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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: AOB for the meeting of the EPSCO Council of 9 March 2026:
Social Protection Committee work programme for 2026
- Information from the SPC chair

Delegations will find attached the 2026 Work Programme of the Social Protection Committee and its permanent and temporary subgroups, as adopted in accordance with the Committee's rules of procedure, with a view to the EPSCO Council on 9 March 2026 (Any Other Business item).

2026 Work Programme of the Social Protection Committee

1. Context

The Social Protection Committee (SPC) is an advisory policy Committee, established in accordance with art. 160 of the TFEU, providing a representative forum for multilateral social policy coordination, dialogue and cooperation at EU level. It brings together senior policy makers from all EU Member States and the Commission in an effort to discuss and identify the most appropriate policy measures to respond to the various social policy challenges across the EU. The Committee actively participates, on behalf of the Council of the European Union for employment, social affairs and health (EPSCO), in the European Semester process of policy coordination¹.

The Treaty-based mandate of the SPC stipulates that the Committee monitors the social situation in the EU and the development of social protection policies.² The SPC delivers on this mandate using the social open method of coordination (OMC), covering all major social policy strands: social inclusion and social protection, pensions, health and long-term care. The SPC further uses the OMC tools (peer reviews and mutual learning activities) to promote mutual learning and the sharing of experience and expertise among the Member States.

The SPC may, if necessary, prepare additional reports, formulate opinions or undertake other work within its fields of competence, at the request of the Council, the Commission or on its own initiative as per Article 2(1c) of the Council Decision 2015/773, establishing the Committee.

¹ Article 2 (2b) of Council Decision (EU) 2015/773 establishing the SPC.

² Art. 160 TFEU

Every year, the Committee adopts a Work Programme to define its activities. Accordingly, this document is structured as follows: Section 2 provides the priorities identified for 2026 in accordance with the broader EU political priorities and the specific activities envisaged throughout the year, Section 3 summarises the foreseen deliverables, Section 4 indicates the working methods to be employed and Section 5 highlights the cooperation with other stakeholders. Annex 1 indicates the tentative calendar for 2026, Annex 2, 3 and 4 present the work programme of the Committee's sub-groups and Annex 5 provides an overview of ongoing initiatives potentially in the interest of the SPC. The Work Programme was discussed at several occasions in 2025 and adopted on 3 February, 2026. The Work Programme will be presented by the Chair to the EPSCO Ministers.

To deliver on its mandate and strategic priorities, in 2026 the SPC will be supported by the following subgroups:

- The permanent SPC **Indicators' Sub-Group (ISG)** will continue to provide technical support to the SPC, especially to its monitoring activities (including monitoring of progress towards the 2030 poverty and social exclusion targets, development of **indicators**, as well as **benchmarking and monitoring frameworks**), in accordance with its own work programme (Annex 2).
- The **Working Group on Adequate Social Protection in Old Age (WG ADAGE)** will support the SPC with analysis of social protection policies aimed to ensure adequate living standards in old age, in particular adequate pensions and affordable and high-quality long-term care (LTC), in the context of demographic and labour market transformations. To deliver on this objective, WG ADAGE will prepare jointly with the Commission triennial Report on Adequate Social Protection in Old Age, follow relevant policy developments and analysis and provide analysis to the SPC within its areas of competence, in accordance with its own work plans (Annex 3).

- The **Minimum Income Network Group (MINET)** will continue following up on policy developments in the field of minimum income through its support the delivery of the next joint SPC-COM report and mutual learning activities, as per its renewed mandate until mid-2031, in accordance with its own work programme (Annex 4). It may also provide inputs to support the further development of the benchmarking framework on minimum income.

2. Policy Framework - Strategic Priorities

The SPC work programme takes into account the **EU Strategic Agenda 2024-2029** adopted by the European Council³, **the policy priorities of the forthcoming Cypriot and Irish Presidencies, the Political Guidelines for the European Commission 2024–2029⁴** as well as the **related Commission’s annual Work Programme (CWP) that was adopted on 21 October 2025**. In this context, the SPC will continue focusing on the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights, addressing and following up the initiatives included in its current and the forthcoming Action Plan, and monitoring the progress towards the 2030 EU and national targets on reduction of poverty and social exclusion⁵.

In general, the Committee activities will focus on three main interlinked areas of policy work, which also support the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights. The first area is related to the European Semester, the second is focused on thematic in-depth work, while the third is related to the Committee’s monitoring and reporting activities.

³ At its meeting in Brussels on 27 June 2024, the European Council agreed on an agenda for the EU for the next five years: the “[Strategic agenda 2024-2029](#)” sets the EU’s priorities and its strategic orientations for the institutional cycle 2024-2029. As such, it guides the work of the EU institutions.

⁴ On 18 July 2024, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, who was elected for a second mandate, presented to the European Parliament her [Political Guidelines for the next European Commission 2024-2029](#).

⁵ 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 close cooperation with the European Commission and the national target-setting process was subject of a [joint EMCO-SPC opinion](#) in 2022 (9520/22).

In delivering on these, the Committee will continue to make full use of the opportunities provided by the social open method of coordination, including peer reviews and other mutual learning activities. In addition, the Committee will look into and discuss - where appropriate - the use of EU funds contributing to the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights, in particular through the implementation of the European Social Fund+ (ESF+), the Social Climate Fund, the Technical Support Instrument, and explore synergies with actions supported by the EU4Health Programme and the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

3. Multiannual outlook

Based on the main references mentioned above for setting policy priorities, in particular the European Pillar of Social Rights, the SPC follows up on various policy initiatives, with the subsequent time schedule. A table in annex 4 lists ongoing initiatives and related actions, which are relevant for SPC work in the coming years. The list is not exhaustive and does not represent equivalent activities or commitments for the SPC across the various areas.

In the next few years, the SPC will be focusing on the monitoring and exchange of practices related to certain initiatives, identified as main priorities, and falling under the scope of its core tasks.

- a) The Committee will fulfil its commitments under the European Semester by delivering on the respective activities in contributing to all aspects of the European Semester within its field of competence and providing support through various opinions and reports to the Council.
- b) In terms of in-depth thematic work, the Committee will focus on the following areas:

Table 1

2026	European Child Guarantee – Commission report to the Council Preparation of the EU Anti-poverty strategy
2027	Adequate social protection in old age covering pensions and long-term care - joint SPC-EC report Council Recommendation on ensuring a fair transition towards climate neutrality Commission Report on the implementation of the Council recommendation on access to affordable high-quality long-term care
2028	Council recommendation on minimum income, ensuring active inclusion – joint SPC-EC report to the Council
2029	Council Recommendation on ensuring a fair transition towards climate neutrality

In addition, the priorities of the upcoming presidencies will be considered, with the schedule of presidencies as follows:

1/2026 Cyprus	2/2026 Ireland
1/2027 Lithuania	2/2027 Greece
1/2028 Italy	2/2028 Latvia
1/2029 Luxembourg	2/2029 Netherlands

4. Areas for SPC work in 2026

In general, the Committee activities will focus on three main areas of policy work, as mentioned above, namely the 1) European Semester, 2) the thematic in-depth work and 3) monitoring and reporting activities. The SPC will monitor the progress of its work and, if necessary, consider possible adaptations to its work-programme in the course of 2026.

