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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Work Programme of the Employment Committee for 2024

Delegations will find attached the Work Programme of the Employment Committee and its subgroups for 2024, as adopted in accordance with the Committee's rules of procedure, with a view to the meeting of the EPSCO Council on 11 March 2024 (Any Other Business item).

EMCO Work Programme 2024

1. Introduction

The Employment Committee (EMCO) is a Treaty-based advisory committee to the Council of the EU. The Committee is established in accordance with Art. 150 of the Treaty of the Functioning of the EU (TFEU) and following a Council Decision.¹ It acts as an advisory body to the Employment and Social Affairs Ministers and is tasked with monitoring the employment situation and employment policies in Member States and the Union, formulating opinions at the request of either the Council or the Commission or on its own initiative, as well as contributing to the preparation of the Council proceedings in the context of the European Semester, as outlined in Art. 148 TFEU.

Every year, the Committee adopts a Work Programme to define its activities. Accordingly, *Section 2* provides the priorities identified for 2024 in accordance with the broader EU political priorities, *Section 3* outlines the specific activities envisaged throughout the year, while *Section 4* indicates the working methods to be employed and highlights the cooperation with other stakeholders. A draft was discussed on 11 December 2023 and consolidated after the submission of written comments. Following its adoption by the Committee, the Work Programme will be presented by the Chair to the EPSCO Ministers.

To deliver on its mandate and strategic priorities, the Committee is supported by:

- The **Indicators Group (IG)**, focusing on the quantitative description and analysis of relevant policy issues, in accordance with its own Work Programme (*Annex 3*);

¹ [Council Decision \(EU\) 2015/772](#) of 11 May 2015, repealing [Council Decision 2000/98/EC](#) of 24 January 2000, itself repealing [Council Decision 97/16/EC](#) of 20 December 1996, which originally set an Employment and Labour Market Committee.

- The **Policy Analysis Group (PAG)**, focusing on reviewing the implementation of EU policies at the national level and creating opportunities for regular exchanges with other stakeholders. The PAG was re-established via the adoption of new Terms of Reference in June 2023 and the subsequent appointment of new members and a new Chair.

2. Policy priorities

The Work Programme is prepared in line with the EU Strategic Agenda 2019-2024 adopted by the European Council² and based on the Treaty-based commitments linked to the European Semester. In this context, the Committee will continue to focus on the implementation of the **European Pillar of Social Rights** proclaimed in 2017. Most notably, EMCO will stand ready to address the implementation of the initiatives included in the Action Plan presented by the Commission in 2021 and, also based on the work of the IG, monitor the progress towards the **2030 EU and national targets on employment and skills.**³ In 2024, the activities of the Committee will also take into account the **policy priorities of the forthcoming Belgian and Hungarian Presidencies of the Council of the EU**, as well as the **Commission’s Work Programme** adopted on 17 October 2023⁴ and the **political guidelines of the next Commission.**⁵

² At its meeting in Brussels on 20 June 2019, the European Council agreed on “[*A new strategic agenda 2019-2024*](#)”.

³ The EU headline targets were welcomed by the [European Council on 24-25 June 2021](#), following the [Porto Declaration](#) of 8 May. National targets were formulated by the Member States in cooperation with the European Commission and the national target-setting process was subject of a [joint EMCO-SPC opinion in 2022](#).

⁴ [Communication \(COM\(2023\) 638\)](#): “*Delivering today and preparing for tomorrow*”.

⁵ Following the European Parliament elections scheduled on 6-9 June 2024.

Furthermore, in view of the preparation of the EU Strategic Agenda 2024-2029, the Committee will stand ready to contribute to strategic reflections on the long-term implementation of the Pillar. On 11 May 2023, the Committee welcomed the opportunity to be consulted by the Commission services on the future of Cohesion Policy and the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+). In response to the invitation received from the Spanish and Belgian Ministers – holding the Presidency of the Council of the EU between July 2023 and June 2024 – the Committee will prepare an **Opinion on the future EU policy priorities for the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights.**⁶

