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Towards a green, digital and resilient economy: European Growth Model

The 2nd of this month of March, the European Commission has put forward a [Communication on the European Growth Model](#). The text recalls the common objectives the EU and its Member States have committed to, with respect to the green and digital transition and to strengthening social and economic resilience. It acknowledges that the European economy is undergoing unprecedented transformations in the context of major uncertainties linked to the global and security outlook. The Communication confirms that those developments underscore the need to work closely with international partners and to reinforce the EU long-term sustainable growth agenda.



The Communication aims to provide input to the discussions on the European economic growth model, which will take place at next week's informal European Council meeting of heads of state or government. The Communication sets out the key investments and reforms that are required to achieve the European Commission's objectives, and underlines the importance of coordinated action by all relevant actors, including the EU, Member States and the private sector.

Investments and reforms at the basis of the European Growth Model

There is a broad consensus on the priorities for the European economic growth model. This includes the green and digital transitions, the need to enhance the Union's economic and social resilience, as well as EU preparedness to shocks. The transformation of EU economy is necessary to safeguard the prosperity and well-being of the citizens of the Union, especially in the current context of geopolitical instability and rising global challenges. Those developments highlight the need to double down on the reform agenda and to reinforce the cooperation with international partners on common challenges, in order to promote peace and stability. The Single Market, the Union's main source of resilience and most valuable economic asset, will be instrumental in achieving those goals.

This transformation of Europe's economy relies on two equally important pillars: **investments** and **reforms**. Investments are key for sustained and sustainable growth, and a prerequisite for an accelerated green and digital transition. However, they need to be accompanied by reforms to ensure that all EU rules are aligned with the EU's key objectives, creating the right social and economic context and incentives for households and businesses to fully contribute to them.

Towards a green, digital, and resilient economy

The green transition is an opportunity to put Europe on a new path of a sustainable and inclusive growth. In addition to tackling climate change, it will help reduce energy bills and dependence on fossil fuel imports, thus improving energy and resource security of the Union. To deliver on the [European Green Deal](#), the EU needs to increase the annual investments by around €520 billion per year in the coming decade, compared to the previous one. From those additional investments,

€390 billion per year would correspond to the decarbonisation of the economy, particularly in the energy sector, and €130 billion per year correspond to the other environmental objectives. For the green transition to succeed, it must put people first and care for those who will be most affected. To this end, the Commission has put fairness at the heart of its policies under the European Green Deal, including the ['Fit for 55' package](#).

The coronavirus pandemic has accelerated the digital transformation of our societies and highlighted the importance of digital technologies for Europe's future economic growth. [The Digital Compass](#) proposed by the Commission sets out the Union's digital targets for 2030. To achieve these ambitions, the EU needs to step up investments in key digital technologies, including cyber security, cloud computing, artificial intelligence, data spaces, blockchain and quantum computing, and semiconductors, as well as in the relevant skills. To foster the digital transition, a 2020 estimate shows that additional investment of around €125 billion are needed per year. A fair digital transformation has the potential to increase the innovation and productivity of the EU economy, offering new opportunities for people and businesses. The digital transition will also contribute to the green objectives, with synergies in many areas of a smart circular economy.

At the same time, the Union needs to address risks and uncertainties, especially in the context of the current geopolitical instability. While most companies and supply chain showed a high degree of resilience and adaptability during the pandemic, the crisis and the subsequent recovery have revealed a number of vulnerabilities in certain areas. These include, logistics and supply chain bottlenecks, labour and skills shortages, cyber threats and security of supply concerns linked to key sectors of the economy, such as is currently the case in the energy sector. To further enhance Europe's technological edge and support its industrial base, the EU will also have to increase investment in European defence and space industries, and to continue to strengthen the risk management and emergency response capabilities to future shocks or pandemics.

Mobilising coordinated action at all levels

As set out in the Communication, in order for the investments and reforms to fully contribute to the EU priority objectives, it is important to ensure coordinated action by all relevant actors: public authorities at European, national and regional level, as well as the private sector. In this way, the actions will become mutually reinforcing, preventing divergence across Member States and strengthening the Single Market.

