USING THE EU TO ADVANCE SOCIAL RIGHTS IN YOUR COUNTRY: A TOOLKIT

CESI's guide to the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights in the Member States



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1 INTRODUCTION: WHY AN EU TOOLKIT FOR SOCIAL RIGHTS IN YOUR COUNTRY?

In a fast-paced evolving Europe – marked by the COVID-19 pandemic some years ago, continuing geopolitical tensions as well as migration challenges, demographic ageing impacting on social security and pension systems, unfolding ecological and industrial transitions and the spread of digitalisation and AI into the world of work -, the European Union remains committed to enhancing equal opportunities for all.

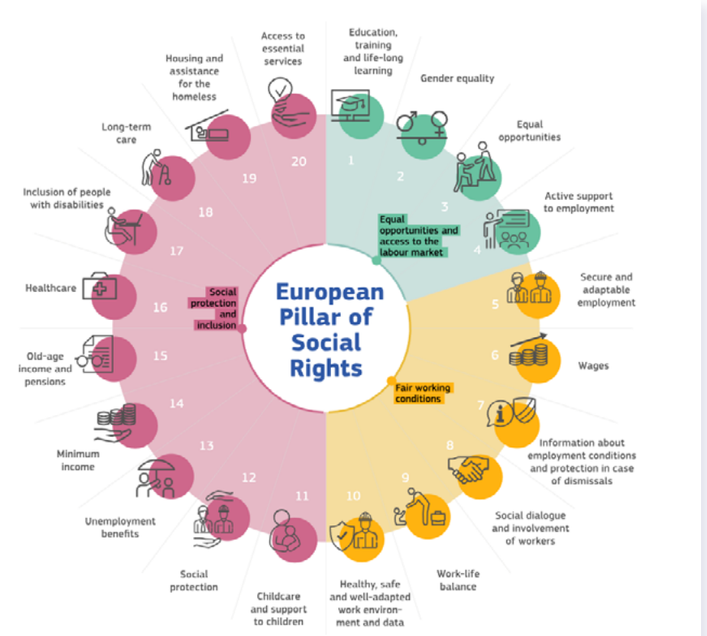
Its main vehicle for guiding fair and decent employment policies at EU level and in the Member States is the **European Pillar of Social Rights** (EPSR). In 20 principles, it sets a compass to achieve ambitious standards for employment, social protection and inclusion, and education and training.

Trade unions can and should use the EPSR to push social partners and policymakers towards decent and fair work and social protection – not only at the EU level, but in national settings too.

2 THE EUROPEAN PILLAR OF SOCIAL RIGHTS: A VEHICLE FOR SOCIAL RIGHTS

The EPSR was adopted in 2017 through an interinstitutional proclamation signed by the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council of the EU (= heads of states and governments of the Member States), and was followed by an implementation-oriented **Action Plan** in 2021. It is divided into three macro-areas, comprising a total of 20 principles.

Even though the principles of the EPSR are not legally binding and do not constitute individually enforceable rights, they play an important role as a compass for action to ensure no one is left behind, to promote wellbeing and to protect people in a setting of sustainable and inclusive economic development. To do so, they touch every aspect of life – from employment to retirement, from health care to education.



European Pillar of Social Rights in 20 Principles - European Commission

The full list of principles is available in **Annex I**: the Principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights.

In their role as interest representatives and social partners, t**rade unions** are called upon to act with employers in social dialogue and with policymakers in public policy debates to promote the implementation of the EPSR as comprehensively and swiftly as possible – also at national level.

3 IMPLEMENTING THE EUROPEAN PILLAR OF SOCIAL RIGHTS

The European Union provides means to effectively implement individual principles of the EPSR.

1. In areas in which the EU Treaties specify that the **EU has legislative competence**, the EU can issue **binding legislation** – such as directives or regulations – that Member States are legally bound to implement and enforce.
2. In areas where the **Member States have legislative competence**, the EU

    - **coordinates** economic, fiscal, social, and employment policies through the European Semester – a **soft law** coordination mechanism, reinforced by **hard-law** fiscal surveillance under the Stability and Growth Pact, and
    - strongly incentivises Member States to implement targets of the EPSR through **EU funding tied to social conditionalities**.