4.1. The European Semester

The European Semester is the main framework for integrated surveillance and coordination of economic and employment policies across the European Union. Since its introduction in 2011, it has become a well-established forum for discussing Member States' fiscal, economic, employment and social policy challenges under a common annual timeline. As part of its mandate⁶, the Social Protection Committee contributes to all aspects of the European Semester⁷ within its field of competence and provides support through various opinions and reports on them to the Council. To this end, the SPC will engage in the following activities in the course of 2026, on the basis of the 2026 European Semester Roadmap⁸ in cooperation with all relevant advisory committees of the Council⁹. The Committee will stand ready to receive information on progress in the negotiations on the next MFF, in light of the expected closer link with the European Semester.

⁶ Council decision (EU) 2015/773, article 2b

⁷ See Regulation (EU) 2024/1263 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2024 on the effective coordination of economic policies and on multilateral budgetary surveillance and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1466/97 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1263>

⁸ The [2026 European Semester Roadmap](#) was presented by the Presidency in December 2025. The Roadmap is updated by the Presidency when necessary during the Semester cycle.

⁹ Including the Employment Committee (EMCO) and the Economic Policy Committee (EPC)

4.2. Multilateral implementation reviews (MIRs)

The SPC will continue its **multilateral surveillance on the implementation of structural reforms in the Member States in the context of the European Semester.**

To carry out this task, the Committee will engage in **country-specific reviews** of the relevant 2025 country-specific recommendations (CSRs). As of the 2024 semester cycle an integrated country focused global approach was applied to reduce administrative burden. The approach accompanied by horizontal exchanges was proven to simplify the process and will be continued in 2026. Due to the increased number of 2025 CSRs, falling into the competence of SPC, it might require organizing the exercise at two dedicated meetings, to avoid rushed implementation and demanding events.

In line with the practices from past years, the SPC will continue seeking cooperation with EMCO and the Economic Policy Committee (EPC), whenever relevant. **Country specific reviews for Member States identified for a second stage analysis under the Social Convergence Framework will be organised jointly with EMCO**, also covering the assessment of CSRs addressed to those countries.

The SPC will also follow the developments related to the **Recovery and Resilience Facility**, given its prominent role in the implementation of social policies in the Member States.¹⁰ To this end, in the context of the SPC MIR reviews, Member States with relevant reforms, included in their National Reform and Resilience Plans (NRRP) will be invited to share the latest developments with the implementation of those reforms. Where appropriate, thematic discussions, supported by external experts could be organized, based on the Commission's thematic analysis¹¹ and implementation reports¹². The Committee will make use, where appropriate, of the results of the peer review programme and relevant social policy innovation projects to enhance the multilateral nature of the exercise.

After the conclusion of the EU Economic Governance Review in 2024 and the entering into force of EU Regulation 2024/126312, the Committee will stand ready to discuss the relevant aspects of the Annual Progress Reports related to the **Medium-Term Fiscal-Structural Plans**.

¹⁰ Based on the [RRF methodology for reporting social expenditures](#), as of 2024, Member States have dedicated around 25% 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.

¹¹ [Recovery and Resilience Scoreboard \(europa.eu\)](#)

¹² [Recovery and Resilience Facility Annual Report 2025 - European Commission](#)

Following the *Council Conclusions on the role of labour market, skills and social policies for resilient economies*¹³ and the *Voluntary guiding principles for EU Member States*¹⁴, the Committee will continue the work on improving the evaluation of the **economic effects of reforms and investments in the labour market, skills and social policy domains**, for instance via informal working groups, joint meetings and/or sessions on relevant topics, as well as the exchange of good practices. As a follow-up, between June and October 2025, the Commission presented its plans for the establishment of a ‘Social Investment Knowledge Hub’¹⁵ and an informal working group on enhancing access to administrative data for evaluation purposes.¹⁶

¹³ The [Council Conclusions on the role of labour market, skills and social policies for resilient economies](#) were approved at the EPSCO Council meeting of 20 June 2024. The conclusions invite (i.) the Commission to consult EMCO and SPC on the design and mandate of a possible “knowledge hub” on the methods and techniques to measure the economic effects of labour market, skills and social policies; and (ii.) EMCO and SPC to continue the work on evaluating and monitoring the economic effects of labour market, skills and social policies, including by building on the above-mentioned voluntary guiding principles.

¹⁴ The [Voluntary guiding principles for EU Member States for evaluating economic effects of reforms and investments in the labour market, skills and social policy domains](#) were endorsed at the EPSCO Council meeting of 20 June 2024.

¹⁵ The ‘Social Investment Knowledge Hub’ will be managed by the Commission services. It will include (i.) the organisation of mutual learning events to provide opportunities to exchange experiences and good practices on policy design and evaluation; (ii.) the creation of a [dedicated website](#) to collect information and best practices on reforms and investments with both economic and social returns; and (iii.) possible thematic discussions to be proposed to EMCO and SPC, or their indicators groups, on the economic and social returns of specific measures.

¹⁶ The informal working group on enhancing access to administrative data for evaluation purposes will be managed by the Commission services, with Member States participating on a voluntary basis and activities starting in 2026.

In 2026, the Committee jointly with EMCO will be consulted on the structure of a joint Commission-OECD questionnaire aimed at collecting information on the implementation of the *Council Recommendation on developing social economy framework conditions*.¹⁷

4.3. Monitoring of the social situation and developments in social protection policies

Through its annual report, the SPC will continue its **monitoring of the social situation in the EU and Member States and of the development of social protection policies**, including the progress towards the 2030 **European and national poverty and social exclusion reduction targets** introduced with the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan (EPSR AP).

Based on the report, the Committee will propose for endorsement of the EPSCO **a set of key messages on the main policy priorities in the area of social protection and social inclusion** in view of the Commission's preparatory work for the **2027 European Semester cycle and its Autumn Package**.

¹⁷ The [Recommendation](#) invites (i.) Member States to report to the Commission on their progress by 2027 (*Paragraph 27*); and (ii.) the Commission to prepare a report on the evaluation of the actions taken in response to the Recommendation to be submitted to EMCO and SPC for discussion (*Paragraph 23(c)*). On 8 December 2025, to address these invitations, the Commission proposed to develop a questionnaire, with the support of the OECD, to be submitted to EMCO and the SPC for agreement in 2026. The questionnaire would cover the key provisions of both the Council Recommendation and the related OECD recommendations on social economy. Based on the Member States' replies to the questionnaire, as well as other existing data, the Commission and the OECD will prepare a joint analytical report for discussion in EMCO and SPC in 2027 or 2028.

4.4. Thematic Work

The SPC will continue its **thematic work on priority issues in the areas under its competence**.

The selection of topics will take into account existing Committee commitments, relevant socio-economic developments and/or EU policy initiatives, as well as the priorities of the holding presidencies. The outcomes of such thematic work will be reflected in the SPC Annual Report; they could also be transmitted to the Council as Key Messages or background information in support of Ministerial discussions. They may also be used to support the preparation of Council conclusions or provide orientation to forthcoming Commission initiatives.

4.4.1. Thematic areas and actions identified as priorities for 2026

- Based on the first round of the biennial national progress reports (2024), review progress on implementation of the **European Child Guarantee and contribute to the preparation of the 2026 Commission report to the Council**, in coordination with the national Child Guarantee coordinators.
- **European Anti-poverty Strategy**: reflections and input to the preparation of the EC proposal.