The investments needed in order to complete the twin transitions and to enhance resilience will need to come primarily from the private sector. The EU and national authorities should ensure a favourable business environment that attracts investment. This can be achieved by strengthening the Single Market, completing the Banking Union, and making swift progress on the Capital Markets Union. Other cross-cutting policies, such as taxation, trade, and competition policy, should also continue to support the Union's favourable business environment and help attract investments to successfully implement the EU's political priorities.

While private funds will account for the major share of investments, public intervention may be needed, for instance by de-risking innovative projects or overcoming market failures. Public support at national and EU level should be well targeted and aimed at crowding in private investments. EU investments have also an important signalling effect. The EU budget and the recovery instrument

NextGenerationEU, with a joint amount of over €2 trillion, are a substantial firepower in support of long-term growth. Through the discussions on the national Plans, the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) has been instrumental in aligning the EU and national priorities for reforms and investment around a set of common goals. In particular, the RRF Regulation requires each Member State to dedicate at least 37% of its recovery and resilience plan total allocation to climate objectives and 20% to digitalisation objectives. But such investments and reforms, at national and EU level, will need to be sustained over time in order to achieve EU goals.

For further information

[Communication Towards a green, digital and resilient economy: Our European Growth Model](#)

[Factsheet Towards a green, digital and resilient economy: Our European Growth Model](#)

[The European Green Deal](#)

[Europe's Digital Decade](#)

[The European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan](#)

[The Just Transition Mechanism](#)

[NextGenerationEU](#)

[Recovery and Resilience Facility](#)

[Social Climate Fund](#)

Digital Services Act (DSA)

The second trilogue on the Digital Services Act took place on the 15th of February 2022 in Strasbourg. **A trilogue, is a type of meeting used in the context of the European Union's (EU) legislative process. They are used if the Council of the European Union does not agree to the amendments proposed by the European Parliament at the second reading of a piece of legislation. In this case, formal trilogue negotiations are carried out within the framework of a conciliation committee. A trilogue is understood as an equally composite tripartite meeting between those involved in the legislative process of the EU institutions. These bodies are the European Commission (EC), the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament. The European Commission takes on the mediating function. Critics argue that the use of trilogues is detrimental to transparency in the legislative process. They believe the European Commission uses this process to bypass public transparency and the supposed opposition the proposed legislation would cause. Once the Conciliation committee agrees on a text, neither the Parliament nor Council are able to change it, although in their respective final vote (third reading) they can reject the whole text.**

At the end of the meeting, the EP Rapporteur, **Christel Schaldemose** (S&D), declared that *"The second trilogue on the DSA illustrated that in many ways we share the same objectives: we need a strong and enforceable legislation to ensure a safer online environment for the users and consumers. Today we discussed the risk assessment and risk mitigation, governance, SME exemption and online marketplaces. We identified some convergences, but also some differences.*

I am confident that these points will not be so problematic as to be unresolvable. I made clear that from the Parliament side we would insist on ensuring more algorithmic accountability, stronger obligations on online marketplaces and proportionality in the text, as well as protecting the country of origin principle.

Overall, I think it is important to remember that these negotiations are not about EP against the Council or vice versa. It's about finding together clear and enforceable solutions to the challenges we are facing to the benefit of the users in particular and our businesses."

The IMCO Chair **Anna Cavazzini** highlighted the importance of the file and stated that work will continue intensively at technical level in order to prepare the discussions at political level. The next trilogue is provisionally scheduled at the Council premises on 15.03.2022.

The full feedback from the Rapporteur, Christel Schaldemose on the first trilogue is available [here](#).

You can follow the discussions of the second trilogue [here](#).

UNAPL makes 30th proposals for the 2022-2027 five-year Presidential term

The 24th of February, the French inter-professional organisation of Liberal Professions (UNAPL) has published a set of 30 proposals to the candidates for the French Presidency. These proposals are aiming at giving the liberal professions the means to pursue their economic development, create jobs, welcome young people and contribute to the country's growth.

Presidential elections in France will be held the 10th and 24th of April 2022. UNAPL strongly feels that the next President of the Republic will have to rely on the liberal professions to build the future of France.