Trade unions should be active at both levels to strengthen employment and social rights in their Member States.

3.1 Areas of EU competence – Legislation

Within the remit of the competences the EU Treaties endow it, the EU can adopt two types of binding legislation: directives and regulations.

Regulations: They set binding rules for Member States and are directly applicable at national level, without a national act. They apply after a short period of usually some weeks only that is specified in the regulation itself. Directives: They set minimum standards or objectives that Member States are obliged to achieve within a set period of time. During a so-called transposition phase (two or three years), the Member States must integrate the standards/objectives into their national legal frameworks. Each Member State is free to deploy or amend any applicable legal act of their choosing, as long as the EU standards/objectives are met.

Here, the European Pillar of Social Rights' implementation is delivered through the transposition of directives and the application of regulations. Trade unions that are involved in the transposition and application process can contribute significantly in these ways:

- For the **directives that have been adopted** by the EU legislative and are still in the **transposition phase** – the period of incorporating the targets of the directive into national legal frameworks –, trade unions can contribute to **ensure a proper and timely transposition**. An example is the recently adopted EU Directive 2023/970 on pay transparency.

- For **directly applicable regulations** and **directives that have been transposed and must be enforced**, trade unions can flag cases of incorrect enforcement. Examples are the EU Directive 2019/1152 on transparent and predictable working conditions, the EU Directive 2022/2041 on adequate minimum wages, the EU Directive 2019/1158 on work-life balance, and the EU Directive 2022/2381 on women on company boards.

This toolkit provides examples of both types of directives to better understand how acts can address the implementation of the EPSR.

3.1.1 Directives in the transposition phase: Example

Pay Transparency Directive 2023/970

The **Pay Transparency Directive** was adopted in 2023 and its provisions need to be transposed by the Member States into their national legal frameworks by 7 June 2026.

The directive provides for new minimum rules to strengthen the principle of equal pay for equal work between men and women. For trade unions, it envisions new rights to access pay information and to legally represent workers in collective action and promotion of collective bargaining to tackle pay discrimination.

As of January 2026, no Member State has fully transposed the directive. It has been partially transposed by Poland, Malta and Belgium, while Ireland, Sweden, the Netherlands and Slovakia have a draft law pending, and further countries have initiated their legal processes.

CESI's German member dbb **reacted** to Germany's "bureaucracy-light implementation" work on the Pay Transparency Directive, warning against weakening rights in the name of debureaucratisation.

For directives in the transposition phase, trade unions could and should:

- ***carefully assess the provisions and minimum standards enshrined in directives in the transposition phase, such as this one, against the reality of their national/sectoral laws.***
- ***get in touch with the national ministries in charge of the transposition of this directive, if relevant***

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minimum standards foreseen by the directive are not yet met at the national or sectoral level.

- ***ask to be heard in further transposition and legal monitoring exercises concerning the directive that can be open to trade unions and social partners.***
- ***report any problematic or delayed transposition issue with the Economic Counsellor of the European Commission's applicable national representation office (see* Annex II*).***
- ***seek to incorporate the provisions of the directives, as relevant, in new collective agreements.***

3.1.2 Directives in the enforcement phase: Examples

A. *The Transparent and Predictable Working Conditions Directive 2019/1152*

The **Transparent and Predictable Working Conditions Directive** provides more extensive and modernised rights for workers in the EU to reduce risks tied to precarious employment, improve legal certainty for workers and employers and to set minimum protection levels across EU countries. More specifically, it provides new obligations for employers to provide certain contractual information and new rights for workers regarding the maximum duration of probationary periods, the predictability of work, transitions to more stable forms of employment, and mandatory training.

It had to be transposed by all Member States by 1 August 2022. In January 2026, except for Spain, every Member State has formally transposed the directive in its national legal framework. Latest updates on transposition by the Member States may be found **here**.

The Belgian trade unions including ACV-CSC and FGTB/ABVV, worked through the National Labour Council to reach a unanimous consensus on transposition. This led to the adoption of a universally binding collective agreement (CBA No. 161) that filled legislative gaps and ensured coverage for both public and private sectors.Belgium also exceeded Directive minima by requiring job information to be provided on the first working day.