3. Specific activities

3.1. Governance of the European Semester

The European Semester is the framework for integrated surveillance and coordination of economic and employment policies across the European Union. Since its introduction in 2011, it has become the key process for discussing Member States’ fiscal, economic, employment and social policy challenges in an integrated manner and under a common annual timeline. In light of Art. 148 TFEU, EMCO contributes to the governance of the Semester by preparing the position of the EPSCO Council throughout the year. On the basis of the **2024 European Semester Roadmap**⁷, following the adoption of the Autumn Package last 21 November, EMCO will continue to fulfil this mandate by conducting the activities referred to in *Table 1* in cooperation with all relevant advisory committees of the Council.⁸

⁶ The invitation specifies that the Belgian Presidency aims to endorse the Opinion at the EPSCO Council meeting of March 2024 in order to feed into an Interinstitutional Declaration. The Opinion would also serve as a first Council contribution to the review of the Action Plan that the Commission foresees to present in 2025.

⁷ The [roadmap](#) was presented to the General Affairs Council on 1 December 2023.

⁸ Namely the Social Protection Committee (SPC), the Economic Policy Committee (EPC) and the Education Committee (EDUC).

In the context of the Semester, the IG will continue to support EMCO by producing the 2024 editions of the Annual Employment Performance Report (AEPR) and the Employment Performance Monitor (EPM).⁹ Findings from the EPM will inform the examination of the proposals for the 2024 Country-Specific Recommendations (CSRs) following the publication of the Spring Package expected in mid-June. With a view to inform also the preparation of the 2025 Autumn Package, the Committee will then submit to the Council a set of Key Messages on the 2024 AEPR and EPM for endorsement.

⁹ See Section 3.4 for more information on the monitoring tools.

▪ *Table 1 - Activities related to the 2024 European Semester*

	Activity	Deliverable
Q1 2024	Reaction to the 2024 Autumn Package	<u>March EPSCO:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reporting by the Chair to the Council - Adoption by the Council of Council Conclusions on the 2024 Annual Sustainable Growth Survey and the Joint Employment Report
Q1 2024	Examination of the Commission's proposal for a 2024 Joint Employment Report	<u>March EPSCO:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adoption by the Council of the 2024 Joint Employment Report
Q2 2024	Multilateral surveillance of the implementation of the 2023 Country-Specific Recommendations	<u>June EPSCO:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reporting by the Chair to the Council - Endorsement by the Council of a Horizontal Opinion on the 2024 European Semester cycle
Q2 2024	Reaction to the 2024 Spring Package	<u>June and July EPSCO:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reporting by the Chair to the Council - Discussion by the Council of a horizontal note on the employment and social policy aspects of the 2024 Country-Specific Recommendations - Endorsement by the Council of a Horizontal Opinion on the 2024 European Semester cycle
Q2-Q3 2024	Examination of the Commission's proposals for 2024 Country-Specific Recommendations	<u>July EPSCO:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approval by the Council of the 2024 Country-Specific Recommendations
Q3 2024	Adoption of the 2024 Annual Employment Performance Report and the Employment Performance Monitor	<u>TBD:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reporting by the Chair to the Ministers - Endorsement by the Council of the Key Messages of the Annual Employment Performance Report
Q3-Q4 2024	Examination of the Commission's proposal to revise or carry over Employment Guidelines	<u>TBD:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adoption by the Council of the 2024 Employment Guidelines
Q4 2024	Examination of the Commission's proposal for a 2025 Recommendation on the economic policy of the Euro Area	<u>TBD:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approval by the Council of the employment and social aspects of the 2025 Recommendation on the economic policy of the Euro Area

The Committee will also support the Council in preparing deliberations related to the governance of the European Semester according to ongoing developments:

- Following the endorsement by the Council of the *EMCO-SPC Opinion on the value added of social investment and the role of the EPSCO Council filière in the European Semester*,¹⁰ the Committee will stand ready to deepen its reflections on the **potential of social investment policies and the role of the EPSCO filière in the Semester**;
- The Committee will also monitor the outcome of the **Economic Governance Review** in relation to its impact on the employment and social dimensions of the European Semester and the related workstreams mandated by Art. 148 TFEU, once the negotiations will be concluded;¹¹
- Following the **stronger country-specific focus on upward social convergence** in the Commission's proposal for the *2024 Joint Employment Report*, the Committee will discuss the implications for the employment and social monitoring in the Semester and prepare *Council Conclusions on the Social Convergence Framework*;¹²
- After having agreed to the continued relevance of the **Employment Guidelines** adopted in November 2022¹³ also for 2023, based on a Commission's proposal, the Committee will stand ready to discuss either new amendments due to the evolving socioeconomic context or a further carry-over of the guidelines currently in force.

