played by the private employment services in reaching better functioning labour markets. At the same time, it has become clear that reaching a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation between public and private employment services at EU level will not be feasible in the near future, due to the large diversity of national practices, the fact that the private employment services industry is still assessed critical in several countries and

the fact that cooperation between public and private employment services should be build up in a bottom-up approach.

EU Sectoral Social Dialogue on temporary agency work

On 22nd January 2020 a meeting of the European Sectoral Social Dialogue on temporary agency work took place in Brussels. Focus was laid on compliance and enforcement of existing regulation, with a special focus on health and safety at work. A second part of the meeting was devoted to the WEC-Europe/Uni-Europa joint project on social innovation with the research team providing an update on the state of play of the project followed by a discussion.

Assessment and next steps:

The Sectoral Social Dialogue on temporary agency work continues to be a key forum to conduct joint research and to have thematic discussions on topics of common interest.

National Public Affairs

Germany: Discussion on new restrictions affecting the private employment services industry

In Germany, two new restrictions are under discussion affecting the private employment services industry: Based on the coalition agreement, stricter conditions for the use of fixed-term contracts shall be introduced, including a maximum 18 months duration of fixed-term contracts. Furthermore, successive fixed-term contracts shall be limited to 3 and for companies with > 75 employees, a limit of 2,5 % for fixed-term contracts shall be introduced. A draft law introducing this reform is expected for the first half of 2020. This will impact the agency work sector as regular fixed-term contracts are used to contract agency workers.

In the health sector, an indirect restriction driven by Federal Ministry of Health (Minister Spahn, CDU) has been introduced. A new law restricts reimbursement of agency work expenses for hospitals. Hospitals will only be reimbursed the wage on tariff level for the use of agency work, although actual costs are higher. A second, legislative initiative is focusing on a ban if agency work in the healthcare industry. This initiative is driven by the regional government of Berlin in the second chamber of the German Parliament (Bundesrat). Such a ban, which would have similar effects as in the construction sector, is particularly sensitive due to the potential spill over to other sectors and industry.

Assessment:

The recent regulatory developments in Germany showcase the need to continue the advocacy actions at national and European level to fight adverse agency work regulation. The World Employment Confederation-Europe Playbooks, especially the playbook 3 on policy

issues, are an important instrument and service to support national federations in their fight against adverse regulation.

Norway: Renewed pressure and difficult environment for the agency work industry

The agency work industry in Norway is again facing major challenges and potential new restrictions. The union representing construction- and manufacturing industry workers in Norway decided at their national convention to work in order to phase out the temporary agency work industry.

In parallel, a motion was put forward in the Parliament by the prime minister from the Labour Party, aiming to limit the agency work sector. While it did not get a majority, the motion was still a clear signal for increased pressure and the likelihood of new restrictions to be put forward by the left-wing government.

Assessment:

The agency work industry in Norway has been under significant pressure and facing new, restrictive regulation in the past years. The pressure was largely driven by trade unions and left-wing policymakers. The World Employment Confederation-Europe has been actively supporting its national federation NHO SH in the advocacy actions.

Thought Leadership

European Policy Centre Conference on The Future of Work

On 9th of December, the World Employment Confederation-Europe Managing Director Denis Pennel spoke at a high-level Conference organised by the European Policy Centre on the Future of Work. The Conference included three thematic sessions focusing on labour law reforms in the age of new forms of work, access to training and social protection in the age of labour market transformation. Denis Pennel addressed the work stream on labour market reforms in the age of new forms of work and conveyed key messages on the need for a new social contract and social innovation.

The conference concluded a 1.5 years project of the European Policy Centre, in which the World Employment Confederation-Europe was involved. Unfortunately, the concluding report was not as positive as expected and did not reflect well enough the input provided by the World Employment Confederation-Europe. Due to this fact, WEC-Europe decided to withdraw its logo from the final report.

Assessment:

The conference was a great opportunity to interact with high-level EU policy makers and stakeholders and to convey key messages on the future of work and social innovation. While the report should have stressed in a better way the need for diverse forms of work, Claire

Dhèret, the project leader at the European Policy Centre, focused in her presentation during the conference on the diversification of forms of work.

Workshop on Social Innovation in the area of working conditions for temporary agency workers

On 15th and 16th of January, the World Employment Confederation-Europe and UNI-Europa, in cooperation with the Centre for European Policy Studies and the Catholic University of Leuven hosted a workshop over two days on “Social Innovation in the area of working conditions for temporary agency workers”. This workshop forms part of the 1,5 years project on social innovation in the context of the EU Sectoral Social Dialogue.

Several, national experts have come to Brussels to present initiatives that they developed to improve the working conditions of agency workers. These case studies included:

- Prevention et Interim, an initiative in Belgium to prevent accidents at work and improve health and safety at work
- The action protocol against accidents at work developed by Asembleo in Spain
- The Dutch initiative “all in one for agency workers”
- The case study “TAKpelnospawni” from Poland.

The presentation of these case studies and national examples provided the basis for a constructive and fruitful discussion on social innovation in the area of working conditions for agency workers. A further project workshop on social innovation in the area of social protection will be held on 23-24 March 2020. The EU sectoral social dialogue project will be completed with the organization of a pan-European conference and the publication of a research report in October 2020.



Assessment:

The workshop was an important event at EU level organised jointly by the World Employment Confederation-Europe and UNI-Europa to showcase and discuss social innovation practices developed in the agency work industry. The presentations lead to an interactive debate and fostered mutual learning in the industry.

Abbreviations

BIAC	Business at OECD
CDU	Christian Democratic Union, conservative party in Germany
ELSA	Employment, Labour and Social Affairs
EU	European Union
GFMD	Global Forum Migration and Development
ILO	International Labour Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PES	Public Employment Services
UK	United Kingdom