



European Cleaning and Facility Services Industry

## EFCI's Online Week 2021: A MEETING POINT TO DISCUSS THE ROLE OF THE SECTOR IN THE POST-COVID EUROPE

Brussels, 21 October 2021 –With 25 speakers, 5 moderators and over 200 attendants through the week, the EFCI created a platform of analysis of the state of the sector post-Covid and through the green and digital transitions.

EFCI's Online Week "*Cleaning and Facility Services for Europe's Recovery*" took place on 11-15 October. During a week of seminars, the EFCI hosted discussions on the industry and the challenges ahead for the sector, its role in Europe's recovery, the new world of work, the greening of cleaning services and the main innovation trends for the sector.

Isabel Yglesias, EFCI's Director General, said "*EFCI's Online Week has become a reflexion point for industry. Joining EU institutions' representatives with experts from the sector, it has given the EFCI and its members food for thought for the present and future challenges of the sector*".

The event reunited more than 200 representatives from the European Institutions, EFCI's stakeholders and experts from the sector and was hailed very successfully in terms of the relevant sessions and quality of the presentations. EFCI's President Juan Diez de los Rios defined the event as "a unique meeting point for our industry experts and leaders to exchange on the most pressing topics for the sector with a European perspective".

- On **Monday 11 October**, Nicolas Schmit, European Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights opened the Online Week with an [address](#) which started with words of gratitude for the sector's role during the pandemic: "*I convey the Commission's recognition and gratitude for the critical role that industrial cleaning companies and workers have played in containing the spread of the pandemic*". He also thanked the EFCI for its active contribution to the Commission's initiatives. In this regard, he affirmed that "*EFCI has been very reactive during this crisis and has contributed actively to key Commission's initiatives. Even when there might be divergencies of views, EFCI's input is always relevant and enriches the policy debate*".

Following the inauguration address, EFCI's President Juan Diez de los Rios inaugurated the Online Week underlining that "*we need more than ever, a shift towards responsible procurement of services, the respect of social partners' autonomy and capacity building, as well as a new approach towards diverse and adaptable forms of work*". Then, Barry Kitz from hkp///Remunet presented EFCI's 2021 Report "*The Industrial Cleaning Sector in Europe 2021 – Covid-19 Impact Analysis*", developed by the EFCI in cooperation with its members and that will be soon available online. The Report was then analysed by a panel of national experts who



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presented their national experiences regarding Covid-19 under the moderation of Michelle Marshall, editor of the European Cleaning Journal. Avril McCarthy of ICCA highlighted wage rate inflation, labour shortages and market changes as the main challenges ahead for the sector in Ireland. As for Germany, Christopher Lück from BIV identified recovering growth, labour shortages, digitalisation and sustainability. Finally, Alberto de Rosa from Anip-Confindustria highlighted the main actions carried out by the Italian organisation during the pandemic that contributed to bring visibility to the essential role of the cleaning services.



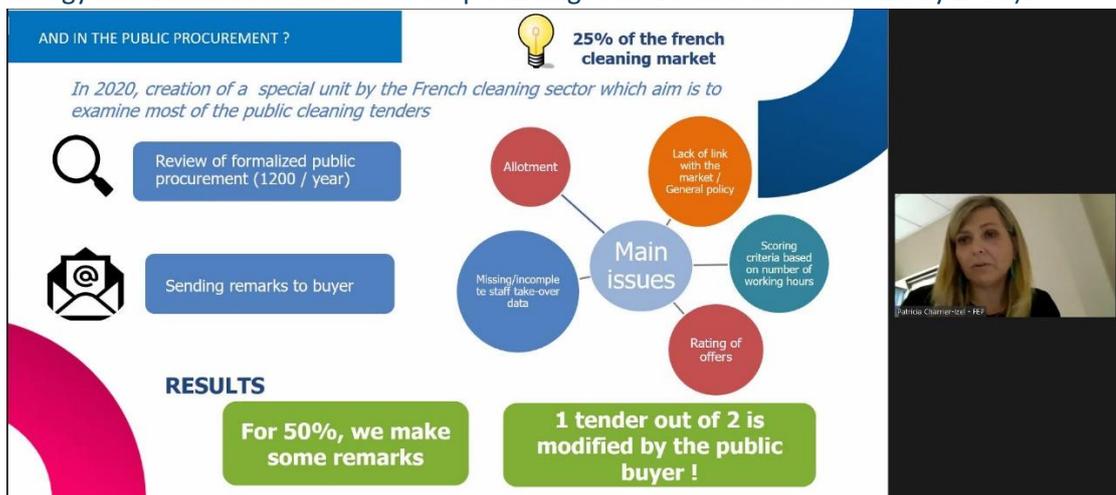
*Commissioner Schmit during his address to the EFCI on Monday 11.10.2021*

- The session of **Tuesday 12 October** invited policy makers and experts to discuss the challenges of the sector in the post-Covid phase, under the moderation of Michael Freytag, Chair of the European Business Services Alliance (EBSA).