B. *Adequate Minimum Wages Directive 2022/2041*

The **Adequate Minimum Wages Directive** aims to ensure that all workers are entitled to fair and adequate minimum wages that support a decent standard of living. It establishes a common framework for minimum wage adequacy and effectiveness, requiring regular and transparent adjustments using clear criteria. Crucially, it mandates Member States with collective bargaining coverage below the 80% benchmark to adopt national action plans to promote and boost coverage.

The directive had to be transposed by all Member States by 15 November 2024. Latest updates on transposition by the Member States may be found **here**.

The Directive has already catalysed significant upward adjustments to minimum wage levels and spurred the adoption of rules-based adjustment mechanisms in several Member States. These measures have enhanced the transparency of wage-setting and reinforced the role of social partners in the adjustment process.

However, key enforcement gaps still remain. The Directive's goal of strengthening collective bargaining is still largely unfulfilled in low-coverage Member States such as Ireland and the Czech Republic, which have yet to adopt concrete national action plans to boost coverage. Furthermore, many countries' statutory minimum wages still fall short of the directive's explicit aim to ensure minimum wages that guarantee a decent standard of living. Finally, effective enforcement is hindered by under-resourced labour inspectorates and high documented rates of non-compliance in certain low-wage sectors. These factors, combined with legal exclusions for some categories of workers (such as dependent contractors), threaten the directive's ability to achieve universal coverage and fully reduce in-work poverty.

In Austria (ÖGB) and Italy (CGIL, CISL, UIL), unions have argued that their high collective bargaining coverage (95%+ on average cross sectors) fulfills the Directive's spirit without requiring statutory intervention, thereby preserving the autonomy of social partners in wage-setting.

C. *The Work-Life Balance Directive 2019/1158*

The **Work-Life Balance Directive** aims to promote gender equality in the labour market by tackling the persistent gender gap in employment and unpaid care work across the EU.

All parts of the directive had to be transposed by the Member States by 2 August 2024. Latest updates on transposition by the Member States may be found **here**.

The Directive successfully established new and more expansive minimum legal standards for paternity leave, parental leave, carers' leave, time off from work on grounds of force majeure, and flexible working ar-

rangements. The Directive acts effectively as a legal lever to achieve a more balanced sharing of care responsibilities between partners in families – not least by breaking traditional cultural barriers, especially in Eastern and Southern EU Member States and providing economic disincentives for partners to readjust their leave and care choices.

CESI's Spanish member **CSIF** was a key stakeholder that actively **criticised** the Spanish Government for the limited retroactivity of new parental leave measures, noting that children born before August 2024 were excluded.

D. *The Women on Company Boards Directive 2022/2381*

The **Women on Company Boards Directive** sets concrete percentages for more gender balance among non-executive directors of large listed companies. Its objective is to provide hard rules to break glass ceilings, by promoting better representation of women in corporate decision-making.

The directive had to be transposed by all Member States by 28 December 2024. Latest updates on transposition by the Member States may be found **here**.

The directive has proven effective where strong, enforceable quotas were introduced. However, achieving universal compliance has still proven difficult in many Member States.

Within the Dutch Social and Economic Council (SER), CESI's member CNV and other social partners strongly advocated for social partner engagement and public monitoring on gender quota, ensuring this relevant issue is always addressed.

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The above-mentioned directives are good examples of legislative acts that allow Member States – and consequently trade unions – to actively implement the EPSR at national level.

For regulations and for directives in the enforcement phase, trade unions should:

- ***carefully assess the provisions and minimum standards enshrined in directives/applicable national laws against the reality in their Member State or sector.***
- ***contact the national ministry or authority in charge, as well as the Economic Counsellor of the European Commission's national representation office (see* Annex II*) if EU provisions are not correctly reflected in national law. Ultimately, the European Commission may launch an infringement procedure against the Member State for a violation of EU law.***
- ***consider bringing cases to national courts, with the objective of determining whether the national transposition is in line with EU law (eventually leading to a request for a so preliminary ruling at the Court of Justice of the EU).***
- ***verify within the directive if it foresees regular reporting obligations by Member States towards the European Commission, and seek to contact the above mentioned actors with a view to be heard in the rollout of the reporting exercise.***
- ***seek to incorporate provisions of the directives, as relevant, in new collective agreements.***

3.2 Areas of Member States competence - EU coordinates national policies

As per the EU Treaties – and specifically the **Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU)** – the EU only has selected competences in the different policy fields. For instance, in the area of employment and social policy, Article 153 TFEU specifies that it remains the right of the Member States to "define the fundamental principles of their social security systems" and that the EU has no legislative competence in the areas of pay, the right of association, the right to strike or the right to impose lock-outs. Similar specifications about the delimitations of EU legal competences are put down in the TFEU for other policy fields, such as health care.

