

Contents

Global Public Affairs

ILO – WEC webinar on Collaborative Strategies for Advancing Ratification of Convention 181 with Your Government	2
OECD Going for Growth Report 2023	2
OECD Migration Outlook to be published on 23 October	2
WEC Regulatory Report to be presented to members on 22 November	3
HR Services Industry voice heard at OECD	3
Migration and labour remain a hot topic	

European Public Affairs

WEC-Europe acted as a speaker at the EU Forum on the Posting of Workers.	5
European Labour Authority – WEC-Europe contributes to the stakeholder group meeting.	5
Joint project with UNI-Europa on capacity building: contractor selected	6
European Commission Work Programme 2024 presented	6

Recent Publications

[WEC-Europe
Advocacy Messages
on Artificial
Intelligence](#)

[WEC opinion piece on
agency work in
healthcare](#)

Upcoming Events

8 November: WEC-
ILO [webinar](#) on
Ratifying C181 in
Egypt

16-17 November:
European
Employment and
Social Rights Forum
in Brussels

22 November:
[WEConversations |](#)
Regulatory Deep
Dive: The good, the
bad and the ugly

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Global Public Affairs

ILO – WEC webinar on Collaborative Strategies for Advancing Ratification of Convention 181 with Your Government

The World Employment Confederation is working together with the ILO to promote further ratifications of the ILO Convention 181 on private employment agencies. Following the regional webinar on Latin America in Q2 2023, a further webinar is organised on 8 November on how to gain the support of the national government to promote the ratification of C181, with a focus on Egypt.

In October 2023, the World Employment Confederation has been in close contact with the ILO Office in Geneva and with our Egyptian member Target HR to develop the programme for this online event, secure the commitment of ILO speakers and agree on the strategic objectives of the event. Besides industry experts and ILO officials, the event shall also include the participation of government officials from Egypt and of the American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt to ensure an impactful event promoting further ratifications of Convention 181.

Assessment

The renewed commitment of the ILO Office to promote the ratification of Convention 181 is a welcomed and positive development under the current ILO Director General Gilbert Houngbo. The first webinar in 2023 was implemented successfully, and the WEC Head Office will work towards a successful online event in November focusing on how to work with national governments to promote the ratification of the Convention, taking Egypt as a case study.

OECD Going for Growth Report 2023

The 2023 Going for Growth Report of the OECD is identifying country-specific reform priorities. The past years have been dominated by shocks and crises that have profoundly changed societies and economies. GDP growth is projected to remain below trend in both 2023 and 2024, although it will gradually pick up through 2024 as inflation moderates and real incomes strengthen. The OECD Going for Growth 2023 Report outlines structural reform priorities for OECD and partner countries that can help set long-term growth on a stronger and more sustainable path.

Key findings of the report focus on the fact that the potential growth is weak and requires supply-side reforms and that comprehensive policy action is needed to put CO² emissions on a downward path. Furthermore, tackling gender inequality can help remedy current labour market tightness.

Assessment

The OECD Going for Growth 2023 Report provides valuable insights and input for the WEC public affairs and advocacy activities. Several messages, such as the need for structural reforms, are consistent with WEC public affairs demands.

WEC Regulatory Report 2023 is being finalised and will be presented on 22 November 2023

Following the WEC Regulatory Survey conducted in July/August 2023, the WEC Head Office team has put together in September and October the findings of the 2023 Regulatory Survey in a report that takes a PowerPoint format. In October, some survey findings were checked with WEC members, and the main results of the Regulatory Report survey have been presented to the Global Public Affairs Network and European Public Affairs Committee. In November, the final cross-checking and editing of the Report will be completed so that the Report will become available to all WEC members in November.

On 22 November, a WEC members' session in the WEConversations format will be held to present the main findings of the Regulatory Report 2023 and discuss regulatory developments in the HR services industry worldwide. For this session, a legal expert from Ius Laboris will join to comment on the 2023 Regulatory Report. ISF will provide an overview of a national regulation and regulatory change case study.

