



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 21 March 2013

Working conditions: Commission urges Member States to implement ILO domestic workers convention

The European Commission has presented a proposal for a Council Decision authorising Member States to ratify the International Labour Organisation 2011 Convention concerning decent work for domestic workers (Convention No. 189). Countries ratifying the ILO Convention agree to ensure fair and decent conditions for domestic workers by protecting their fundamental labour related rights, preventing abuse and violence and establishing safeguards for young domestic workers.

"Improving working conditions in personal services is an important objective for the Commission" said László Andor, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, adding "I urge Member States to ratify this Convention as soon as possible, which will also contribute to implementing the EU strategy against trafficking in human beings".

The Commission proposal for a Council Decision is necessary because the Member States cannot autonomously ratify ILO Conventions without prior authorisation by the Council in respect of those parts of the Convention which fall under EU competence. The EU itself cannot ratify any ILO Convention, because only States can be parties to it.

States ratifying the Convention are required to take measures to ensure fair and decent working conditions and to prevent abuse, violence and child labour in domestic employment. They must ensure equal treatment between domestic workers and other workers as regards compensation and benefits, for example in the case of maternity. The Convention also introduces an obligation to inform workers of the terms and details of their employment. Further clauses ensure that domestic workers are protected against discrimination, are offered decent living conditions, and have easy access to complaint mechanisms. Finally, the Convention sets out rules regarding foreign recruitment.

EU legislation already addresses some aspects covered by the ILO Convention. The provisions of the Convention share the same approach than this legislation and are broadly consistent. On many issues, EU law is more protective than the Convention. The Convention, however, is more precise than EU law in the coverage of domestic workers by legislation and in other particular aspects of domestic work.

Background

The EU promotes, in all its policies, the ratification and effective implementation of ILO Conventions on core labour standards and other Conventions that have been classified by the ILO as up to date.

In its 2012 Employment Package, the Commission underlined the role of the implementation of the Domestic Workers Convention in improving working conditions in personal services.

In June 2012, in the context of the EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings, the Commission urged Member States to ratify all relevant international instruments, agreements and legal obligations which will contribute to addressing trafficking in human beings in a more effective, coordinated and coherent manner, including the Domestic Workers Convention.

Furthermore, trade unions and non-governmental organisations are running an international campaign to promote the ratification of the Domestic Workers Convention.

Several Member States have indicated their intention to ratify swiftly the Domestic Workers Convention. It is therefore necessary that any legal impediments for the ratification by Member States be removed at the level of the EU.

As regards three other ILO Conventions adopted over the last decade, parts of which fell under the competence of the EU, the Council has authorised Member States to ratify them, in the interests of the Union, in respect of those parts falling under Union competence. On 20 November 2012, the Commission adopted a similar proposal for such a Council Decision as regards the Chemicals Convention (N°170).

For more information

International Labour Organisation: [Decent work for domestic workers](#)

[László Andor's website](#)

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