4.4.2. Additional initiatives or developments to follow up

The SPC will take note and will reflect on implications for its work in the field of social policy with regards the following policy areas:

- Follow-up the development of the **action plan on EPSR**.
- Follow up developments concerning **Job Quality**.
- Follow up on the activities of the **European Platform on Combatting Homelessness**.

- Follow up the Commission's actions on the **European Affordable Housing Plan**.
- Follow up the actions concerning the implementation of the **Social Climate Fund** to support those struggling with **energy or transport poverty**.
- A possible revision of the **Voluntary European Quality Framework for Social Services**.
- Follow up developments on the **Demography toolbox**.
- **Regular updates of the activities and joint exercises with various formations** following EU initiatives, including mutual learning exercises on distributional impact assessment (DIA) and inequalities in the framework of the Commission's Communication on better assessing the distributional impact of Member States' policies.
- In line with the potential priorities of the **Cypriot and Irish Presidencies** in the policy fields of the EPSCO Council, the Committee will stand ready to schedule thematic discussions.

The SPC mutual learning activities will include **peer reviews** and other mutual learning events. Mutual learning events will particularly cover selected areas, like the **distributional impact assessment of policies, access to social protection (especially for non-standard workers, and the role of AI), the governance aspects of the social protection systems reforms, pension awareness, access to affordable high-quality long-term care and minimum income**. Mutual learning activities would not require the presence of the national SPC members, but rather the participation of national experts/delegates in the respective fields.

4.4.3. Thematic social reporting

Every year, the SPC Members engage in thematic social reporting on a topic chosen according to the current social policy priorities. The outcome of such reporting serves to promote mutual learning and exchange of best practices among the Member States, including in the form of support information for dedicated SPC discussions; it may be included in the SPC annual report, and/or used to inform Ministerial discussions and relevant Commission's initiatives.

The **2026 SPC thematic social reporting** would be dedicated to the implementation of the **European Child Guarantee**.

The thematic social reporting will cover the forthcoming reporting task of Member States on their national implementation of the European Child Guarantee. The process will involve the national child guarantee coordinators, thus SPC members are invited to coordinate within their administration to ensure the submission of consolidated reports.

On the basis of the national thematic social reporting, a synthesis will be delivered by the Commission services and a thematic discussion will be organised examining recent developments in the implementation of the European Child Guarantee as well as remaining challenges and the possible ways forward at EU and national level, with a view to provide input to the Commission report to the Council (foreseen by Q4 of 2026).

4.4.4. Monitoring tools, benchmarking frameworks and development of indicators

The SPC will continue, **through its Indicator Sub-Group (SPC ISG)**, to work on the **identification and development of indicators to monitor the social situation** and the development of social protection policies in the Member States and the Union. The Committee will continue its involvement in the governance and monitoring activities of the implementation of relevant recent initiatives.

In particular, the Committee will continue its work on the development and review of **monitoring and benchmarking frameworks** in the area of social protection and social inclusion. The frameworks will be developed in the Indicator Subgroup, in line with its work program. (See more details in Annex 2).

5. Summary of deliverables

Table 2 – Annual activities related to the 2026 European Semester

	Activities	Deliverables to the Council
Q1 2026	Reaction to the 2026 Autumn Package	The SPC, together with the Employment Committee (EMCO), will prepare draft Council Conclusions : political guidance on the 2026 Joint Employment Report . <i>March EPSCO</i>
Q1 2026	Examination and input into the Joint Employment Report and its key messages on issues related to social protection and social inclusion, including the analysis of key employment and social indicators.	Adoption by the Council of the final Joint Employment Report <i>March EPSCO</i>
Q1 2026	Examination of the Commission’s proposal for a 2026 Recommendation on the economic policy of the Euro Area	The SPC, together with the Employment Committee (EMCO), will prepare proposal for the employment and social aspects of the 2026 Recommendation on the economic policy of the Euro Area for Council approval. <i>March EPSCO</i>
Q1-Q2 2026	Multilateral examination of the implementation of structural reforms in the Member States in response to the 2025 Council country-specific recommendations in the areas under SPC competence .	Horizontal opinion on the 2026 European Semester cycle and country-specific conclusions for Council endorsement <i>June EPSCO</i>

Q2 2026	Feedback to the 2026 Spring Package	Horizontal opinion on the 2026 European Semester cycle and country-specific conclusions for Council endorsement
Q2 2026	Examination of the Commission’s proposals for 2026 Country-Specific Recommendations	
Q3-Q4 2026	Examination of the Commission’s proposal to revise or carry over Employment Guidelines, with a focus on Guideline 8	The SPC, together with the Employment Committee (EMCO), will prepare the modification of the Employment Guidelines if necessary <i>October EPSCO (TBC)</i>
Q3-Q4 2026	Preparation of an annual report on the social situation in the EU and overview of social protection reforms on the basis of the Social Protection Performance Monitor (SPPM) and thematic social reporting by Member States	Annual Report and Key messages on the social situation and the main social policy priorities as input to the preparation of the 2027 Autumn Package <i>October EPSCO</i>
Q4 2026	Examination of the social protection and social inclusion issues included in the Commission proposal for a 2027 Recommendation on the economic policy of the Euro Area	Contribution on social protection and social inclusion parts of the 2027 Euro area recommendation . <i>December EPSCO or 2027 (TBC)</i>

Table 3 – Annual activities related to thematic work

continuous	Regular debriefs of the activities and joint exercises with various formations	
Pdcy 1 (Q1)	Thematic discussion on the Role of enabling services in Reducing Poverty and Encouraging Activation	Thematic conclusions – Key messages (TBD)
Pdcy 2 (Q3)	Thematic discussion	Thematic conclusions – Key messages (TBD)
Q3	Thematic discussion on ECG, based on thematic social reporting	Conclusions

6. Working methods and relations with other Committees and advisory bodies

In 2026, the SPC meeting arrangements would include a mix between physical/in-person meetings, taking place in Brussels or the Member State holding the Presidency of the EU and virtual meetings, organized via a teleconferencing system. The organization of hybrid meetings is not foreseen. The format of the meeting will be determined close to the meeting dates and will depend on the availability of meeting rooms and an assessment on the proposed agenda items¹⁸. Potentially, the provision of interpretation services will be reduced to limit the administrative workload of the Secretariat Team and ensure its ability to secure adequate conference rooms for physical meetings.

¹⁸ Virtual format would be applied when meetings have more informative nature and/or due to unforeseen circumstances or limited time for organisation of a physical meeting.

In its cooperation with other policy Committees (Employment Committee - EMCO, Economic Policy Committee - EPC, the Economic and Financial Committee -EFC, the Education Committee - EDUC and with the Working Party on Public Health at Senior Level (WPPHSL), the SPC will be guided by the Council Decision (EU) 2015/773 establishing the SPC, the European Council Conclusions of 15 October 2013, calling for more work to strengthen cooperation between the various Council configurations in order to ensure consistency of the economic, employment and social policies in line with the common EU objectives, as well as by the EPSCO Council Conclusions on Economy of Well-being, which call on the SPC to continue fostering a close cooperation with other Council Committees and preparatory bodies. This may include joint meetings, preparation of joint papers, as well as coordination of the views on cross-cutting policy issues, in particular with EPC concerning the new economic governance. The SPC will be represented by the Chair at the meetings of the EPSCO Council and the informal meetings of the Ministers of Employment and Social Affairs organised by the Presidency of the Council of the EU.