¹⁰ The [Opinion](#) was endorsed by the Council on 28 November 2023.

¹¹ On 26 April 2023, the Commission tabled [legislative proposals to reform the EU economic governance](#).

¹² In cooperation with SPC, between 2022 and 2023 the Committee formulated an [Opinion](#) and [Key Messages](#) on the possible introduction of a Social Convergence Framework in the European Semester. The Key Messages summarised the [technical work conducted by a devoted joint EMCO-SPC working group](#) active between September 2022 and May 2023.

¹³ See [Council Decision \(EU\) 2023/2528](#) of 9 October 2023 on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States, which confirmed the continued relevance of the guidelines previously adopted in [Council Decision \(EU\) 2022/2296](#) of 21 November 2022.

3.2. Multilateral Surveillance

To examine the implementation of employment policies as mandated by Art. 148 and 150 TFEU, the Committee engages in an annual **Multilateral Surveillance (MLS)** process consisting of peer reviews. Between September 2022 and October 2023, the Committee held a series of reflections on how to design its multilateral surveillance activities, leading to the following arrangements:

- **EMCO** should assess the implementation of the **Country-Specific Recommendations (CSRs)** issued by the Council within the European Semester and related challenges. As from 2024, this process will include a session on country-specific challenges to social dialogue. The **Social Dialogue Review** will start being organised every two years (from 2025) to monitor progress on the implementation of the *Council Recommendation on strengthening social dialogue in the EU*;
- **PAG** should monitor progress on the implementation of the remaining **Council Recommendations addressed to all Member States** relevant for the mandate of the Committee. Each Recommendation should be monitored every two years, with PAG alternating their monitoring.

In 2024, EMCO will review the implementation of the CSRs issued by the Council and related challenges identified within the European Semester in relation to labour market, skills and social dialogue. In line with the current practice, the Committee will engage in joint reviews with SPC, EDUC and national social partners on recommendations of common interest. Specific operational arrangements containing the country-specific challenges to be discussed will be proposed for agreement in early 2024. The horizontal and country-specific conclusions of the reviews will be included in the annual **Horizontal Opinion on the European Semester** that will be submitted to the Council for endorsement.

In 2024, PAG will review the implementation of the Council Recommendations on the integration of long-term unemployed in the labour market (LTU) and - for the first time - on individual learning accounts (ILA). The possible monitoring arrangements of the latter were discussed by EMCO on 12 December 2022, with the Committee agreeing to postpone the first ILA Review to 2024. For any review, PAG will be entrusted with preparing **Key Messages** to inform the Council about the examination. The agreed alternation of PAG reviews is detailed in *Annex 2*.

3.3. Thematic work

EMCO and PAG will continue to schedule thematic discussions focused on new and relevant socioeconomic developments¹⁴, as well as on the priorities of the Belgian (January – June) and Hungarian Presidencies (July – December). The outcomes resulting from thematic discussions could be transmitted to the Council as Key Messages¹⁵, feed into the preparation of Council Conclusions¹⁶ or provide orientations for forthcoming Commission initiatives.¹⁷ To prepare thematic discussions, the Secretariat will liaise with relevant Commission services, international organisations and other stakeholders which can present analytical contributions, case studies and reports relevant for the mandate of the Committee, including the 2024 editions of the *Employment and Social Developments in Europe (ESDE)* and the *Labour Market and Wage Developments in Europe (LMWD)* reports. As of 2024, PAG will reinstate an **annual thematic seminar with national social partners**.

¹⁴ Such as, for example, the impact of artificial intelligence, platform work, right to disconnect and the use of micro-credentials for employability.

¹⁵ As in 2020, under the German Presidency, when two thematic events on short-time work schemes and other job retention measures in the context of the COVID-19 crisis resulted in key messages to the Presidency.

