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**European Churches call the European Union and its Member States
to protect Sunday as a weekly rest day**

With regard to the ongoing debate on Sunday protection in the Member States of the European Union, the Church and Society Commission of the Conference of European Churches has repeatedly called on the Member States of the European Union and the EU institutions to protect Sunday as a weekly rest day in forthcoming national and EU working-time legislation – in order to enhance both the protection of workers' health and also the reconciliation of work and family life.

Scientific research shows that Sunday is more closely connected with the health of workers than any other day of the week. A recent survey of Eurofound, the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (a European Union body), showed that the likelihood of sickness and absenteeism in establishments that work on Saturdays and Sundays is 1.3 times greater than in establishments that do not require staff to work at the weekend.

According to EU law, Sunday is protected as a weekly rest day for children and adolescents. Therefore, more than any other day of the week, a free Sunday offers the opportunity to be with one's family and friends. Thus a free Sunday serves the aim of reconciling work and social life. Common free time is an important precondition for a participatory society, which allows its members to engage in civil activities.

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