The SPC and ISG members can freely access and are invited to regularly consult documents on the [Social Protection Committee Library on CIRCABC](#).

7. Cooperation with the EU social partners' organizations and social NGOs

In delivering on its work programme, the SPC will continue its co-operation with EU-level social partners and social NGOs.

In accordance with the Council Recommendation on strengthening social dialogue in the European Union, the SPC will contribute to the monitoring of its implementation by involving civil society organisations and social partners into selected thematic discussions, where relevant.

In addition, as traditionally, the social partners and representatives of NGOs are systematically invited to an exchange of views on the spring and autumn packages of the European Semester. In addition, NGOs are consulted on the thematic outputs of the Semester in general, while social partners are consulted on the packages prior their adoption.

The SPC will also collaborate closely with other relevant stakeholders, such as the EEA/EFTA States (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway).

Annex 1: Tentative calendar for SPC meetings in 2026

Annex 2: Work Programme of the SPC Indicators Sub-group (SPC ISG)

Annex 3: Work plan of Working Group on Adequate Social Protection in Old Age (WG ADAGE)

Annex 4: Work Programme of Minimum Income Network (WG MINET)

Annex 5: Ongoing initiatives, potentially in the interest of the SPC

Annex 1: Tentative calendar for SPC meetings in 2026

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 SPC and is not exhaustive.

An update of this rolling planning calendar will be provided by the Secretariat in every quarter.

Date	Format	Venue	Provisional Topics
3-4 February	Partially joint with EMCO/SPC only	Brussels	EMCO-SPC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ European Semester: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2026 Joint Employment Report - Drafting session and adoption - Council Conclusions on 2026 Joint Employment Report - Drafting session and adoption SPC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2026 Work Programme: endorsement of ISG, MINET and WG ADAGE WPs - Consultation on the Anti-Poverty Strategy - Quality Jobs Roadmap - presentation
12-13 informal EPSCO Cyprus			
18-19 February	Informal	Nicosia, Cyprus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thematic discussion on the Role of enabling services in Reducing Poverty and Encouraging Activation - Update on the Social and Employment situation in the EEA EFTA countries - Seminar on the 25th anniversary of SPC
9 March EPSCO Brussels			
18-19 March	SPC only	Brussels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Multilateral Implementation Reviews (MIR) - Discussion on the outline of the annual report
21-22 April	SPC only	Brussels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Multilateral Implementation Reviews (MIR)
19-20 May	Joint with EMCO	Brussels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social Convergence Reviews
4-5 June	Joint with EMCO	Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - `2026 Spring Package -Presentation - Exchange of views with Social Partners and CSOs

16-17-[18] June	Joint with EMCO and EPC (TBD)	Brussels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Negotiations of the 2026 CSR package - Horizontal Opinion on the 2026 European Semester cycle - [<i>Horizontal note on the 2026 CSRs for the European Council</i>]
29 June EPSCO Luxembourg			
Week 29-03 (date TBC)	SPC only	Brussels	Administrative points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Progress evaluation and adjustment of the 2026 Work programme of the SPC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Updates on the Activities of the SPC Working Groups - Information point on the ongoing and accomplished mutual learning activities - European Child Guarantee - thematic discussion - Presentation of the priorities of the Irish Presidency
6-7 July EPSCO informal IE			
21-22 September (TBC)	Informal	Dublin, Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thematic work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PDCY priority - Adoption of Annual Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update on the Social and Employment situation in the EEA EFTA countries - Discussion of the 2027 Peer Review programme
19 October EPSCO Brussels			
Week 26-30 October (e.g. two days on 27-28-29)	SPC only	Brussels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparatory work for 2027 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion of the 2027 Work Programme - Thematic work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation of ESDE 2027
26-27 November	Partially joint with EMCO/SPC only	Brussels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Autumn Package (with EMCO) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation of the package - Exchange of views with Social Partners and CSOs - Presentation of the priorities of the forthcoming Presidency SPC only <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2027 Work Programme – 2nd discussion - Discussion on the organization of the 2027 Multilateral Implementation Reviews
7 December EPSCO Luxembourg			
8 December	Joint with EMCO	Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2027 Euro Area Recommendation (TBD) - 2027 Work Programme

2026 Indicators Sub-Group Work Programme

1. Introduction

The work programme of the Indicators Sub-Group (ISG) of the Social Protection Committee (SPC) for 2026 will focus on contributing to delivering on the 2026 SPC priorities, follow up of the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR) and its Action Plan for implementation of the EPSR, the EU Anti-Poverty Strategy, the European Semester, and relevant other priorities arising from the Commission Work Programme 2026. In addition, the ISG will contribute as necessary to in-depth thematic work in the context of the open method of coordination for social protection and social inclusion (Social OMC).

Given these priorities and on-going activities, the work of the ISG will focus on the main areas listed below. The impact of new activities that the SPC decides to undertake in the course of 2026 will be assessed on an ongoing basis and the ISG work programme will be adjusted as necessary. Annex 1 contains an overview of next year's provisional meeting dates and agendas, with an indication of the scheduling of the main activities over 2026.

2. Review of monitoring/reporting frameworks and follow up on the European Pillar of Social Rights and implementation of its Action Plan

- **Follow up to the European Pillar of Social Rights and implementation of its Action Plan, including monitoring of the poverty and social exclusion target for 2030**

The ISG will contribute as necessary to relevant aspects related to the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights and its Action Plan and in particular the monitoring of progress towards the EU and national poverty and social exclusion targets for 2030. It will review the analytical content of the draft Joint Employment Report and, in particular, the assessment based on the EPSR social scoreboard.

- **Review of the current social monitoring framework**

The ISG will continue to review as necessary the current social monitoring framework (EPSR social scoreboard, SPPM, JAF, etc.)¹⁹ and to reflect, jointly with the EMCO Indicators Group (EMCO IG), on the scope to simplify and consolidate the existing tools, and review improvements to the timeliness of indicators. Specific activities in this area will include:

- **Reflection on the EPSR scoreboard**

Jointly with EMCO IG, the ISG will reflect as necessary on the EPSR scoreboard.

- **Timeliness of social indicators and flash estimates**

Timely estimates of the social situation are essential as highlighted by the COVID-19 crisis and the recent cost of living crisis. In line with the June 2024 Council Conclusions²⁰, the ISG will continue to reflect, in cooperation with Eurostat, on further improvements of the timeliness of social indicators, in particular on the format and availability of flash estimates of key income-based indicators (and the possibility to extend estimates to cover other indicators) to feed into the monitoring of the social situation in the EU.

- **Joint Assessment Framework (JAF)**

The ISG will continue to review the Joint Assessment Framework as necessary, together with the EMCO Indicators Group and the European Commission. This may cover aspects such as the continuing review of the structure and content of the JAF and the JAF methodology, in view of its improvement and further development and use to support the Social Open Method of Coordination.