¹⁶ As in 2018, on Early Childhood Development under the Bulgarian Presidency or on the Future of Work under the Austrian Presidency.

¹⁷ Most recently, on social economy framework conditions (2022), on social dialogue (2022), on ensuring a fair transition towards climate neutrality (2021) and on individual learning accounts (2021).

Given the paramount role that the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) will play in the implementation of employment policies until 2026¹⁸, the Committee will discuss the EU-level progress on the implementation of the facility in policy areas relevant for its mandate.

Thematic discussions could be organised on the basis of Commission's thematic analyses and implementation reports.¹⁹ On the other hand, country-specific progress on the implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Plans will be taken into account in relation to the challenges discussed in the multilateral surveillance activities described in Section 3.2.

EMCO will also continue to contribute to the annual Economic and Financial Dialogue with the EU candidate countries and potential candidate countries. In cooperation with the advisory committees of the ECOFIN Council filière and with the support of the European Commission, EMCO will discuss in a multilateral setting the relevant policy developments and structural challenges in these countries with a view to contributing to the preparation of joint conclusions at the Ministerial level.²⁰ In 2024, the process is likely to be adapted to include also Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia in light of their new status.²¹

¹⁸ Based on the [RRF methodology for reporting social expenditures](#), Member States have dedicated 28% of their financial allocations to supporting social objectives. The [RRF Scoreboard](#) also provides a set of common indicators related to the objectives of the RRF and the successful implementation of the measures contained in the RRP, such as the number of participants in education and training measures, the number of people engaged in job searching opportunities and the number of young people receiving support.

¹⁹ As done in 2022 on the [Review Report published in July](#) and, jointly with the EPC, on the [measures contained in the RRP to support employment](#) and [SMEs](#).

²⁰ EMCO has been contributing to this exercise since 2016. EU candidate and potential candidate countries submit annual Economic Reform Programmes (ERPs) to the European Commission, which are assessed in Committee meetings in April. This assessment leads to joint conclusions with targeted policy guidance adopted by the ECOFIN Council.

²¹ On 24 June 2022, the European Council granted the status of candidate country to Ukraine and to Moldova and recognised the EU membership perspective of Georgia. On 8 November 2023, the Commission recommended that the Council opens accession negotiations with Ukraine and Moldova, and status of a candidate country to Georgia on the understanding that a number of steps are taken.

3.4. Monitoring tools and benchmarking frameworks

The activities of EMCO will continue to be supported by its Indicators Group (IG), via the quantitative description and analysis of relevant policy issues, in line with its own Work Programme (in *Annex 3*). The IG will rely on the existing monitoring tools developed in the past years, namely the Social Scoreboard, the Joint Assessment Framework (JAF), the Employment Performance Monitor (EPM), the Annual Employment Performance Report (AEPR) and its Key Messages. In this context, as in 2023, the IG will monitor the progress towards the 2030 national targets on employment based on the agreed methodology, while standing ready to discuss an appropriate methodology for the national targets on adult learning.²² The IG will also continue to reflect on an overall adjustment of its monitoring tools.²³ Moreover, the IG will continue to support the adaptation of monitoring frameworks and the exploration of relevant indicators that could support the PAG reviews from a quantitative perspective. Finally, between October and November 2023, the EMCO members agreed to mandate the IG to reflect on how to improve data collection on social dialogue and report back to EMCO in view of the preparation of a future Opinion for Council.²⁴

²² On 18 October 2022, the IG agreed on a methodology to monitor the national targets on employment. Discussions on how to monitor the national targets on adult learning will follow. More information is provided in the IG Work Programme.

²³ On 15 November 2022, the IG launched a reflection on the monitoring tools at disposal of EMCO. The exercise follows the conclusions of [the joint EMCO-SPC assessment on the Europe 2020 Strategy](#) (2019). More information is provided in the IG Work Programme.

²⁴ The Council invited EMCO to deliver such Opinion in the context of the *Recommendation on strengthening social dialogue in the European Union*.

