

Tripartite Social Summit for Growth and Employment

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Final Speaking Note Hans-Joachim Reck

CEEP President

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Presidents, Prime Ministers, Ministers, Commissioner,
Ladies and Gentleman,

Today we have the opportunity to exchange on how to address the challenges of recovery and renewal of the EU's social dimension. It is encouraging to see a shift in the European policy message concerning the road to recovery. Growth-friendly expenditure with a **long-term perspective**, such as investments in education, research, innovation, and energy is essential. CEEP therefore welcomes the budget allocations for Research and Development and infrastructure

within the new Multi-financial Framework. Regrettably, the proposed **decrease in the Cohesion Policy budget as well as the limited allocations for telecom and broadband infrastructure** show that the policy message is not always followed through in actions. These funds promote local investments and inclusive growth. CEEP calls for real commitment to growth-friendly investment when finalising the new financial framework.

Underlining the link between public budgets and investment is **CEEP's first "Pulse of Public Services"** survey. Figures show cuts or limitations in public budgets represent for public service employers the biggest obstacle to investments, thereby hindering growth over the next 12 months. However, CEEP is of course well aware of the differences existing between the EU member states when it comes to efficiency and effectiveness of public service providers. And we are also open to discuss on how to combat insider relationships that definitively exist in public administrations just as in the private sector. In this sense CEEP and its members are willing to open themselves for benchmarking and comparisons.

In order to **strengthen the social dimension of EMU** and the EU, CEEP supports calls for further monitoring and benchmarking instruments of social and employment indicators in order to ensure that future policy directions are relevant and effective.

Please allow me to add that there are also other means to strengthen European growth and expenditure than only the means of competition. Competition is not an end in itself! Functioning national systems of providing public services may not be questioned by a one size fits all approach. Here I would shortly like to point out the concessions directive for example. We have to make sure that it does not produce side effects which would give false signals to European citizens. CEEP is at the full disposal of the European Commission, the Council and the European Parliament to help them reach a text that would favour and not endanger the provision of Services of General Interest at national, regional and local levels.

Turning to **youth unemployment**, CEEP welcomes the Youth Employment Package and the allocation of 6 billion Euros in the proposed MFF agreement. However, it is essential that actions remain focused on the long-term perspective.

In this respect, CEEP is proud of the commitment of European Social Partners to foster youth employment as shown by the ongoing negotiations of our **Framework of Actions**.

An important element of the necessary measures is to promote the attractiveness of jobs in public services for young people.

Indeed, young people are often unaware of the scope of careers offered by enterprises providing public services. As outlined in the joint declaration of the Public Services Employers Forum, public services will face huge difficulties in the short- and medium-term due to demographic changes. To overcome these challenges, investments in human capital and public services are paramount. The main ideas outlined in the Commission's **Social Investment Package** are a good starting point, but the pure productivity-enhancing aspects of increased human capital are played down. The message that

strengthening public services helps achieve sustainable social budgets now needs to be put into action.

Finally, CEEP calls for a greater role for European social dialogue, particularly in the European Semester. Otherwise, efforts may be wasted on futile discussions, as shown by the debate on an EU minimum wage initiative and unemployment insurance system. Involvement of Social Partners should therefore be sincere and have real impact in order to provide an added value.

Thank you for your attention!