¹⁹ European Pillar of Social Rights Scoreboard, Social Protection Performance Monitor (SPPM) and Joint Assessment Framework (JAF)

²⁰ Council Conclusions on the role of labour market, skills and social policies for resilient economies, 11382/24, [pdf](#)

- **Replacement of use of the OECD TAX BEN model by Euromod HHoT**

The ISG will continue to adjust agreed indicators that use the OECD TAX BEN model to use instead the in-house Euromod Hypothetical Household model (HHoT). Through the support of the Commission (in particular the JRC), the ISG will provide feedback on developments of the Euromod HHot and its applications.

- **Benchmarking**

The ISG will continue the work on benchmarking as tasked by the SPC. The ISG will also, whenever called upon, review and update already existing frameworks.

- **Exploring the use of administrative data**

The ISG will continue to explore the use of administrative data and how this can be included in its monitoring frameworks, including by reviewing examples of national practices in the use of such data and interacting through its representatives with the informal working group on access to administrative data to be established by the Commission.

- **Assessing social impacts of EU policies**

The ISG will follow developments in the field of assessing the social impacts of EU policies, including distributional impact assessment, the governance of the assessment of the social impact of new initiatives, and the social impact of CSR-linked reforms at the national level. The ISG will support the implementation of efforts to quantify the social impacts by reviewing possibilities to improve availability, accessibility and timeliness of evidence (including administrative data).

Planned deliverables for 2026

- The ISG will continue to review the possibilities for greater use of administrative data in its monitoring frameworks and follow developments in this area, including the work of the informal working group on access to administrative data to be established by the Commission
- It will make progress on the availability and use of timelier indicators of the social situation, including the more systematic use of flash estimates.

3. Monitoring of the social situation and the development of social policies

- **Preparation of the SPC Annual Report**

The ISG will contribute to the update on the social situation in the European Union and the monitoring of progress towards the EU and national poverty and social exclusion targets for 2030, through preparing specific inputs based on its monitoring tools, on-going work as well as through providing analysis based on the EU social indicators. The ISG will explore how to better account for the gender dimension in the report. It will continue collecting statistics derived from administrative data on benefit recipients.

- **Social Protection Performance Monitor (SPPM)**

The ISG will continue the work on updating the SPPM, especially regarding the set of key social indicators, in view of recent statistical developments and ISG adoption of new indicators. It will produce an update of the SPPM dashboard based on the set of available EU-SILC 2025 data.

- **Thorough review of the Portfolio of EU Social Indicators**

The ISG will complete the ongoing detailed review of the Portfolio of EU Social Indicators and publish the latest version. This will include revisiting the breakdowns of the indicators, to ensure they are consistent.

Planned deliverables for 2026

Reports

- The ISG will contribute to the SPC annual report through an update on the social situation in the European Union and analyses based on the EU social indicators and the SSPM dashboard and vertical assessment tool.

Indicators and tools

- Update of the Social Protection Performance Monitor
- Completion of the current review of and publication of the latest version of the Portfolio of EU Social Indicators

4. Thematic work

- **Poverty and Social Inclusion**

- **Inequality**

The ISG will further explore indicators on inequalities. It will also follow up as necessary on the Council Conclusions on “Improving access to enabling services and employment services in order to reduce territorial inequalities and promote social inclusion of marginalised communities living in poverty, including Roma”, which invites the Committees to consider the feasibility and the added value of improving the relevant EU social indicators and to initiate and encourage, in cooperation with the Commission, knowledge sharing and exchanges of best practice between Member States, on a voluntary basis, as regards identifying, measuring and managing territorial inequalities.

- **Minimum income ensuring active inclusion**

The ISG will continue to review the Minimum Income Benchmarking Framework. It will explore, together with the MINET group as necessary, the areas for further work identified in the review of the framework that was conducted in early 2025. This will involve, for instance, looking at various possible new outcome and performance indicators, policy levers as well as contextual information (e.g. related to child poverty, access to healthy nutrition, enabling and essential services, etc.).

- **Anti-poverty Strategy**

The 2025 State of the European Union address announced that the upcoming EU Anti-Poverty Strategy will help eradicate poverty by 2050. The ISG will follow and contribute as necessary to the follow up of the European Anti-Poverty Strategy and of its subsequent monitoring.

- **Child poverty**

In November 2023, the SPC endorsed the first version of the monitoring framework for the European Child Guarantee (ECG) Recommendation, developed by the ISG, and granted a new mandate to the ISG. In line with this mandate and the strengthening of the Child Guarantee announced in the 2024-2029 Political Guidelines, the ISG will update and explore avenues for further addressing some of the remaining gaps identified in the monitoring framework. It will also update the Benchmarking Framework for Childcare and Support to Children.

- **Situation of persons with disabilities**

Together with the Commission, the ISG will continue to develop and further improve the indicators for monitoring the situation of persons with disabilities. This includes corroboration of LFS and EU-SILC survey results on education, activity rates, employment and NEETs. The ISG, in cooperation with the EMCO IG, will discuss how to best assess the employment of persons with disabilities, whether the disability employment gap should be measured through the LFS or whether it should remain based on the EU-SILC, and whether additional components (such as prevalence, activity rate, and employment levels) are needed and whether there is a scope to better use the EMPL LMP data base.

- **Homelessness and housing exclusion, Housing conditions**

The ISG will look into the area of homelessness and housing exclusion and affordability with the aim to further refine indicators (e.g. concerning the way housing benefits are treated in the housing cost overburden rate indicator, exploring further indicators on housing affordability etc.) and discuss possible ways to monitor housing deprivation on a more regular basis. It will contribute as relevant to the analytical projects under the umbrella of the European Platform on Combatting Homelessness, in particular the EU-funded project carried out by the OECD on data mapping and monitoring systems and the pilot project on a European Homelessness Count.

- **Indicators on Social and Labour Aspects of the Fair Digital Transition**

The ISG will follow work on indicators relevant to monitor the social aspects of the fair digital transition, and in particular examine the need for additional indicators in this area.

- **Indicators on Social and Labour Aspects of the Fair Transition towards Climate Neutrality**

The ISG will follow work on indicators relevant to monitor the social aspects of the fair transition towards climate neutrality, and in particular examine the need for additional indicators to assess the fairness of the transition. In this context the ISG will reflect in particular on indicators related to transport poverty and further reflect on how to contribute to the monitoring process in the area of carbon and environmental footprint inequality.

- **Health**

The ISG will support the further development of the OMC health work stream and follow closely the work of DG SANTE on measuring inequality in access to healthcare. It will maintain regular contact with Eurostat and international organisations such as OECD and WHO in terms of policy needs and priorities in the area, and follow-up the work of the Working Party on Public Health (WPPH) working group on Health System Performance Assessment.

- **Pensions and long-term care**

The ISG will support the preparation of the 2027 SPC-Commission report on adequate social protection in old age (ADAGE), including through reviewing and updating as necessary the pension adequacy benchmarking framework. In particular, it will review and approve the list of indicators, including the Theoretical Replacement Rate cases, to be used in the 2027 ADAGE report.

The ISG will support the further development of the OMC long-term care work stream. In particular, it will continue to contribute as necessary to the further development of the framework of indicators for monitoring the implementation of the Council Recommendation on access to high-quality affordable long-term care, building on the joint work on common indicators on long-term care and other monitoring frameworks. In addition, the ISG will follow up on the work of the EUROSTAT Task Force on LTC in order to improve the availability and quality of indicators relating to LTC.

