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‘SOCIAL INVESTMENT PACKAGE’: the importance of investing in human capital and strengthening public services is finally on the agenda

“CEEP welcomes the publication of this Package,” declared Valeria Ronzitti, General Secretary of CEEP, commenting today on the adoption of the European Commission Communication ‘Towards Social Investment for Growth and Cohesion’.

“CEEP has long emphasised that better investment is needed in public services to ensure inclusive growth and higher levels of employment, as shown by the current crisis”. Through the Package’s focus on the importance of investing in childcare, education and training, active labour market policies, housing support and health services, the Commission’s adoption today truly serves to reinforce this message. “Our members, being education and healthcare providers, as well as local public authorities, are central to the provision of these services”. However, as the Social Investment Package implies, “there must be recognition at Member State level that strengthened public services helps achieve effective, efficient and sustainable social budgets. This message now needs to be put into action.”

In terms of implementation of the Package, CEEP supports the emphasis on Structural Funds to assist active inclusion and social innovation of public services. “There is high potential for public services to innovate. Our members are catalysts for innovation in public services both in terms of new models of delivery, for example in the field of care, and employment practices such as the integration of disadvantaged groups within their workforce.”

It is also welcome that Member States are urged to strengthen the involvement of social partners throughout the European Semester, “although the Commission must bear in mind that genuine involvement needs to occur at the European level too to ensure EU policy guidance is both relevant and effective,” concluded Valeria Ronzitti.

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CEEP gathers enterprises and organisations from across Europe, both public and private, at national, regional and local level, which are public employers or providers of services of general interest. CEEP members employ a quarter of the EU workforce: CEEP is one of the three European Social Partners.