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From:	Presidency
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Presidency events - <i>Information from the Presidency</i>

Delegations will find attached information on the events organised by the Presidency, with a view to the EPSCO Council on 20 June 2024 (Any Other Business item).

**Information on the events organised by the Belgian Presidency
of the Council of the European Union**

Investing in an inclusive and fair future for Europe: Building inclusive pathways for better digital services, 13-14 March, Brussels

This conference brought together European experts and decision-makers in search of solutions for inclusive digital services. The Digital Decade Policy Programme 2030 sets the target of at least 80% of adults having at least basic digital skills by 2030. The conference was an opportunity to discuss the progress made towards this target and promote digital inclusion in Europe. Moreover, the conference highlighted the current and future job market requirements in terms of digital skills. Participants presented a diverse range of projects and put forward recommendations for the future.

Towards full inclusion of persons with disabilities - the European Pillar of Social Rights and beyond, 19 March, Brussels

The objective of this conference, organised in collaboration with the European Commission and with the support of the European Disability Forum, was to discuss the new initiatives to be taken in the second phase (2025 - 2030) of the EU Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The conference was an opportunity for civil society to put forward its priorities and suggestions.

The conference addressed three priority topics: access to employment, an inclusive single market that promotes the free movement of people with disabilities, and strengthening the implementation of the EU Strategy and of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) at European and national level.

High-Level Conference on the European Pillar of Social Rights, 15-16 April, La Hulpe

The goal of this High-Level Conference was to bring together policymakers, stakeholders and experts to deliberate on the further implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights. Through engaging discussions, insightful panels and collaborative workshops, participants explored possible avenues and actions to promote the further implementation of the Pillar's principles in the years to come, making a difference in the daily lives of Europeans.

In the plenary discussions, EU Ministers of Employment and Social affairs tackled several pivotal questions about future challenges and priorities: How can social and employment policies foster human capital development, increase competitiveness, and innovation, and make our societies more inclusive? How can we achieve a fair and just transition? How can we strengthen upward social convergence and solidify the EU social level-playing field?

At the event, the European Parliament, the European Commission, Belgium on behalf of 25 EU Member States, the European Economic and Social Committee, ETUC, SGI Europe, SME United and the Social Platform signed the La Hulpe Declaration on the Future of the European Pillar of Social Rights. In the Declaration, the signatory parties pledge to continue implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights and to further strengthen social Europe. The Declaration proposes concrete initiatives for the EU's future social agenda and reaffirms the Pillar as the guiding framework for EU social policies.

European Social Work Conference, 25-26 April, Bruges

The European Social Work Conference was structured around three themes: social work and climate change, social work and migration, and social work and digitalisation. Participants included practitioners, experts, academics and representatives of civil society organisations. The conference touched upon the history and added value of social work in Europe, with a particular emphasis on social work practices and expertise.

European Year of Skills Closing event, 29-30 April, Brussels

As part of the closing events of the European Year of Skills, the Belgian Presidency organised on 29 April a meeting of the coordinators of the European Year of Skills of participating countries and representatives of Belgium and the European Commission. A closing statement on behalf of the coordinators of the European Year of Skills, “Beyond the European Year of Skills – Maintaining the momentum” took stock of the achievements of the European Year of Skills and outlined several priority areas of action for the future. The closing statement was shared with the Council of the EU and the European Commission.

This was followed on 30 April by the European Year of Skills closing event, organised by the European Commission, with the participation of representatives from EU Member States, EU institutions and agencies, as well as social partners, civil society organisations and other relevant stakeholders.

Conference on the European Child Guarantee: from engagement to reality, 2-3 May, Brussels

On 2-3 May 2024, the Belgian Presidency organised the Conference “European Child Guarantee: from engagement to reality”, with the participation of the national coordinators of the European Child Guarantee, representatives from EU Member States and from the EU institutions, civil society and other stakeholders.

Three years after the adoption of the Council Recommendation on the European Child Guarantee, the Conference provided an opportunity to assess the progress made, to exchange good practices and knowledge and to look at the challenges and opportunities ahead regarding the implementation of the European Child Guarantee. The Conference also featured working groups dedicated to two specific topics: Early Childhood Education and Care and Child Participation.

High-level event on LGBTIQ policy: Pride Alliances and Policy: Towards a Union of Equality, 17 May, Brussels

The event brought together the Commissioner for Equality Helena Dalli, Ministers and Secretaries of State from several EU Member States, Members of the European Parliament, experts and civil society organisations. Participants discussed the progress and obstacles to the implementation of the EU LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025, as well as the way forward for the next European Commission.

The meeting resulted in 18 EU Member States signing a joint Declaration on the continued advancement of the human rights of LGBTIQ persons in Europe. The signatories of this Declaration notably committed to implement national LGBTIQ strategies and to support the appointment of a new Commissioner for Equality in the next Commission. They also called on the next Commission to pursue and implement a new strategy to improve the rights of LGBTIQ people during the next legislature, including by allocating sufficient resources and working with civil society.

“Roadmap on Carcinogens” Closing Event, 12-13 June, Brussels

On 12-13 June, a closing event of the 2020-2024 Roadmap on Carcinogens was organised, where the Roadmap partners marked the end of the current phase of the Roadmap and launched the Roadmap on Carcinogens 3.0. At the event, a state of play on the protection of workers against carcinogens was presented, as well as the achievements of the Roadmap, according to its different pillars and challenges. The Roadmap partners took stock of the progress so far and reflected on what still needs to be done, especially regarding the way in which the achievements of the Roadmap can be further consolidated and implemented in practice, with the Roadmap on Carcinogens 3.0.