Pending further proposals by the Commission, EMCO will continue to work on developing its benchmarking frameworks to foster a shared understanding of policy challenges in the Member States. Since 2016, EMCO – also via its subgroups, in cooperation with SPC and with the active support of the Commission services – has been carrying out work in developing benchmarking frameworks, notably via a comparative assessment of country performance and policies using agreed policy indicators.²⁵ In line with its general aim to support structural reforms and upward social convergence, benchmarking is a vehicle to support the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights. As such, benchmarking frameworks are used for the evidence-based analysis formulated within the European Semester (e.g., in the JER) and as an instrument for mutual learning.

4. Working methods and collaboration with stakeholders

In fulfilling its Treaty-based mandate and implementing the Work Programme, the Secretariat will schedule a balanced mix of physical²⁶ and virtual meetings across EMCO, PAG and IG and will continue to cooperate with other advisory committees of the Council. It will strive to develop synergies and ensure coordination within the European Semester – as well as on broader policy issues of joint interest – with the Social Protection Committee (SPC), the Economic and Financial Committee (EFC), the Economic Policy Committee (EPC) and the Education Committee (EDUC). The Committee will be represented by the Chair at the meetings of the EPSCO Council, the informal meetings of the Ministers of Employment and Social Affairs, the Macroeconomic Dialogue at Political (MED-POL) and Technical Level (MED-TECH), as well as within the governing board of the European Network of Public Employment Services (PES Network).

²⁵ Two benchmarking frameworks have been agreed so far within the EMCO: on 1) unemployment benefits and active labour market policies, and 2) adult skills and learning. As concerns the framework on unemployment benefits and active labour market policies, while the part of the framework related to unemployment benefits is complete and fully operational, work is underway on the development of policy lever indicators on the quality of early support services provided by Public Employment Services to unemployed job seekers.

²⁶ Expenses for the participation to physical meetings will be reimbursed by the European Commission via the [AGM system](#) in accordance with the administrative rules in force and the limitations explained on the website. Delegates from national public administrations will receive only a reimbursement of travel expenses (maximum two delegates per Member State).

The Committee will also collaborate closely with other relevant stakeholders, such as the EEA/EFTA States (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) and the social partners. As of 2024, the EEA/EFTA States will be invited to attend relevant thematic discussions organised in PAG.²⁷ Regarding the social partners, on 28 November, the Committee agreed to organise more discussions with the EU Social Partners in EMCO and tripartite discussions with national social partners in PAG to reinforce the institutional dialogue among the Member States, the Commission and the social partners at all levels.²⁸

The EMCO members can freely access the following via the CIRCABC platform²⁹:

- **Council Decision (EU) 2015/772 of 11 May 2015** establishing the Employment Committee and repealing Decision 2000/98/EC;
- **Rules of Procedure**, as amended on 22 September 2017;
- **Privacy statement**, as circulated on 11 September 2023;
- **Membership lists for EMCO, PAG and IG**, which will be updated indicatively every 3 months;
- **Official documents** circulated ahead of each meeting.

²⁷ In line with the PAG Terms of Reference, according to which the group “*should seek to establish a pool of observers at technical level*”.

²⁸ In response to the Commission’s invitation made in the [Communication on strengthening social dialogue in the European Union—harnessing its full potential for managing transitions](#) published on 25 January 2023.

²⁹ The EMCO members are invited to regularly consult documents on the [EMCO Library on CIRCABC](#).

Annex 1 – Calendar of EMCO and PAG meetings scheduled in 2024

The calendar below is provisional and subject to changes. For each physical meeting, delegates are invited to book their travel arrangements only upon receipt of the draft agenda.

Extraordinary videoconference meetings can be planned according to the needs of the group and in line with the Work Programme.

The list of main topics for each meeting mostly presents the timeline for the presentation and adoption of the regular deliverables of EMCO and is not exhaustive.

An updated calendar for the second half of 2024 will be provided by the Secretariat before the summer.