In areas where the Member States have legislative competence, the EU coordinates national economic, fiscal, social, and employment policies. The **European Semester** – a soft law coordination mechanism, reinforced by hard law fiscal surveillance under the Stability and Growth Pact – seeks implement employment and social targets of the EPSR, thereby seeking to actively shape national policies.

The European Semester is an annual exercise to review and monitor the broader economic and social policies of Member States – including issues related to employment, workers' rights and working conditions, healthcare and social security. The European Semester cycle encompasses a series of stages:

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November: The European Commission publishes its so-called Autumn Package, providing most notably the Annual Sustainable Growth Survey (ASGS) with its general economic, employment and social policy priorities for the next 12 months and a proposal for a Joint Employment Report (JER) that specifically monitors Member States' implementation of the EPSR, from the viewpoint of the European Commission.

November-February: As part of dedicated fact-finding missions, expert staff of the European Commission meet with government representatives and social partners of the different Member States for a so- called Social Scoreboard Survey. In this survey, they gather and discuss the implementation of the European Semester cycle of the preceding year as well as particular issues and concerns related to national economic and social policies.

January/February: *T*he Council of Ministers discusses and adopts conclusions on the ASGS and adopts the JER with conclusions.

April: Member States submit their so-called medium-term fiscal-structural plans to the European Commission. These documents detail the social and economic reforms and public investments that a country intends to adopt, in the context of its annual budget.

May: *On the basis of the ASGS and JER*, and on the basis of the national medium-term fiscal-structural plans, the European Commission presents its Spring Package, which includes detailed Country Reports for every Member State to assess their economic and social situations. The Spring Package also includes draft individual Country-Specific Recommendations (CSRs) for all Member States. The CSRs provide guidance on how Member States should respond to major challenges and deliver on policy objectives.

June/July: The Council of Ministers adopts the CSRs for the different Member States.

August–October: In the final phase of the annual European Semester cycle, Member States are expected to implement the adopted CSRs and the considerations identified in the Country Reports, and to incorporate them into the medium-term fiscal-structural plans and public investment and national budgetary plans for the following year.

November: The European Semester cycle starts anew.

All documents relevant for the European Semester and the different Member States can be consulted through the **European Commission's European Semester website**.

The European Semester is an opportunity for trade unions to raise any issue related to the principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights: working conditions, employment issues, health care issues, social security matters, etc.

Trade unions should:

- ***by September, contact the Economic Counsellor of the European Commission's applicable national representation office – see* Annex II *– to be heard during their national fact-finding missions between November and February.***
- ***by October, contact their national finance ministry to be included in consultations around the medium-term fiscal structural plans that need to be submitted to the European Commission in April.***
- ***in May, analyse the country report and CSRs for their countries, as issued in the spring by the European Commission, and relay positions, concerns and feedback to the Economic Counsellor of the European Commission's applicable national representation office.***
- ***between August and October, monitor actively how their national governments follow up and implement their last country report and CSRs.***

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Good practices from CESI's network:

CGFP/Luxembourg: on 1 December 2025 CGFP participated in a tripartite consultation within the framework of the European Semester ahead of the 2026 Semester cycle. The meeting, held with the other social partners to the meeting with Luxembourg's Economy and Finance ministers at Senningen Castle, was the occasion to discuss the European Commission's analysis and the responses to be provided to the recommendations addressed to Luxembourg.

DBB/Germany: It **reacted** to the Country Report and linked it to concrete public-service investment needs. DBB reacted to the German Country Report 2024 by translating findings into specific priorities (e.g., public investment backlog in education, infrastructure, digital transformation) and arguing that public-sector workers' expertise should be systematically included to avoid misallocation of funds and improve reform quality.