- **Reconciliation of private and professional life**

On the basis of the guidance manual and indicator framework on comparative EU-level data on the reconciliation of private and professional lives, the ISG, in coordination with the EMCO IG, will follow-up as necessary on Member States' progress in preparing for and delivering the data required for the Directive on reconciliation of private and professional life.

- **Access to social protection**

The ISG will prepare in 2026 a partial update of the monitoring framework for the Recommendation on access to social protection for workers and the self-employed (focused on indicators related to effective access, adequacy and labour market context). Moreover, the ISG will keep on working on further development of the indicator framework, notably as regards adequacy indicators as well as exploring possible outcome indicators and policy lever information for the transparency/simplification dimension.

- **Social protection dimension of Job Quality**

The ISG will continue its work to identify indicators to include in the social protection dimension of the monitoring framework on job quality, including testing the reliability of indicators proposed under phase 1 of the development of the framework and exploring additional indicators that might be proposed for inclusion under phase 2.

- **Social investment and resilience, especially regarding social protection systems**

Following the Jumbo EPSCO-ECOFIN Council, organised under the Belgian Presidency on 12 March 2024, to discuss the interplay between social investment, economic growth, and fiscal sustainability and the approval by the EPSCO Council in June 2024 of the Council Conclusions prepared by EMCO and SPC on the role of labour market, skills and social policies for resilient economies, the ISG stands ready to carry out any work to be mandated by the SPC as a follow up to the Council Conclusions. This will include, as necessary, follow up of work on the Social Investment Knowledge Hub.

- **Social indicators for monitoring of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

The ISG will follow work on social indicators for monitoring of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and contribute as necessary to the further development of the indicators in this area.

Planned deliverables for 2026

Thematic work

- Further development of the initial version of the monitoring framework for the Recommendation on access to high quality and affordable long-term care.
- Prepare a partial update of the monitoring framework for the Recommendation on access to social protection for workers and the self-employed and further develop the monitoring framework in some specific areas.
- Development of additional indicators on ensuring a fair Digital Transition and a Fair Transition towards Climate Neutrality.
- Follow up on the monitoring requirements for the Anti-Poverty Strategy
- Finalisation of input on the social protection dimension of the monitoring framework on job quality
- Update and explore avenues for further developing the monitoring framework for the European Child Guarantee Recommendation.
- Update, and further develop as relevant, the benchmarking frameworks for Childcare and Support to Children, Minimum Income and Pensions Adequacy
- Review and agree the list of indicators to be used in the 2027 report on adequate social protection in old age

5. On-going activities on enhancing statistical capacity and methods

The ISG will follow up on issues identified in the 2022 seminar to mark 20 years of the existence of the group. In particular, the ISG will:

- explore addressing some of the remaining priority gaps identified in coverage of indicators. The ISG will also explore how to include more contextual information in order to help users to better interpret the available indicators;
- further explore the use of alternative data sources that could complement the traditional ones, such as administrative data and Eurostat data on the joint distribution on income, consumption and wealth;
- hold an informal thematic seminar in 2026 to reflect on the topic of *”Priority data issues and gaps to address”* including for instance timeliness and reliability of social indicators, wealth data and data on access to services. This would appear as particularly relevant in the context of the upcoming EU anti-poverty strategy in 2026 (and could also possibly touch upon the issue of methods to assess returns on social investments).

The ISG will also review and enhance its indicators wherever necessary on the basis of new data or analysis. For example, the ISG will collaborate further with Eurostat on the possibility of inclusion of non-monetary income components in the definition of income. In this regard, it will follow closely and provide guidance on any follow up to the Eurostat project on “Social transfers in kind”.

The ISG will follow and advise the work Eurostat is carrying out in compiling and analysing existing data to better describe the joint distributions of income, consumption and wealth and the statistical links between micro and macro perspectives.

It will explore developing indicators which give a better view of the dynamic aspects of the social situation, such as indicators on poverty transitions, persistence and recurrence, making greater use of the longitudinal component of EU-SILC.

The ISG will support the EMCO IG as necessary in the further development of the LTU Recommendation monitoring framework.

The ISG will also work, in collaboration with the Commission, on ways to measure and analyse social spillovers and explore strengthening the ability to analyse the link between social policy and economic policy.

It will continue to follow developments regarding the European data strategy developed by the Commission and the use of social indicators in the Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure (MIP) scoreboard.

6. Cooperation with other relevant groups and organisations

The ISG will cooperate with other relevant groups of other Committees, including the working group on Social Protection Statistics and the related ESSPROS Task Force on methodology, the Eurostat Working Groups on Public Health Statistics and on Income and Living Conditions, and the EPC LIME group. It will continue its close collaboration with the EMCO Indicators Group including concerning interactions between the labour market and social inclusion, further development of the JAF, and the review of the current social monitoring framework.

The ISG will monitor research of potential interest for ISG work, especially through cooperation with services of the Commission including the JRC and will liaise where needed with the MISSOC network and the SPC MINET Working Group. It will also collaborate with academics and international organizations, such as OECD and Eurofound, developing research relevant for the group's activities.

Provisional schedule of topics per ISG meeting in 2026

ISG Meetings dates 2026	Provisional agenda items
<p>22-23 January</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>(Physical)</i></p>	<p>Revision of Portfolio of EU Social Indicators – finalisation and revisit of breakdowns</p> <p>Final report of the Eurostat Task Force on Long-Term Care Statistics – presentation by Eurostat</p> <p>Further development and updating of the LTC Recommendation Monitoring Framework</p> <p>Social protection dimension of Job Quality monitoring framework</p> <p>Presentation of EU-OECD joint project on financing of social protection</p> <p>Joint meeting with EMCO IG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revised proposal for a Joint Employment Report (2026) - Perspectives from the ROMA survey 2024 - Presentation by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights
<p>11 February</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>(Virtual)</i></p>	<p>Update on ESSPROS developments, including timeliness improvements</p> <p>SSM research note “Child material deprivation in the EU: The role of family structure” (timing tbc)</p> <p>Presentation of RAND Europe study on filling in the knowledge gaps and identifying strengths and challenges in effectiveness of child benefits</p> <p>Social protection dimension of Job Quality monitoring framework</p>

<p>25-26 March <i>(Physical)</i></p>	<p>SPC annual report - outline and data issues, including SPPM</p> <p>Environmental inequalities</p> <p>Access to social protection monitoring framework (extension and improvement of the framework) (tbc)</p> <p>Presentation on latest work on OECD study on faces of poverty</p> <p>Recap of online ISG facilities (ISG minutes database, website etc.)</p> <p>Housing indicators (tbc)</p> <p>Transport poverty (tbc)</p>
<p>23 April <i>(Virtual - tbc)</i></p>	
<p>21 May <i>(Virtual)</i></p>	<p>Carbon and environmental footprint inequality</p> <p>Possibilities for greater use of administrative data in monitoring frameworks</p>
<p>17-18 June <i>(Physical)</i></p>	<p>SPC annual report preparation (results from SPPM dashboard update, key social challenges exercise)</p> <p>Monitoring framework on access to social protection - 2025 (partial) update of framework</p> <p>Presentation of the EU Anti-Poverty Strategy (tbc)</p> <p>Eurostat update on flash estimates/nowcasting of social indicators</p>
<p>15 September <i>(Virtual)</i></p>	<p>SPC annual report (finalisation)</p> <p>Access to social protection monitoring framework (extension and improvement of the framework)</p>