Date	Committee	Venue	Main topics
24-25 January	EMCO	Brussels, BE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ European Semester: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2024 Joint Employment Report - Council Conclusions on the 2024 Annual Sustainable Growth Survey and the Joint Employment Report ▪ Opinion on the future EU policy priorities for the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights ▪ 2024 Work Programme
12-13 February	EMCO	Ghent, BE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Opinion on the future EU policy priorities for the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights
21 February	EMCO	Brussels, BE or Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Opinion on the future EU policy priorities for the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights ▪ Organisation of the 2024 multilateral surveillance activities ▪ (poss.) Preparation of the March EPSCO-ECOFIN meeting
11 March – EPSCO meeting			
12 March – EPSCO-ECOFIN meeting			
19-20 March	EMCO	Brussels, BE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Multilateral surveillance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CSR reviews
11-12 April	PAG	Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Multilateral surveillance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thematic review on the implementation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market

17-18 and/or 23-24 April	EMCO	Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Multilateral surveillance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CSR reviews ▪ Economic and Financial Dialogue with the EU candidate countries and potential candidate countries
15-16 May	EMCO	Brussels, BE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Multilateral surveillance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CSR reviews ▪ <i>(poss.)</i> Preparation of the June EPSCO meeting
11-12 June	PAG	Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tripartite seminar with national social partners
Mid-June	EMCO	Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ European Semester: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation of the 2024 Spring Package
20 June – EPSCO meeting			
2-3 July	EMCO	Brussels, BE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ European Semester: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Negotiations on the proposals for 2024 CSRs ▪ <i>(poss.)</i> Preparation of the July EPSCO meeting
July – EPSCO meeting			

Main items for the second half of 2024:

- 2024 Annual Employment Performance Report
- Multilateral Surveillance:
 - Thematic review on the Council Recommendation on individual learning accounts
- European Semester:
 - 2024 Employment Guidelines
 - 2025 Autumn Package
 - 2025 Recommendation on the economic policy of the Euro Area
- Thematic discussion on the impact of artificial intelligence on the labour market
- 2025 Work Programme

Annex 2 – Planning of PAG reviews

Adoption by the Council	Council Recommendation	Reviews conducted since adoption	Next planned reviews
<i>15 February 2016</i>	Integration of long-term unemployed in the labour market (LTU) ³⁰	<i>2016, 2018, 2020, 2022</i>	2024, 2026
<i>16 June 2022</i>	Individual learning accounts (ILA) ³¹	/	2024, 2026
<i>16 June 2022</i>	Ensuring a fair transition towards climate neutrality (FT) ³²	<i>2023</i>	2025, 2027
<i>22 April 2013 and 30 October 2020</i>	Youth Guarantee (YG) ³³	<i>2013, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2021, 2023</i>	2025, 2027

³⁰ [Council Recommendation of 15 February 2016](#) on the integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market.

³¹ [Council Recommendation of 16 June 2022](#) on individual learning accounts.

³² [Council Recommendation of 16 June 2022](#) on ensuring a fair transition towards climate neutrality.

³³ [Council Recommendation of 30 October 2020](#) on A Bridge to Jobs – Reinforcing the Youth Guarantee and replacing the [Council Recommendation of 22 April 2013](#) on establishing a Youth Guarantee.

Annex 3 – IG Work Programme

EMCO INDICATORS GROUP WORK PROGRAMME 2024

A) EMCO Indicators Group Core Business

In 2024, the EMCO Indicators Group (EMCO IG) will continue to support EMCO in the quantitative description and analysis of relevant policy issues. The broad EMCO priorities imply that the EMCO IG will continue to support the surveillance and monitoring capacities of EMCO in various ways:

European Semester and monitoring of the European Pillar of Social Rights

- The EMCO IG will discuss the analytical content of the Proposal for a Joint Employment Report.
- The EMCO IG will continue reflecting on the EMCO monitoring and reporting tools. It will continue the review of the JAF policy areas aimed at better aligning with the current Employment Guidelines, the update and streamlining of the JAF indicators as well as the design of the JAF analytical outputs (e.g. tables and charts).
- Subsequently, it will turn its attention to updating and simplifying the EPM and AEPR, also based on the identification of synergies and overlaps with other monitoring tools and instruments, such as the Social Scoreboard.
- The EMCO IG will continue cooperating with the Social Protection Committee Indicators Subgroup (SPC ISG) in areas of joint competence, concerning the reflection on the monitoring and reporting tools, including the JAF, its methodology and its outputs, as well as including in relation to the Social Scoreboard and the possible agreement on the secondary indicators proposed by the Commission.
- The IG will regularly review policy fields identified as lacking appropriate indicators, such as undeclared work and bogus self-employment, the social economy, new forms of work, among others, notably in case of relevant statistical developments, with a view to improve their monitoring at EU level.

