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**NOTE**

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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
To: Delegations  
Subject: Work Programme of the Employment Committee for 2019

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Delegations will find attached the 2019 Work Programme of the Employment Committee and its subgroups, as adopted in accordance with the Committee's rules of procedure, with a view to the meeting of the EPSCO Council on 15 March 2019 (Any Other Business item).

**EMCO Work Programme 2019**

The Employment Committee (EMCO) is the advisory Committee established under Article 150 TFEU. It is tasked with monitoring "*the employment situation and employment policies in the Member States and the Union*" and with the formulation "*of opinions at the request of either the Council or the Commission or on its own initiative, and to contribute to the preparation of... Council proceedings*".

**THE EUROPEAN SEMESTER**

EMCO has a number of commitments under the European Semester and the Europe 2020 strategy. These commitments determine much of the Committee's calendar for the year.

In early 2019 EMCO, together with the SPC, will prepare Council Conclusions on the Annual Growth Survey 2019, the publication of which in November 2018 signifies the start of the 2019 Semester cycle. It will also finalise the Key Messages of the Joint Employment Report.

EMCO will review the implementation of all of the Country-Specific Recommendations (CSRs) in its areas of competence, which were endorsed by Council at the end of the 2018 Semester. The reviews will be organised thematically to permit horizontal conclusions to be drawn: EMCO has agreed that it will seek in the upcoming Semester cycle to reinforce its horizontal discussion preceding some of its Multilateral Surveillance Reviews. EMCO will do this work in conjunction with its Policy Analysis Group (PAG) in the period December 2018 to May 2019.

The Member States' individual conclusions from this cycle of reviews (along with those from EMCO's reviews on social dialogue and the implementation of the Long-Term Unemployment Recommendation), along with the Employment Performance Monitor, will form EMCO's multilateral position for the discussions on Commission proposals for new CSRs. These discussions are currently scheduled to take place in late May and early June. They will begin with a general discussion of the CSR proposals at a joint session with the Social Protection Committee (SPC) and Social Partners.

EMCO will transmit the agreed CSR texts to the June EPSCO Council. These will be accompanied by an Opinion containing some general observations on the working of the Semester process, and the country-specific and horizontal conclusions from the multilateral surveillance work.

EMCO and its Indicators Group will continue to produce the Employment Performance Monitor. EMCO will submit this to the October EPSCO Council alongside the EMCO Annual Performance Report, along with some key messages about the employment situation in the EU. This will represent EMCO's contribution to the preparation of the Annual Growth Survey for 2020, which will start the 2020 Semester cycle.

EMCO and its sub-groups will continue to work on the benchmarking proposals from the Commission to contribute to the analysis underpinning work on the Semester. Work will go on to complete the early support component of the benchmarking framework on unemployment benefits and active labour market policies.

Towards the end of 2019 EMCO will meet jointly with the SPC and social partners to discuss the 2020 Annual Growth Survey and Joint Employment Report.

EMCO will also work with the SPC and the ECOFIN Committees to finalise the employment and social aspects of the draft Euroarea Recommendation.

## **EU FUNDS**

EMCO will continue to follow developments related to the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2021-2027, the proposed new regulations for the ESF+ and EGF, as well as the Regulation on the establishment of the Reform Support Programme.

EMCO will look to continue to cooperate with the SPC and the Economic Policy Committee (EPC) on these matters.

## **EUROPE 2020**

EMCO, in conjunction with SPC, will start work to assess the achievements of the Europe 2020 strategy and to bring the Committee's involvement in the strategy to a conclusion. This will be on the basis of initial reflections and a roadmap, due to be completed jointly by SPC ISG and EMCO IG and PAG in early 2019.

EMCO will reflect on a possible successor strategy with a view to providing its contribution to the debate on the future of social Europe post-2020 when it develops.

## **G20**

EMCO will continue to follow the work in the G20 and to continue to work on the EU's contribution to the G20 Employment Working Group.

## **MONITORING OF COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS**

EMCO is tasked with monitoring the implementation of two Council Recommendations: the Council Recommendation of 22 April 2013 on establishing a Youth Guarantee; and the Council Recommendation of 15 February 2016 on the integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market.

EMCO has decided that it will carry out one full 28-Member State review of a Recommendation per annual cycle. Having reviewed the implementation of the Youth Guarantee in December 2017 and the long-term unemployment Recommendation in October 2018, it will again review the Youth Guarantee towards the end of 2019.

## **WORK WITH SOCIAL PARTNERS**

The Committee will continue to consult Social Partners on all pertinent aspects of its work under the European Semester, and to implement the agreed working methods for cooperation with Social Partners. The Committee will also continue to participate actively in the Macro-economic dialogue at all levels.

EMCO began multilateral surveillance reviews with the involvement of European and national social partners in 2016. That process has developed in 2017 and 2018, and the intention is to repeat the exercise on 2019. Exact modalities for the review will be decided in the first half of 2019.

EMCO will contribute to the preparation of the Tripartite Social Summit, as envisaged in Council Decision (EU) 2016/1859.

