

European elections : The European Sunday Alliance calls on MEPs to promote a Work-free Sunday and Decent Work in EU legislation

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Today, on the occasion of a Conference at the European Parliament which gathered 120 participants, the European Sunday Alliance officially launched a Pledge for a work-free Sunday and decent work, ahead of the European elections 2014. The Pledge is aimed at committing European politicians to the promotion of a common weekly day of rest as well as a legal framework guaranteeing sustainable working time patterns based on the principle of decent work.

The pledge states that « *A work-free Sunday and decent working hours are of paramount importance for citizens and workers throughout Europe and are not necessarily in conflict with economic competitiveness. Especially in the present time of socio-economic crisis, the adoption of legislation extending working hours to late evenings, nights, bank holidays and Sundays has direct consequences for the working conditions of employees and for small and medium sized enterprises. Competitiveness needs innovation, innovation needs creativity and creativity needs recreation!* ». The Pledge can be accessed [here](#).

By signing this pledge, current members of the EU Parliament and candidates in the upcoming European elections commit themselves :

- 1. To ensure that all relevant EU-legislation both respects and promotes the protection of a common weekly day of rest for all EU citizens, which shall be in principle on a Sunday, in order to protect workers' health and promote a better balance between family and private life and work;*
- 2. To promote EU-legislation guaranteeing sustainable working time patterns based on the principle of decent work benefiting society as well as the economy as a whole.*

The Second European Conference on the Protection of a Work-free Sunday and Decent Work was held on the 21 January 2014 at the European Parliament (Brussels) in order to raise awareness around the Pledge and the core demands of the European Sunday Alliance. The Conference was organised by the Members of Parliament Evelyn Regner (S&D) and Thomas Mann (EPP), together with the European Sunday Alliance.

For overcoming the crisis in Europe, the creation of jobs and economic competitiveness are the main requirements. The European Sunday alliance affirms that competitiveness and decent work can go hand in hand with a common weekly day of rest. It needs recreation to be creative, innovative, and in the end, competitive. The various pannelists and keynote speakers were of the view that today, legislation and practices in place at the EU and Member State level need to be more protective of the health, safety, dignity of everyone and should more attentively promote the balance between family and private life and work. All people in the European Union should be entitled to benefit from work-free Sundays and decent working hours. Sunday protection strengthens the social cohesion of our societies. **It represents a precious feature of our heritage, which should be recognised as a fundamental pillar of the European Social and Economic Model.**

More information, photos and videos of the conference will be available [here](#).

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The European Sunday Alliance, a network of national Sunday Alliances, trade unions, civil society organisations such as sports organisations, Churches and religious communities committed to raise awareness of the unique value of synchronised free time for European societies, engages in campaigns focused on work-free Sunday and decent working hours in general. The European Sunday Alliance's Founding Statement draws attention to specific aspects of life/work-balance and social cohesion that ultimately depend on a

vast majority of people having their lawful free time at the same time. For more information:
<http://www.europeansundayalliance.eu/site/home>