- Pending the finalisation of these reflections:
 - The EMCO IG will produce the 2024 Employment Performance Monitor (EPM) and identify the key employment challenges and good labour market outcomes of the Member States and the EU as a whole.
 - It will produce the 2024 EMCO Annual Employment Performance Report as well as the related Key Messages, which will represent EMCO's contribution to the preparation of the 2025 Annual Sustainable Growth Survey.
- The EMCO IG will also define the methodology for the monitoring of the progress towards the 2030 national targets in the area of adult learning, once the LFS and AES data will be released, with the aim to present this progress in the EPM and the AEPR, as already done for the 2030 EU headline and national employment targets.
- The EMCO IG, in cooperation with the SPC ISG, will discuss indicators for setting national employment and adult learning targets for persons with disabilities, as well as indicators to monitoring green employment.
- The EMCO IG will continue to work on the benchmarking proposals from the Commission to contribute to the analysis underpinning work on the Semester. In particular, work will continue on completing the benchmarking framework on unemployment benefits and active labour market policies (ALMPs).

Monitoring of Council Recommendations

The EMCO IG will continue its work on analysing the results of the data collections on monitoring the Council Recommendations on the *Youth Guarantee* and on the *integration of the long-term unemployed in the labour market*. When necessary, the EMCO IG will review the pertinent Indicator Frameworks.

Following the Council's adoption of the Recommendation on *strengthening social dialogue in the European Union* in June 2023 and discussions in the Employment Committee, the Indicators Group will explore the possibility to improve the scope and relevance of the data collection at Union and national level on social dialogue, including on collective bargaining, and report back to EMCO. To this end, the IG will organise in the first quarter of 2024 (most probably on 22 March, see also the table below) an expert seminar with the participation of international organisations and social partners, with the purpose of mapping existing data collection strategies and recent methodological developments as well as discussing appropriate indicators to effectively monitor social dialogue. Afterwards the issue will be taken up in the subsequent IG meetings.

If needed, the EMCO IG will continue discussing and working on the monitoring aspects of the Council Recommendation of 16 June 2022 on *individual learning accounts* (2022/C 243/03) and the Council Recommendation of 16 June 2022 on *ensuring a fair transition towards climate neutrality* (2022/C 243/04).

Furthermore, if needed, the EMCO IG will discuss and work, as relevant, on the monitoring aspects of the Council Recommendation on the Revision of the Barcelona Targets on early childhood education and care as well as the Council Recommendation on access to affordable high quality long-term care, in cooperation with other groups, in particular the SPC ISG.

Employment indicators for monitoring of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The EMCO IG will continue following up and supporting the work carried out by the Commission on employment indicators for monitoring of the UN Sustainable Developments Goals and contribute as necessary to the further development of the indicators in this area.

Social investment

Following the endorsement by the Council of the Opinion of the Employment Committee and the Social Protection Committee on the value added of social investment and the role of the EPSCO Council filière in the governance of the European Semester, in November 2023³⁴, the IG may be tasked to further reflect on how to monitor and evaluate the economic and social returns to social investment.

Other methodological and analytical issues

The EMCO IG may explore potential methodological improvements to the calculation of tax-benefit indicators, using the recent extension of the EUROMOD model, the EUROMOD Hypothetical Household Tool.

The impact of possible new activities that EMCO decides to undertake in the course of 2024 will be assessed and the EMCO IG work programme will be adjusted as necessary.

The EMCO IG will continue - when necessary - its work on monitoring multidimensional policy concepts.

Moreover, the EMCO IG will look at the results of impact assessment studies, especially on the impact of ESF financed measures in the context of employment policies and the effectiveness of labour market policies.

B) Working Methods

The main discussions of the EMCO IG take place during its scheduled meetings. In order to facilitate the discussion and to allow Members to prepare adequately for the meeting, documents will be sent sufficiently in advance of the meeting, when possible.