<p>21-22 October <i>(Physical)</i></p>	<p>Review of indicators for monitoring of the EU Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</p> <p>Follow up discussion on EU Anti-Poverty Strategy (tbc)</p> <p>Pension adequacy monitoring framework (update)</p> <p>Monitoring framework for the European Child Guarantee and benchmarking framework for childcare and support to children (update)</p> <p>Presentation of OECD study on value for money of child-related investments and policies</p> <p>Review of Minimum Income benchmarking framework</p>
<p>19 November <i>(Virtual)</i></p>	<p>2027 ISG Work programme – initial discussion</p> <p>Annual update by Eurostat on EU-SILC developments</p> <p>Eurostat update on work on joint distributions of income, consumption and wealth and the statistical links between micro and macro perspectives</p> <p>Presentation of 2026 Employment and Social Developments in Europe (ESDE) report</p> <p>Presentation of results of study on non-take-up</p>
<p>15-16 December (part joint with EMCO IG) <i>(Physical)</i></p>	<p>Joint meeting with EMCO IG - Draft Joint Employment Report</p> <p>2026 ISG Work programme – finalisation</p> <p>Summary of ISG achievements and activities in 2026</p>

Annex 3: Work Plan of WG ADAGE

Provisional work plan for drafting 2027 ADAGE Report and WG ADAGE meetings

Chapter/sub-chapter	External inputs with ddl	2025		2026								
		14 November	10 December	5 February (in-person)	20 April (tbc) (in-person)	27 May (tbc) (online)	1 July (tbc) (in-person)	17 September (tbc) (online)	29-30 October (in-person)	16 November (online)	14 December (in-person)	
External presentations			Supplementary pension package of the Savings and Investment Union	AWG presentation ISSA guidelines on LTC								
Volume I												
Key conclusions												
Intro			<i>1st draft</i>									
1. Current adequacy of old-age social protection												
1.1. Protection against poverty and social exclusion						<i>1st draft</i>						
1.2. Income maintenance and LTC affordability in old age	JRC on pension gap			<i>JRC presentation + 1st draft input based on it</i>			<i>1st draft</i>					
1.3. Retirement duration, changes in income and LTC needs	Ageing Report underlying assumptions							<i>1st draft</i>				
1.4. Gaps in access to pensions and LTC	SHARE				<i>1st draft (part based on SHARE and ASP)</i>							

Chapter/sub-chapter	External inputs with ddl	2025		2026								
		14 November	10 December	5 February (in-person)	20 April (tbc) (in-person)	27 May (tbc) (online)	1 July (tbc) (in-person)	17 September (tbc) (online)	29-30 October (in-person)	16 November (online)	14 December (in-person)	
1.5. Other policies key to sustaining living standards in old age J				<i>1st draft</i>								
2. National reforms in pension and LTC policies												
	ESPAN TR							<i>1st draft</i>				
3. The future of old-age social protection												
	TRRs and indicators									<i>1st draft</i>		
4. Longer working lives												
	- ESPAN report on flexible retirement - SHARE - Ageing Report projections - Eurofound: impact of working conditions in LTC sector on longer working lives				<i>1st draft (partial)</i>							

Chapter/sub-chapter	External inputs with ddl	2025		2026							
		14 November	10 December	5 February (in-person)	20 April (tbc) (in-person)	27 May (tbc) (online)	1 July (tbc) (in-person)	17 September (tbc) (online)	29-30 October (in-person)	16 November (online)	14 December (in-person)
5. Financing of old-age social protection											
	- ESPAN - SHARE - Literature review on returns to investing in LTC - OECD				<i>1st draft (partial, SP financing, SHARE)</i>	<i>1st draft LTC returns on investment</i>					
Volume II											
Highlights											
1. General description of the pension and LTC systems											
2. Reform trends											
3. Assessment of adequacy											
3.1 Current adequacy											
3.2 Future adequacy											
4. Key challenges and opportunities											
Background statistics											

2026 – 2027 Work Programme of MINET

1. Introduction

On 26 November 2025, the SPC decided to extend the mandate of its **Minimum Income Network (MINET)** working group. The **Terms of Reference (ToR)** approved by the SPC remain applicable until 31 May 2031, with a revision envisaged in 2027.

In accordance with the ToR, the **overall objective of MINET** is to strengthen the exchange of best practices, foster cooperation and promote mutual learning in the further development of minimum income schemes, with the aim of preparing the joint Reports on Minimum Income supporting the implementation of the Council Recommendation on adequate minimum income ensuring active inclusion²¹. The key policy discussions will continue to take place at the level of the SPC, to which MINET will contribute by supplying technical expertise and evidence-based insights. Structured cooperation between the SPC and MINET will be further explored.

The **MINET Work Programme for 2026–2027** will focus on contributing to the delivery of the SPC priorities, while continuously improving the understanding of national minimum income schemes and identifying common challenges through structured knowledge exchange. The mutual learning activities will be implemented within the framework of the Open Method of Coordination on social protection and social inclusion (Social OMC), as outlined in the Council decision establishing the Social Protection Committee (SPC)²².

²¹ C_2023041EN.01000101.xml - EUR-Lex - European Union

²² Council Decision (EU) 2015/883 Article 5(1)

The activities will build on the work carried out so far, deepening expertise and knowledge on specific aspects of the Council Recommendation on adequate minimum income ensuring active inclusion, with a view to supporting its follow-up and implementation. They will also take into account the priorities of the upcoming Council Presidencies and relevant initiatives under the related Commission Work Programmes.

Given these priorities, the MINET Work Programme for 2026–2027 will focus on the key priority areas outlined below. The possible follow-up by MINET on any new activities that the SPC may decide to launch during this period will be assessed on an ongoing basis, and the work programme may be adjusted accordingly.

2. Mutual learning activities in 2026-2027

To facilitate mutual learning and cooperation among Member States' experts and authorities responsible for minimum income policies through exchanges of experience and good practices, MINET will meet regularly - **at least twice both in 2026 and 2027** - at in-person meetings held in Brussels, or exceptionally in another Member willing to host the meeting, depending on the availability of resources. Hosting a meeting at national level offers valuable opportunities for direct exchange with national and local policymakers and stakeholders, greater visibility of national and local practices, and first-hand insights into the implementation of minimum income policies. Additionally, other online meetings might be organised, depending on the needs for deliverables. These meetings can also be complemented or replaced, with ad hoc smaller events or meetings²³, based on MINET's initiative. Written consultations may also be used where appropriate.

²³ Such as peer reviews, country visits, specific events with involving lower (regional or local) level stakeholders etc,

Based on the satisfaction questionnaire circulated to MINET in September 2025, MINET members identified **key thematic priorities** for future work. At the same time, while the 2025 joint Report on Minimum Income²⁴ provided an initial assessment of progress across the main building blocks of the Council Recommendation, several elements could not yet be fully examined due to limited information or analytical evidence. These areas will therefore be further explored within MINET during 2026–2027, with a view to supporting the preparation of the next joint Report on Minimum Income, planned for 2028.

