



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 16 October 2014

Undeclared work: Commissioner Andor welcomes Council's agreement on EU Platform for better prevention and deterrence

European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion László Andor has welcomed the agreement reached today by the EU's Council of Employment and Social Policy Ministers on a so-called 'general-approach' to establish a European Platform to better prevent and deter undeclared work. The Platform seeks to bring together various national enforcement bodies involved in the fight against undeclared work, which causes serious damage to working conditions, fair competition and public budgets. The Commission presented its proposal to set up the Platform in April 2014 ([IP/14/387](#), [MEMO/14/271](#), [MEMO/14/272](#)).

"With the Council's agreement on a general approach, the Platform is one step closer to becoming a reality. Undeclared work is a serious challenge to all Member States, depriving workers of social protection and decent working conditions, undermining fair competition for business and putting the sustainability of public finances at risk. Therefore, it is essential that all Member States actively participate in the new Platform's activities, especially since undeclared work is not just an internal concern but has a cross-border dimension. By joining forces, we'll be better placed to fight this scourge", Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, László Andor, commented.

The 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. It 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 common problems caused by undeclared work and by the related phenomenon of bogus self-employment
- tackle cross-border aspects by, for example, exploring ways to improve data exchanges between national administrations

- strengthen cross-border operational cooperation such as staff exchanges and joint inspections
- develop common principles and guidelines for inspections to tackle undeclared work and organise joint training sessions
- increase awareness of the problem through common activities such as European campaigns and adopting regional or EU wide strategies

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 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

[Video – Undeclared work: an endless circle](#)

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

[László Andor's website](#)

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