According to UNAPL, many advances were realised during the five-year mandate that is coming to an end, some of which are historic, such as the establishment of a system of daily allowances for self-employed professionals or the integration of self-employed funds into depreciation measures to facilitate business transfers. The recent adoption of the law in favor of independent professional activity contains important and positive measures for the sector, such as the unique status of individual entrepreneur and the protection of personal assets. UNAPL also collaborates in the drafting of the decree relating to the development and financing of structures for the exercise of regulated liberal professions. But there is still a lot more to do.

Built around 8 essential axes, these proposals of UNAPL concern the fields of employment, training, taxation, and liberal entrepreneurship, as well as social subjects such as representativeness, social protection, retirement, and pensions, or still parity and equality in releasable companies. UNAPL proposals also deal with the subject of Europe and digital technology. They are resolutely turned towards the future.

UNAPL will meet in the coming weeks with all the candidates for the presidential election to discuss this set of proposals to them.

Michel Picon President of UNAPL declared that his organisation “*is putting forward ambitious and pragmatic proposals for the liberal sector towards candidates for the Élysée. The modernization of our professional sector, which weighs more than 2.5 million workers and 11% of the national added value, is an asset for the economic growth of our country*”.

The proposals of UNAPL are available [here](#).



Unpaid, undervalued: Women shoulder three-quarters of the burden of EU caregiving

The majority of caregiving in the EU is done for free by women, so-called “informal carers”, which further accentuates gender inequalities, according to a report by Hungarian MEP Katalin Cseh, vice-president of the Renew group.



[The report](#), voted on Tuesday 15th of February (524 in favour, 33 against, 143 abstentions), raises the challenges facing urban areas in the post-COVID-19 era, including the well-known issue of gender inequality.

Overall, while 80% of all care in the EU is provided by informal carers, as opposed to so-called “formal” carers such as nurses or care assistants, the report reveals that 75% of them are women.

Informal carers are people who look after a sick or needy relative without being paid. The profiles are varied, from a mother who looks after her sick child for a day, to a child who takes care of their elderly parents on a daily basis.

“If someone in their household is ill, women are expected to stay at home without any compensation,” says Katalin Cseh, adding that *“for some women, it is like a second job, something that society expects them to do”*. *“It is a burden on their shoulders,”* she stressed.

The pandemic has exacerbated this phenomenon, partly because of restricted access to health systems but also because people with COVID symptoms have had to stay at home with someone to look after them.

“I’m not saying we shouldn’t take care of our loved ones. But this burden is not recognised enough by the states. It’s not paid or valued,” she said. *“We need a social contract for those who spend their lives caring for their loved ones. They should have help and support from professionals, but also financial support if they have to stay at home,”* she argues.

While Mrs. Cseh said the phenomenon of informal carers could be explained by cultural heritage, it was necessary to review *“a whole system of access to health care”* at the European level, where *“salaries are still not up to scratch”*.

The lack of staff in health facilities, including hospitals and elderly care homes, is indicative of the unattractive working conditions, including stress, lack of equipment, lack of human resources, low salaries, she pointed out. *“Health workers are exhausted,”* the MEP warned.

Gender inequalities are also found among so-called *“formal”* health professionals, where women are the main providers of care, particularly in the posts of nurses and care assistants.

However, as the European population becomes increasingly older, the phenomenon and the imbalances it creates are likely to increase in the years to come.

[According to the Eurostat website](#), the proportion of people aged 80 or over in the EU is expected to increase 2.5 times between 2019 and 2100, from 5.8% to 14.6%.

The European Commission is currently working on a European Care Deal, the work programme of which will be presented to the Parliament before the end of 2022.

“It is time for the Commission to become aware of this imbalance between women and men in care work,” concludes Katalin Cseh, who will be following the Commission’s progress closely.

HPP Webinar - Fighting access to health inequalities by improving health worker retention and task shifting policies (29 March 2022, 14.30 - 16.30 pm CET)

On the 29th of March, the European Commission is holding a webinar where the first results of the Health Workforce Projects Cluster on EU Health Policy Platform will be presented.

The aim of this webinar is to share information on the progress of the projects that aim to provide supporting tools, practical guidelines and to improve sharing of best practices that can help Member States to design and implement their policies related to health workforce retention, task-shifting and tackling regional medical deserts. Contribution from key stakeholders to the policy dialogue is essential to advance on these challenging issues.