A first panel analysed **how the sector can contribute and benefit from Europe's recovery plans**: Maria Teresa Fabregas, Director of the Task Force Recover of the European Commission presented the EU's recovery strategy with a focus on the services sector. Ms Fabregas highlighted the key role of industrial ecosystems in supporting the twin transition to a green and digital economy, making European industry more competitive globally, and enhancing Europe's open strategic autonomy. Laurentiu Plosceanu, President of the Employment, Social Affairs and Citizenship Section of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) analysed the role of employers in Europe's recovery and acknowledged the key role of the cleaning sector in job creation and the need for a supportive framework in public procurement. Rosa Ferrando from BCL Facility Services further specified that the cleaning sector can be a vector for employment creation and integration only if supported by the right legal framework, which she considers is currently not there. Patricia Charrier-Izel, Managing Director at FARE Propreté, underlined the importance of responsible public procurement focused on quality criteria as a strategic tool to drive social and labour policies forward in an effective manner. In

this regard, she explained how the FEP and the EFCI engage at all political levels to encourage responsible procurement focused on quality criteria and mentioned the EFCI recently published "[Recommendations for quality-based procurement of cleaning services](#)".

As second panel focused in the **European initiatives on buildings and the new working tendencies**. Maria-Elena Camarascu from the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission presented the New European Bauhaus and its effects on the innovation in circularity, resource efficiency and social objectives in the industrial cleaning and facility services sector. Jos Duchamps, Chair of IFMA-EMEA presented how building management is being transformed by the new world emerging from the pandemic. Karl Thies from the European Construction Industry Federation concluded the panel intervening on the European Renovation Wave (the European Commission’s strategy to trigger at least double the annual renovation rate and foster deep buildings renovations across the EU by 2030).



**AND IN THE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT ?**

**25% of the french cleaning market**

*In 2020, creation of a special unit by the French cleaning sector which aim is to examine most of the public cleaning tenders*

Review of formalized public procurement (1200 / year)

Sending remarks to buyer

**Main issues**

- Allotment
- Lack of link with the market / General policy
- Scoring criteria based on number of working hours
- Rating of offers
- Missing/incomplete staff take-over data

**RESULTS**

- For 50%, we make some remarks
- 1 tender out of 2 is modified by the public buyer !




**How to Succeed as a Remote Worker**

- Experiment with Your Work Setup
- Create Work/Home Boundaries
- Prepare for Your Meetings
- Create Accountability for Yourself
- Be Visible at Work
- Communicate Clearly and Effectively
- Work on Your Health
- Set Clear Responsibilities
- Talk with Your Team
- Take Time to Socialize

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Some images of the panel of Tuesday 12.10.2021.



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- On **Wednesday 13 October**, the EFCI invited association and cleaning company leaders to an exchange on the current and future challenges of the sector in the framework of an online Executive Summit. Company and associations executives from EFCI's members, as well as Members of the EFCI Circle analysed the level of preparedness of the sector for the challenges ahead and specially for the green and digital transitions in an informal online setting.
- On **Thursday 14 October**, Ricardo Rio (Rapporteur on SDGs of the European Committee of the Regions and Mayor of Braga, Portugal) set the framework for a panel that tackled green cleaning and circular services under the moderation of Isabelle Perru-Poupon (DG of FEP Île de France). Mayor Rio praised EFCI's engagement with the Sustainable Development Goals and underlined how each individual effort to accomplish the Goals counts. Stefan Sipka from EPC introduced the concept of servitisation, the process that reduces production and material consumption, facilitating repair and take-back of used equipment and supporting resilience and competitiveness. Guido Lena from SMEUnited (the European federation representing SMEs, arts and crafts) analysed the recent initiatives by the Commission on sustainability and circular economy from the SMEs' perspective, describing both challenges and opportunities in the green transition. Amelie Weber presented A.I.S.E. (International Association for Soaps, Detergents and Maintenance Products)'s views on how suppliers support the industry in their contribution to the SDGs and the Green Deal and stressed how cooperation with the value chain and stakeholders through a consistent and harmonised approach based on science is vital. In this regard, A.I.S.E. is engaged in projects such as "Sustainable use campaigns" and the most recent "A.I.S.E. strategy on plastics". Åsa Degerman and Reneé Remijnse from Tork, an Essity brand presented their brand's proposals to make cost-efficient the transition towards greener cleaning operations through responsible sourcing, waste and consumption and well-being. Finally, Axelle Despatures from Onet closed the panel presenting their solution Biogistic, an innovative circular system for the provision of cleaning services. The seminar succeeded to provide both a detailed picture of the European policy framework and of the best practices and initiatives by the sector and its suppliers.



*An image of Mayor Rio's intervention opening the seminar on 14.10.2021.*



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- **Friday 15** closed the week with a session on innovation and digitalisation, seeking to provide the tools to enhance the sector's readiness for new technologies. Cécile Huet, Deputy Head of Unit in DG Connect of the European Commission and specialist on Artificial Intelligence Innovation and Excellence, gave an overview of the European strategy on AI with a focus on the services sector.

Further, Manfred Zielbauer from FHCS presented the Facility Data Standard, a recently developed open communication standard for manufacturers of digital tools for facilities management. Eduardo López, from Acciona and Christian Engels from Paul Schulte GmbH presented how their companies are leading this transformation: Eduardo López highlighted the importance of regular updates in the processes, products and cleaning techniques as it allows to carry out increasingly efficient and effective work, while Christian Engels stressed how the use of digital elements – such as sensors, apps, digital worksheet and robotics – can contribute to increasing the efficiency of processes.



*Cécile Huet during her intervention on Friday 15.10.2021.*

Finally, the seminar hosted the presentation of the first results of the project “**SK-Clean: new skills and training for the cleaning industry**” which the EFCI is implementing with the financial support of the European Commission. The first results of the project are showing how digital skills are increasingly important for the sector's workforce and is now focusing in analysing the best practices in cleaning agents' training to ensure their acquisition.

**For further information, images and recordings of EFCI's Online Week, please contact:**

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