



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

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Undeclared work: Commission proposes new Platform to improve prevention and deterrence

(see also [MEMO/14/271](#) and [MEMO/14/272](#))

The European Commission has proposed today the creation of a European Platform to improve cooperation at EU level in order to prevent and deter undeclared work more effectively. The Platform would bring together various national enforcement bodies involved in the fight against undeclared work, a phenomenon that causes serious damage to working conditions, fair competition and public budgets.

"Undeclared work deprives workers of social protection, puts their health and safety at risk and lowers labour standards. It also undermines fair competition for businesses and endangers the sustainability of public finances and social security systems. In the end, everybody loses. This is why the Commission is fully committed to support Member States in tackling this scourge, so we can protect workers, level the playing field for companies and safeguard fiscal revenue", EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion László Andor commented.



The new Platform would bring together all enforcement bodies involved in tackling undeclared work, such as labour and social security inspectorates and tax and migration authorities, as well as other stakeholders, such as EU-level representatives of employers and employees. The proposal envisages that **all** Member States should be members of the Platform, as undeclared work affects all of them, and joint participation of all EU countries is crucial to address cross-border situations.

The Platform would fill a vacuum at the EU level, where until now undeclared work is discussed sporadically and in an uncoordinated way in different committees and working groups. It would allow for more effective cooperation between those who deal with undeclared work on the ground every day.

The new Platform would:

- provide a forum where experts could share information and best practices, thereby expanding the limited contacts existing so far
- explore national and EU tools to face shared problems, such as the related phenomenon of bogus self-employment and undeclared work in subcontracting chains
- tackle cross-border aspects by, for example, exploring ways to improve data exchanges between national administrations
- strengthen operational cooperation such as joint training sessions, exchanges of staff and joint inspections
- develop common principles and guidelines for inspections to tackle undeclared work
- increase awareness of the problem through common activities such as European campaigns and adopting regional or EU wide strategies

The proposal for a Decision establishing a European Platform will now be sent to the European Parliament and the Council for adoption.

Background

[Undeclared work](#) is defined as any paid activities that are lawful as regards their nature but are not declared to public authorities, taking into account differences in the regulatory systems in Member States. This notion has been integrated in the European Employment Strategy and, since 2001, is addressed in the employment guidelines to Member States. According to a Eurobarometer survey carried out in 2013, around one in ten Europeans (11%) admitted to have bought goods or services involving undeclared work in the previous year, while 4% conceded that they had performed undeclared work ([IP/14/298](#)). The survey reflected the incidence of this phenomenon in a wide range of sectors and also significant differences among Member States.

The April 2012 [Employment Package](#) underlined that transforming informal or undeclared work into regular employment could help to reduce unemployment, as well as highlighting the need for improved cooperation between Member States.

In mid-2013, the Commission carried out a first stage consultation with EU-level representatives of employers and employees on possible future EU measures to increase cooperation between national enforcement authorities ([IP/13/650](#)). It was followed by a second stage consultation at the beginning of 2014. In both cases, social partners indicated that action at EU level will bring added value to the efforts at national level.

The European Parliament, in its [Resolution of 14 January](#), called for stronger cooperation and reinforcement of labour inspectorates to fight undeclared work.

For more information

[News item on DG Employment website](#)

[Eurobarometer "Undeclared work in the EU"](#)

[László Andor's website](#)

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