Fighting access to health inequalities by improving health worker retention and task shifting policies



INTERMEDIATE EVENT OF THE HEALTH WORKFORCE PROJECTS CLUSTER

Tuesday 29th March 2022, 2.30 – 4.30pm, Brussels time

The Health Workforce Projects Cluster covers five EU co-funded projects under the umbrella of the 3rd Health Programme. The projects focus on three key topics – medical deserts, task shifting and retention policies - that will be investigated thoroughly and internationally in the coming years.

Projects of the Health Workforce Projects Cluster:

- Action for Health and Equity - Addressing Medical Deserts: [AHEAD](#)
- MEnTal hEalth: fOcus on Retention of healthcare workers: [METEOR](#)
- prOmoting evidence-bASed rEformS: [OASES](#)
- Empowering EU health policies on Task SHifting: [TaSHI](#)
- A Roadmap OUT of mEdical deserts into supportive Health WorkForce initiatives and policies: [ROUTE-HWF](#)

Register now to the webinar following this link. Once registered, you will receive a confirmation email from Webex, with the link and the registration ID to join this [event](#).

More information regarding the agenda is available [here](#).

Public consultation on the new company law initiative “Upgrading digital company law”

On the 25th of February the European Commission informed us that there is a **public consultation on the new company law initiative “Upgrading digital company law”**.

The new company law initiative will focus on:

- Better access to more information about companies in the EU,
- Using company data available in national business registers in cross-border administrative or judicial procedures,
- Making it possible for companies to use information from their national business registers when expanding to markets in other Member States,
- Digitalising company law procedures and addressing new digital developments in EU company law.

These topics are relevant for SMEs, e.g. in the context of:

- looking for information about business partners in another Member State,
- planning to open a branch or subsidiary in another Member State or
- needing to provide company information to administrative authorities or courts in another Member State.

The Consultation is available [here](#)

The **deadline for responding is 8 April 2022**. One can answer in **any EU language**.

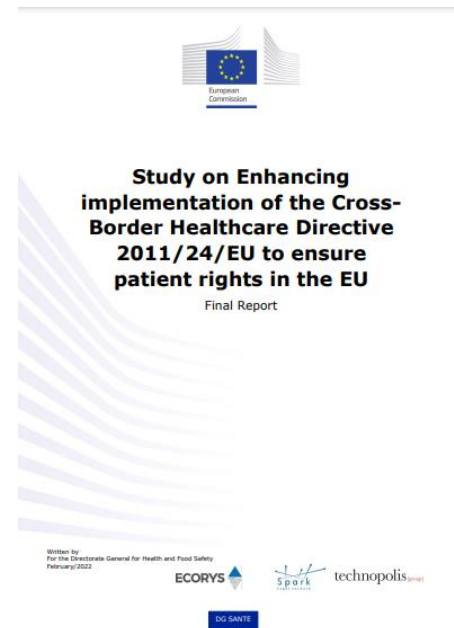
In case of questions, please contact: just-cleg@ec.europa.eu

More information in the inception impact assessment, available [here](#)

Study on Enhancing implementation of the Cross-Border Healthcare Directive 2011/24/EU to ensure patient rights in the EU

On the 24th of February, the European Commission (DGSANTE) released a Study on enhancing implementation of the Cross-Border Healthcare Directive 2011/24/EU to ensure patient rights in the EU.

The aim of this Study is to support the European Commission's work to deepen analysis of problems relating to the implementation of the Directive, identify options and solutions for improving the consistency and transparency in its application, map and analyse information from the 27 Member States, as well as EEA countries, on specific areas of the Directive's practical implementation. Building on the existing data collection for patient mobility and developing a set of indicators for a new data collection to evaluate the Directive in line with Tool 41 and 42 of the Better Regulation Toolbox are also among these aims.



Description

- [Final report](#)
- [Executive Summary](#)
- [Guiding principles for information provision on prior authorisation systems across Member States](#)
- [Mapping NCP consultation arrangements with key stakeholders: analytical report](#)
- [Mapping and Analysis of Prior-authorisation lists: analytical report](#)
- [Mapping and Analysis of Administrative Procedures: analytical report](#)
- [Intervention logic and associated indicators for evaluation purposes](#)