

MAURIZIO SACCONI: ITALIAN MINISTER FOR LABOUR AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS (PdL) WILL CHAIR THE NEW EPP MINISTERS OF EMPLOYMENT, LABOUR, AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS GROUP

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Italian Minister for Labour and Social Affairs **Maurizio Sacconi** will chair the new EPP Ministers of Employment, Labour and Social Affairs group, following a decision taken by the EPP Presidency. Sacconi will chair on behalf of the EPP Ministers the preparatory meetings prior to the scheduled meetings of the Council of Ministers, in conjunction with Irish EPP Vice President and Fine Gael leader, **Enda Kenny**.

For the past three years, the EPP has been organising with success important Ministerial meetings such as Foreign Affairs, Economy and Finance, Energy, Transport and many more.

"I am very honoured to be given the responsibility of chairing the EPP Ministers of Employment, Labour and Social Affairs. In these difficult times, the fight against rising unemployment levels all across Europe is a huge challenge and I firmly believe that the European Union must have better coordination mechanisms put in place to address these issues. In creating this ministerial group, the EPP is recognising the importance of better political coordination at EU level," Sacconi stated.

"From an Italian point of view, at a time when the unemployment crisis is worsening, my appointment to chair this ministerial group gives my party - PdL - a direct input into the formulation of the correct and most effective European response. It will also allow us to learn from the economic and employment policies that are being pursued in other EU member states, thereby raising our hopes for a quick recovery" Sacconi concluded.

EPP Secretary General **Antonio Lopez-Isturiz** warmly welcomed the new role of Maurizio Sacconi:

"I am very pleased that Maurizio Sacconi has agreed to chair this Ministerial group. He has great experience on these matters and offers the necessary political impetus to make these meetings a great success. I am convinced that work of Sacconi, together with Enda Kenny and all the other EPP Ministers, will be of great added value for tackling the Europe-wide plague of unemployment," Lopez underlined.

Note to editors:

Maurizio Sacconi and the PdL party belong to the largest and most influential European-level political party - the European People's Party - which currently includes 72 member-parties from 39 countries, 13 EU and 6 non-EU heads of state and government, the Presidents of the Council, Commission and Parliament, as well as the largest Group in the European Parliament.

For more information:

Kostas Sasmatzoglou, Spokesman +32-22854147
Javier Jimenez, Press Officer +32-475480446

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