In parallel, the H2/2023 edition of the Staffing Executive Regulatory Report is being prepared and will be ready by November. At this stage, the WEC Head Office has received 13 replies to the H2/2023 SERO survey, which is significantly lower than H1/2023.

Assessment

The WEC Regulatory Report and the Staffing Executive Regulatory Outlook are two core elements of the WEC Regulatory Monitoring project, which forms part of our current strategic plan. The Regulatory Report and Staffing Executive Regulatory Outlook are also important instruments for impactful advocacy, especially regarding the priority of reaching appropriate agency work regulation.

HR Services Industry voice heard at OECD

Through the Business and Industry Advisory Committee (BIAC), the WEC's positions on Artificial Intelligence and Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) were shared at the latest OECD Employment, Labour, and Social Affairs (ELSA) Committee on Oct. 10 and 11 in Paris. Notably, the ELSA discussion on AI focused on its potential to make employment more inclusive for people living with disabilities. Of course, using AI to help eliminate bias in hiring is an important topic for the WEC membership and includes other underrepresented groups.

The WEC intervention on PPPs was part of a discussion on innovative approaches to contracted-out employment services in OECD countries. The WEC's positive and concrete examples in this area showed the organisation's wealth of knowledge and experience gained through working with the public sector.

The meeting also made strong links between migration, green skills, and the green transition. With concerns shared among countries about vocational training, upskilling, the idea of targeted training and education to deal with the green transition was stated as a priority, but there appear to be many gaps to making that possible.

Assessment

The meeting also made strong links between migration, green skills, and the green transition. With concerns shared among countries about vocational training, upskilling, the idea of targeted training and education to deal with the green transition was stated as a priority, but there appear to be many gaps to making that possible. There is a great opportunity for the WEC to help fill the gaps.

Migration and labour remain a hot topic

With the OECD's release of its International Migration Outlook, the report was the latest example that the topic is high on the agenda throughout the international community. Showing that migration flows are at an all-time high, the report details that labour market outcomes for immigrants have also reached the highest levels in over 20 years and that immigration is key to filling labour needs.

In advance of the Global Forum on Migration and Development Summit in January, a third and final preparatory meeting took place in Geneva on Oct. 25. The WEC was prominently featured during the roundtable discussions on Labour Migration: Promoting the Economic Inclusion of Migrants as Menno Bart, WEC Board Member and Chair of the European Public Affairs Committee, co-chaired the session and discussion on the background paper.

Assessment

With so much discussion focused on migration, the green transition, inclusion and diversity, the WEC voice is strong and position well-placed to show how the HR services industry does and can play a greater role in addressing labour shortages, especially ones where new skills are required.

European Public Affairs

WEC-Europe acted as a speaker at the EU Forum on the Posting of Workers.

On 23rd and 24th October 2023, the World Employment Confederation-Europe participated in a Forum organised by the European Commission and the European Labour Authority on the Posting of Workers. WEC-Europe acted as the main speaker of European employers in a session on the posting of temporary agency workers on the first day. In the presentation, WEC-Europe highlighted the benefits of posting workers for both employers and workers, stressed the fact that an appropriate legal framework is in place that ensures the provision of services and the protection of workers and highlighted the need for access to information, controls and enforcement.

Further sessions during the conference focused on effective administrative procedures and control measures, opportunities and tools of digitalisation and cooperation in the field of social security coordination.

Assessment:

While there have been no legislative discussions and debates in 2023, the posting of workers remains an important public affairs priority for WEC-Europe and the private employment services industry. Discussions on the posting of workers and the practical aspects of the application and enforcement of the respective rules largely take place in the context of the European Labour Authority.

European Labour Authority – WEC-Europe contributes to the stakeholder group meeting.

On 18th October, WEC-Europe participated in the 8th Stakeholder Group Meeting of the European Labour Authority, which was held in Brussels. Besides an institutional update from the European Labour Authority, there have been important discussions for the private employment services industry on the 30th anniversary of the European job mobility scheme EURES, including EU and national actions to address labour and skills shortages through targeted labour mobility and the involvement of social partners in the EURES Network. WEC-Europe underlined in this context that EURES is still in most countries not sufficiently used and that its framework and business model are not attractive enough for employers in the HR services industry.