Thematic Priorities

Building on the above, the following clusters of priorities are proposed for 2026–2027.

A. Pathways to Employment and Social Integration

- Assessing the effectiveness of Active Labour Market Policies and financial incentives in ensuring sustainable transitions to employment and higher work intensity.

B. Adequacy and Coverage of Minimum Income Schemes

- Assessing and improving the adequacy of benefits in line with the Council Recommendation, including by analysing the interaction of cash and in-kind benefits and exploring methods to estimate the monetary value of in-kind services contributing to overall adequacy.
- Examining coverage gaps, non-take-up, and the continuity of access to benefits.

²⁴ The 2025 Minimum Income Report. An overview of the implementation of the 2023 Council Recommendation on adequate minimum income ensuring active inclusion across EU Member States, Joint report prepared by the Social Protection Committee and the European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion.

C. Individualised Approach and Access to Services

- Further analysing access to various types of enabling and essential services available for to minimum income beneficiaries and exploring ways in which services are provided (integrated provision, one-stop-shop, collaboration protocols, increasing digitalization and its impacts on both social workers and service recipients, etc).
- Promoting social inclusion plans to ensure that minimum income schemes respond effectively to individual needs.

D. Design and Responsiveness of Minimum Income Schemes

- Analysing the resilience of schemes to different types of crises and their effectiveness in mitigating socioeconomic impact.
- Reviewing coherence between various benefits, activation measures and enabling services to avoid gaps, overlaps, and fragmentation.

E. Implementation and Administrative Capacity

- Strengthening evidence on the operational capacity of authorities responsible for managing minimum income schemes and providing related services.
- Identifying successful approaches to coordination between employment services, social assistance, and other actors.
- Governance and monitoring mechanisms.

Planned deliverables:

- Minutes and summaries of meetings;
- Contributions and inputs to SPC initiatives, reports (in particular the SPC Annual Report), thematic discussions, reviews and opinions, upon request;
- Regular reporting to the SPC on mutual learning activities;
- Dissemination of information on activities and outputs.

3. Continuous update of country profiles and the implementation table of the 2025 Minimum Income Report

To ensure up-to-date and comparable information on minimum income policies across Member States, MINET will continue to coordinate the **regular update (at least once a year) of the country profiles** and the comparative **overview table** included in the 2025 joint Report on Minimum Income.

The updated profiles and table will capture the most recent reforms, policy measures, and implementation developments in national minimum income schemes. These updates will provide an essential evidence base for the preparation of the 2028 Report on Minimum Income, contribute to relevant thematic activities of the SPC and will inform continuous mutual learning within MINET.

Planned deliverables:

- Annual update of Part 2 of the joint Report on Minimum Income (country profiles) and of the overall implementation table;

4. Strengthening data collection²⁵

Following discussions with EUROSTAT (MINET meeting on 28 April 2025), MINET will support the **ESSPROS** (European System of Integrated Social Protection Statistics) Working Group in defining a list of benefits to be classified as minimum income benefits for the purposes of the ESSPROS data collection. The collaboration between ESSPROS Working Group and MINET will be essential to ensure consistent definitions, reliable data coverage, and the relevance of data collection for policy analysis and benchmarking.

Planned deliverables:

- Exchanges with ESSPROS Working Group.

²⁵ ESSPROS remains responsible for technical matters, as it is the body in which Member States discuss and agree on the type, scope and any changes to data deliveries. Consequently, any decisions developed in cooperation between MINET and ESSPROS must be formally submitted to Member States through the ESSPROS framework for approval.

Annex 5: ongoing initiatives, potentially in the interest of the SPC

Initiative	Related action
<p>Council recommendation on access to social protection</p>	<p>Further developing the indicator-based monitoring framework in SPC ISG.</p> <p>Organisation of specific mutual learning activities (and potential thematic peer reviews) to support the implementation of the Recommendation. In 2026 this will include mutual learning on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pension awareness and the role of digitalisation - February 2026 • Ensuring social protection to the self-employed – Balancing contributions, coverage, and fairness (march April 2026) • Access to social protection for non-standard forms of contracts (including zero-hour contract, civil law contracts workers, platform workers) (June 2026) <p>Dedicated thematic discussions and policy exchanges on the different dimensions of the Council recommendation (eg adequacy, effective access) and in relation to specific target groups (eg self-employed, specific categories of people in non-standard forms of employment).</p> <p>Possible follow-up to the thematic social reporting on access to social protection (Annual report 2025) and to the October 2025 thematic discussion of the SPC (with a focus on transparency and simplification and the role of digitalisation)</p>
<p>Council recommendation on European Child Guarantee</p>	<p>Further review and develop the monitoring framework in SPC ISG.</p> <p>Organisation of mutual learning activities, including with the ECG coordinators.</p> <p>Based on the first round of the biennial national progress reports (2024), review progress on implementation and initiate reflection on the structure of the report to the Council due in 2026.</p>
<p>Council recommendation on early childhood education and care: the Barcelona targets for 2030</p>	<p>Potentially the Commission will <i>“explore the possibility to develop further indicators in cooperation with the EMCO and the SPC...”</i>.</p>
<p>Council recommendation on adequate minimum income ensuring active inclusion</p>	<p>Triennial report on adequate minimum income (next edition in 2025).</p> <p>Organisation of mutual learning activities in MINET.</p>

Council recommendation on access to affordable high-quality long-term care	<p>Organisation of mutual learning activities and thematic peer reviews to support the implementation of the Recommendation.</p> <p>Commission report to the Council on the implementation (by end 2027).</p>
European Platform on Combatting Homelessness	<p>Development of a policy toolkit and monitoring framework with OECD (2024).</p> <p>Launch of the final report of the European Homelessness Count pilot project (started in 2024).</p> <p>Organisation of Platform meetings and mutual learning activities, involving the stakeholders of the Platform.</p>
Commission Action Plan on Labour and skills shortages	<p>Invitation to the Employment Committee and the Social Protection Committee to have regular tripartite exchanges on this issue, with the participation of European and national social partners.</p>
Council Conclusions on the role of labour market, skills and social policies for resilient economies	<p>Committee works jointly with EMCO on improving the evaluation of the economic effects of reforms and investments in the labour market, skills and social policy domains.</p>
Council recommendation on developing social economy framework conditions	<p>Reporting to the Commission 4 years following the adoption (2027) and 5 years after that (2032).</p> <p>The first reporting will be aligned with the reporting to be done under the OECD Recommendation on the Social and Solidarity Economy and Social Innovation.</p> <p>Based on MS' reporting, the Commission will prepare a report evaluating the actions taken and submit it to SPC and EMCO.</p>
Council Recommendation on ensuring a fair transition towards climate neutrality (FT)	<p>Biennial review completed in SPC and EMCO, in accordance with the specific arrangement proposed by the European Commission.</p>
Communication on Distributional impact assessments	<p>Following up on the Commission activities and mutual learning</p>
Communication: A comprehensive approach to mental health	<p>Following up on the Commission package and organisation of thematic discussion</p>
Communication “ Demographic change in Europe: a toolbox for action	<p>Following up on the Commission package and organisation of thematic discussion</p>
A Voluntary European Quality Framework for Social Services	<p>Following up and potentially review the framework</p>