Written procedures can be helpful in the follow-up to meetings, especially when agreements have to be reached before the next scheduled meeting or when documents are circulated too close to the meeting date. However, written procedures should not replace discussions in the group on a regular basis.

³⁴ For the EMCO/SPC Opinion see [here](#), in particular paragraph 7.

On the organization of the meetings, a mix of physical and virtual meetings has been established. In-person meetings will in particular be preferred for full day meetings or when they are joint with the SPC ISG. When the number of agenda items does not justify full-day meetings written procedures and/or videoconferences will be preferred.

Building on past successful experiences, the EMCO IG could envisage organising *ad hoc* working groups consisting of a few Member States to develop proposals to be discussed in the EMCO IG concerning specific areas of the EMCO IG work such as revising/developing a policy area or developing indicators for monitoring a specific subject.

C) Co-operation with other Committees and institutions

The EMCO IG will continue to cooperate closely with all other relevant groups or committees, particularly on work related to the JAF and the Social Scoreboard for monitoring of the European Pillar of Social Rights. The EMCO IG Chair and the Secretariat will regularly update the Members on relevant work carried out in the other committees.

In addition to the close cooperation with the SPC ISG (notably in the context of the work on the JAF and the Social Scoreboard), the EMCO IG will cooperate, as necessary, with the Eurostat Working Group on Labour Market Statistics (LAMAS), the LIME Working Group of the Economic Policy Committee, the Standing Group on Indicators and Benchmarks (SGIB), the Labour Market Policy statistics groups (expert group and task force) and the PES Network (focusing on their PES bench-learning in particular on the effectiveness of labour market policies), as well as with the European Platform tackling undeclared work.

The EMCO IG will continue to promote cooperation with other institutions and bodies carrying work in the area of analysis of the labour market, including CEDEFOP, EUROFOUND, and international organisations such as ILO and OECD. It will also monitor research of potential interest for its work, especially through cooperation with several services of the Commission.

D) Provisional meetings for 2024:

Date	Format	Venue	Provisional agenda items
18 January	IG/ISG	Brussels	<i>IG only:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EPM roadmap ▪ LTU data collection final results ▪ Presentation of the Council Recommendation on social dialogue (tbc) ▪ LABREF: update <i>IG/ISG:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ JER revised proposal ▪ Long term care monitoring framework-workforce dimension (tbc)
23 February	IG	Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State of play re. LMP statistics (tbc)
21-22 March	IG	Brussels	IG meeting (21 March) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Benchmarking on ALMP/UB: early support indicators – follow up presentation (tbc) ▪ Adoption of non JAF-based KECs ▪ EUROMOD Hypothetical Household Tool – presentation (tbc) Expert Seminar on social dialogue (22 March)
26 April		Virtual	tbc
30 May	IG	Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EC-OECD project on counterfactual impact evaluations (CIEs) of labour market policies (tbc)
17 June	IG	Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Finalization of the EPM ▪ Discussion on the 2024 AEPR (if needed)
16-17 September (*)	IG	Brussels (tbc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2024 AEPR agreement – finalization of related Key Messages
17 October	IG	Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EU SDG indicator set review in view of the “Monitoring report on progress towards the SDGs in an EU context”
18 November	IG	Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ First discussion on the IG 2025 Work Programme ▪ YG/LTU data collection first results (tbc)
16-17 December (*)	IG/ISG	Brussels	<i>IG only:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Finalization of the 2025 IG Work Programme <i>IG/ISG:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proposal for a 2025 JER: Presentation by the Commission

* In case of a physical meeting, IG could start on the first day indicated, in the afternoon, and finish on the next day, before lunchtime, for example.

The calendar above is provisional and subject to changes. The list of agenda items for each meeting mostly presents the timeline for the presentation and adoption of the regular deliverables of the EMCO IG and is not exhaustive. Discussions on the adult learning indicator and employment disability gap indicator will be held when data are publicly available.

At least two joint EMCO IG-SPC ISG meetings are now scheduled to be organised in 2024. Extraordinary videoconference meetings or in person meetings can be planned according to the needs of the group and in line with the policy agenda.
