

SDC CGA contribution to the “First phase consultation of Social Partners under Article 154 TFEU on a possible action addressing the challenges related to fair minimum wages” (COM(2020) 83 final)

Introduction

Social partners in central governments welcome the Commission Consultation as an opportunity to implement, with EU social partners, principle 6 on wages of the European Pillar of Social Rights proclaimed by the Council, Parliament and the Commission, which reaffirms, amongst others, that workers have the right to fair wages and that transparency and predictability must guide wage setting according to national practices and in respect of social partners' autonomy.

We share these objectives and are committed to ensuring workers have a decent wage.

We recall in this regard the SDC CGA policy recommendations for a quality service in central government administration, 2015, which commit, amongst others, to “a remuneration policy that, despite budgetary constraints, provides a decent living and the motivation of personnel”.

We expect to be fully consulted and involved in any initiatives that relate to collective bargaining and the regulation of the labour market.

Regarding the specific consultation, within the scope of our committee:

1. We share the view that a fair wage is central to fair working conditions and living standards, alongside with progressive income taxation and social welfare. It benefits the economy as a whole.
2. We support the objectives of upward convergence towards better working and living conditions, shared economic prosperity across the EU, gender pay equality and sustainable funding of social protection systems.
3. We agree with the Commission that collective bargaining between trade unions and employers especially at sectoral level is essential to a well-functioning social market economy and fair wage setting and that the autonomy of social partners must be fully respected. We insist that the Commission fully involves us when preparing its second phase consultation, especially regarding its possible proposals to promote collective bargaining.
4. While we do not take position on a specific initiative and wish to remind that wage setting is a national competence, we do agree that any initiatives on fairer wages are to cover all workers, without discrimination between public, non-profit and private sectors.
5. We will continue our discussions as European sectoral social partners.

Brussels, 26 February 2020.