## **ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE EU AND THE WESTERN BALKANS AND TURKEY**

Having contributed to this process for the first time in 2016, EMCO did so again in 2017 and 2018, and will do again in 2019. This contribution will consist of a multilateral review of the employment aspects of the Economic Reform Programmes of the participants in the Economic and Financial Dialogue, and a contribution to the ensuing Joint Conclusions.

## **THEMATIC WORK**

Given the large amount of work which "business as usual" now requires of the Committee, particularly in the first half of the calendar year, EMCO continues to prioritise its thematic work rather than spreading itself too thinly.

The Committee – and its Policy Analysis Group - has the intention to focus its additional thematic work in 2019 primarily on these themes:

- labour mobility
- policy responses to new forms of work
- flexicurity
- labour taxation
- the green economy and employment implications of climate change
- labour shortages
- skills

The Mutual Learning Programme (MLP) activities will be coordinated to ensure that the results of the MLP contribute to the EMCO thematic work as well as its Policy Analysis Group's work.

EMCO will also look at the operation of the EU Twinning Programme.

## **EMCO SUB-GROUPS**

EMCO will continue to be supported by two sub-groups (whose work programmes are annexed to this document):

- The **Policy Analysis Group (PAG)** will continue to provide evidence-based advice to underpin EMCO work and debate. It will carry out a major part of the multilateral surveillance work under the Semester. It will also carry out a number of thematic reviews to support EMCO's work. PAG will also follow the work of EUROFOUND and the PES Network closely. PAG will also play a major role in examining the policy content of benchmarking papers as that work develops.
- The **Indicators Group** will continue to support EMCO in the quantitative description and analysis of the policy issues. The continued work of the group on the Joint Assessment Framework (JAF) and in developing the annual Employment Performance Monitor, as well as the Annual Employment Performance Report, will provide the quantitative background for EMCO's work. The Group will also continue its work on evaluating the Indicator Frameworks for monitoring the Recommendations on the Youth Guarantee and Long-term Unemployed, and on analysing the results of the respective data collections. It will also continue its work on examining the quantitative aspects of the work on benchmarking policy areas.

## **COOPERATION WITH OTHER COMMITTEES**

EMCO will continue to promote close working relationships with all other relevant committees, in particular the SPC, especially on work related to the European Semester.

EMCO will regularly cooperate with the SPC and the Education Committee to account for their views on social and education policy. EMCO will organise a joint seminar on a topic of shared interest with EPC in the first half of 2019, as has been done in previous years.

## Provisional calendar for EMCO's work in 2019

	Activity	Deliverable
Jan - Feb	Preparatory work for adoption of Joint Employment Report (JER), and analysis of social and employment scoreboard	Finalised JER and scoreboard adopted by March EPSCO
Jan - Feb	Analysis of relevant employment issues on the 2019 Annual Growth Survey (AGS)	Contribution to Council Conclusions on the AGS in context of EPSCO input into Spring European Council
Jan - May	Multilateral surveillance on implementation of Country-Specific Recommendations	EMCO Conclusions to the June EPSCO
Feb – June	Adoption of the Employment Performance Monitor (EPM)	EPM adopted by EMCO in May, to October EPSCO
May	Review of participants in Economic and Financial Dialogue with Turkey and the Western Balkans	Contribution to Joint Conclusions
May – June	Discussion on Commission proposals for Country-Specific Recommendations (CSRs) for 2018	Finalised CSRs to the June EPSCO
June	Evaluation of the 2018 European Semester process	EMCO Opinion on the Semester process to June EPSCO
July – October	EMCO preparation of EMCO Annual Employment Performance Report on basis of multilateral surveillance and the Employment Performance Monitor (EPM)	EMCO Annual Employment Performance Report to October EPSCO alongside EPM, accompanied by Key Messages for EPSCO endorsement
October - December	Review on the implementation of the Recommendation on the Youth Guarantee <sup>1</sup>	Conclusions sent to June EPSCO alongside other multilateral surveillance conclusions
Oct/Nov	Review with participation of social partners	Conclusions sent to June EPSCO alongside other multilateral surveillance conclusions
Nov	Initial discussions on 2020 Annual Growth Survey and Joint Employment Report; preparatory work on Euro-area Recommendation	Feed-in to EPSCO debate and EMCO discussions in early 2020

<sup>1</sup> This will also incorporate monitoring of implementation of relevant CSRs and KECs, as in previous years.

## PROVISIONAL MEETINGS CALENDAR FOR FIRST HALF OF 2019

The calendar below is of necessity provisional and subject to change.

<b>24 January</b>	<b>EMCO</b>
<b>5 February</b>	<b>IG</b>
<b>18 February</b>	<b>EMCO</b>
<b>19 February</b>	<b>PAG</b>
<b>12 - 14 March</b>	<b>EMCO – EDUC / EMCO</b>
<b>15 March</b>	<b>EPSCO Council</b>
<b>20 March</b>	<b>IG</b>
<b>21 March</b>	<b>PAG</b>
<b>4 – 5 April</b>	<b>EMCO (Romania)</b>
<b>10 - 11 April</b>	<b>Informal EPSCO</b>
<b>25 April</b>	<b>EMCO (Dialogue with Western Balkans and Turkey)</b>
<b>26 April</b>	<b>EMCO (Country Review)</b>
<b>21 May</b>	<b>IG</b>

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