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**NewsFlash**  
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### **REMINDER: CEEP online renaming event on 8 December 2020!**

Following up on various past communications, I'm pleased to recall that our – long-awaited – renaming event will take place next Tuesday, 8 December 2020 (16:00-17:30 CET). You can register via the following [registration form](#). Besides the official launch of our new name, the event will be the occasion to bid farewell to our outgoing President and welcome the new one. It will also feature a high-level panel discussion on the vision for the European recovery and the role of Services of General Interest in this process. On this occasion, we will welcome Valdis Dombrovskis, European Commission Executive Vice-President for an Economy that Works for People, as well as MEP Brando Benifei (S&D, IT), MEP Anna Cavazzini (Greens/EFA, DE) and MEP Eva Maydell (EPP, BG). The event will be organised via Zoom, allowing a broad participation from across Europe. All the information will be communicated to registered participants a few days ahead of the 8th of December.

We hope to see many of you on this occasion and to celebrate together this key achievement for our association.

## **SOCIAL AFFAIRS BOARD**

**European social partners urge Finance and Employment Ministers to prolong emergency measures and to involve social partners in shaping national Recovery and Resilience Plans**

Ahead of the ECOFIN and EPSCO Councils on 1 and 3 December, CEEP, ETUC, BusinessEurope

and SMEUnited called upon the Finance and Employment Ministers, in a joint letter, to prolong the emergency measures and involve the social partners in shaping the national Recovery and Resilience Plans. You can find the letter [here](#).

## **CEEP signs the Osnabrück Declaration on Vocational Education and Training**

On 30 November 2020, the EU social partners together with the Ministers responsible for Vocational Education and Training (VET) of the 27 Member States and the European Commission, signed the [Osnabrück Declaration on vocational education and training as an enabler of recovery and just transitions to digital and green economies](#)". The Declaration follows the high-level conference held in Osnabrück on 16-17 September 2020 and serves as a renewed commitment to contribute to post-COVID recovery and further develop the European Education and Training Area through innovative and future-oriented education and training systems that support the digital and green transitions and improve employability and competitiveness, thereby stimulating economic growth. At the dedicated online ceremony, CEEP Secretary General Valeria Ronzitti reiterated the importance of the priorities of the Osnabrück Declaration, especially considering the effects that COVID-19 and the lockdown restrictions have had on VET systems. Ms Ronzitti however added that we should consider these difficulties as opportunities for innovation and she therefore welcomed the adoption of a systemic approach to lifelong learning with a strong promotion of digital skills. Ms Ronzitti stressed that, to meet these challenges, it is necessary to ensure effective investment in support of the development of equitable and sustainable education systems. Finally, Ms Ronzitti placed particular emphasis on the need to address one of the biggest challenges in adult education, namely *"increasing synergies between education and socio-economic actors, as many systems still exist without coordination mechanisms between education providers and social partners"*.

## **PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD**

### **CEEP feedback to the Commission's long-term vision for rural areas**

The European Commission launched in September a public consultation on its new initiative for a long-term vision for rural areas. This consultation aims to collect views on current opportunities and challenges in rural areas, aspirations for rural areas in 2040 and the actions needed to achieve these aspirations. The public consultation on the long-term vision for rural areas is a first step towards a Commission Communication on the topic, to be published mid-2021. This Communication will aim to support a debate at European level on the future of rural areas and the place they should have in our society. It will propose actions to be taken, including in the shorter term, to achieve this long-

term vision for the future of rural areas. The Public Services Board (PSB) contributed to this public consultation in setting out a vision for the future of rural areas whilst highlighting that local services of general interest must be at the heart of such a long-term vision. Furthermore, for CEEP, a successful long-term strategy includes integrating services of general interest and guaranteeing sustainable infrastructure in rural areas. Therefore, the PSB stresses that the long-term vision should also be about equal living conditions in urban and rural areas and the opportunities offered by digitisation. The basis for this is access to high-performance digital infrastructure which serves the general interest. You can find the response to the public consultation [here](#).

## SUSTAINABILITY BOARD

### **Provisional agreement in the EP Transport Committee on the European Year of Rail 2021**

On 1 December, the European Parliament's TRAN Committee voted on the [provisional agreement](#) on the European Year of Rail 2021 file resulting from an interinstitutional agreement made on 12 November between the European Parliament and the EU Council. The European Year of Rail will promote rail as a sustainable, innovative, and safe mode of transport with events, campaigns and initiatives planned throughout 2021. The agreement includes a final budget of €8 million, as well as a request to the Commission to consider launching two feasibility studies, including about the idea of a rail connectivity index, similar to the one that already exists for air transport. The next step will be that the Commission is required to inform the Council and the European Parliament of its plans by the end of March 2021. CEEP is planning throughout the year for activities with the Transport Task Force to take the momentum in times of COVID-19 to ensure the work of public transport stays in the spotlight.

### **Joint letter with CER, UITP and Eurocities on Public Transport during and after COVID-19**

Ahead of the upcoming publication of the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy, CEEP sent a Joint Letter in cooperation with CER, UITP and Eurocities to urge the European Commission to recognise and strengthen public transport as the backbone of sustainable mobility during and after COVID-19. Together, the EU associations call for strategic action along 6 points that will support this public good for a resilient and green future for cities and underline the health and safety of using all modes of public transportation. The joint letter can be found [here](#).

## PROJECTS & EVENTS

### European Commission consultation on labour migration: Skills and Talent package and Talent Partnerships on 7 December 2020

CEEP and the other European Social and Economic partners are invited by the European Commission's DG Home to meet on Monday 07 December 2020 for a consultation on the Skills and Talent package and Talent Partnerships, in the framework of the [New Pact on Migration and Asylum](#), published by the European Commission on the 23 September 2020. This consultation will provide the framework for an initial discussion on the revision of certain EU directives, previewed by the European Commission for 2021, such as the Single permit Directive and the Long-term residents Directive. CEEP will emphasize that the changes within the revision of the directives should contribute to a sustainable, innovative, and inclusive EU labour market, tackling the existing employment shortages and skills mismatches. Likewise, CEEP will use this opportunity to present the main priorities and needs of the public services employers and SGI providers for the attraction and inclusion of third country nationals in the labour market and to emphasize that the proposals within the Skills and Talent package and Talent Partnerships should follow the principle of the multi-stakeholder approach, underlined in the [joint statement for the renewal of the European Partnership for Integration](#) released on 7 September 2020 by the European Commission and the European Social and Economic partners. Should you have any questions about the results of the consultation, please do not hesitate to contact CEEP Project and Policy Officer, [Stefan Enica](#).