In a further thematic discussion on labour mobility and the posting of workers in the construction sector, representatives of the European Labour Authority underlined a significant number of too-large sub-contracting chains and abusive practices by some temporary work agencies. WEC-Europe intervened in the debate, highlighting the need to differentiate clearly between the well-established agency work sector represented by WEC-Europe and some other intermediaries not complying with the rules. WEC-Europe also highlighted actions taken by the industry at the national level, such as activities in the Netherlands to ensure compliance with collective labour agreements and the ombudsman systems in several countries to deal with

Assessment:

Meetings and discussions in the stakeholder group of the European Labour Authority frequently address practices and activities of the agency work sector. The mandate of the European Labour Authority is focused on access to information, compliance and enforcement, as well as cooperation between Member States in the context of labour mobility and the posting of workers. This means that the European Labour Authority has no mandate to propose or initiate European regulation on mobility. Still, discussions at the European Labour Authority will provide input to reflections at the level of the European Commission/DG Employment. Against this background, WEC-Europe needs to contribute to the work of the European Labour Authority.

Joint project with UNI-Europa on capacity building: contractor selected

Linked to the WEC-Europe/UNI-Europa project on capacity building, the EU Sectoral Social Partners for temporary agency work only received one reply to the public call for tender launched. This offer was submitted jointly by Tristan d'Avezac and Tom Hadley, two consultants who used to work for a WEC Corporate Member/national federation.

The WEC Head Office Team and UNI-Europa Secretariat have assessed the tender reply received and will work on the contract with the external partner. The first capacity-building workshop will take place in 2024. A project steering committee has been set up, including Sonja van Lieshout and Michael Freytag on the employers' side and Dimitris Theodorakis and Madlen Nikolova for the trade unions.

Assessment:

The joint project on capacity building for sectoral social partners with a special focus on social partners in central/eastern Europe and southern Europe is an important pillar of our European sectoral social dialogue work programme 2020 to 2023, which has just been prolonged by one more year to the end of 2024.

European Commission Work Programme 2024 presented

On 17th October 2023, the European Commission adopted its work programme 2024, "Delivering today and preparing for tomorrow", which will be the last work programme of the current European Commission. The work programme follows up on the six headline ambitions of the current European Commission, namely the European Green Deal, A Europe fit for the digital age, an economy that works for people, a stronger Europe in the world, promoting the European way of life and a new push for European democracy. In the 2024 work programme, a strong focus is laid on better regulation, burden reduction and the implementation and enforcement of EU law.

As always in the last year of the European Commission, fewer new initiatives are announced for the next year, and most of the initiatives listed in the work programme annexe are non-legislative. Actions of interest to the World Employment Confederation-Europe include the follow-up of the high-level Val Duchesse Summit, which the Belgian EU Council Presidency

will host and a non-legislative initiative on a Joint European Degree as well as a Council Recommendation fostering the assurance and recognition of diploma.

The European Commission Work Programme follows up on a strategic declaration adopted by the EU Heads of State and Government during a summit in Granada. EU leaders reaffirmed the strategic objectives to ensure European citizens' peace, stability and prosperity. EU leaders also underlined the need to reduce energy dependency and to work on long-term resilience and competitiveness. Efforts should focus on a more cohesive, innovation-driven and interconnected single market, which should include a focus on economic and social welfare, investment in research and education and skills of the future to address demographic challenges.

Assessment:

The European Commission work programme is certainly much lighter compared to the previous years, reflecting the fact that European Parliament elections will take place in June and a new European Commission will take office in November. Actions on the Val Duchesse summit and skills could still provide essential opportunities for WEC-Europe.

Useful Publications

- [OECD Going for Growth Report 2023](#)
- [European Commission Work Programme 2024](#)
- [OECD International Migration Outlook 2023](#)

Abbreviations

BIAC	Business and Industry Advisory Committee
EU	European Union
FT	Financial Times
ILO	International Labour Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development