3.3 EU funding: Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), NextGenerationEU, structural and investment funds, other specific EU funds

Alongside the European Semester, EU funding represents an incentivising tool for the European Commission to encourage the Member States to follow EU policy priorities. This also applies to the areas of employment and social affairs.

A. *The Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) and the NextGenerationEU*

In order to manage the immense economic and social fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic and enable Member States to re-emerge stronger, the EU set up a major investment instrument, the so-called **NextGenerationEU (NGEU)** and **Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)**.

Unlike the structural and investment funds and the issue-specific funds that have (likely) come to stay over time also in future MFFs, the NGEU and RRF instruments were set up explicitly as temporary one-off funds.

The RRF is the centrepiece of the NGEU recovery instrument, worth €723.82 billion in grants and loans, until August 2026.

The RRF also supports public investments and reforms that address the challenges identified in the European Semester cycle. Since the European Semester also monitors Member States' EPSR performance, RRF funding can be a financial backing to turn CSRs into concrete social reforms.

Funds are distributed based on National Recovery and Resilience Plans (NRRPs) that were drafted by the individual Member States and validated by the European Commission and the Council of Ministers.

Each NRRP sets out a package of investments and reforms structured around milestones and measurable targets. Disbursements from the European Commission are made when agreed milestones and targets are met and verified. Many plans include quantified targets, an implementation timetable, designated national authorities, and reporting obligations to the Commission.

Even if the NRRPs have been agreed, the implementation of projects and measures remains ongoing.

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Trade unions should:

make themselves familiar with and analyse the* National Recovery and Reform Programme (NRRP) of their country*. Since countries are now in the implementation phase of the plans, trade unions can monitor and scrutinise ongoing or planned* projects or measures in their country/region or sector*, track the so called* Recovery and Resilience Scoreboard *for their country/region and point out whether the objectives are met.

contact the national ministry in charge of the RRF/European Semester - see* Annex III - *and/or the Economic Counsellor of the European Commission's applicable national representation office – see* Annex II *– to find out if their country runs monitoring or stakeholder consultation streams for the implementation of its NRRP. These consultations are usually held between November and February: trade unions can ask to be included with a view and contribute to be ensuring that the rollout of measures prioritises quality jobs, social protection, effective active labour market policies and public services as foreseen by the European Pillar of Social Rights.

B. *EU Structural and investment funds*

There is a series of major so-called structural and investment funds to benefit Member States and stakeholder organisations across Europe, including trade unions and social partner organisations, as part of the EU's annual budget, and more generally as part of the EU's Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF). The most important ones in the area of employment and social affairs are:

- **European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)** – created to provide funding in regions to

reduce economic, social and territorial disparities across the EU
- **Cohesion Fund** – designed to enhance the economic, social and territorial cohesion in the EU
- **European Social Fund (ESF+)** – set up to support measures in the area of employment, education and skills, as well as social inclusion
- **Just Transition Fund (JTF)** – designed to support actors and regions that are affected by industrial change as a result of green and climate change policies
- **European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF)** – set up as a specific solidarity tool to support workers who are displaced due to restructuring, especially through retraining and requalification programmes[1]
- **Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA)** – established in the context of EU enlargement policy, to support EU accession candidate countries to reform and modernise their political, legal and economic structures to prepare them for EU membership

C. *Specific EU funds*

Next to the large structural and investment funds, the EU maintains a series of smaller, yet substantial, specific funds – including in the area of employment and social affairs. The most important ones relate to:

- **Citizens, equality, rights and values programme** – geared especially towards civil society organisations, to promote rights and values enshrined in the EU Treaties and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and arrive at open, rights-based, democratic, equal and inclusive societies based on the rule of law.
- **Erasmus+** – one of the best-known and popular EU funding programmes, designed to support transnational measures and activities in the areas of education, training, youth and sport.
- **European Solidarity Corps** – a programme to support young people wishing to engage in solidarity activities and volunteering.
- **EU4Health** – a funding programme to respond to structural deficiencies in health and care systems of the Member States that the Covid pandemic made apparent, to pave the way for more resilient, high-quality health care services for citizens in the EU.

All structural and investment funds and issue-specific funds are governed by their own framework regulations to set out their main purposes and organisation, multiannual or annual work programmes or national programmes as well as programme guides to set themes and topics, and topical calls for proposals (for projects). They specify what kind of projects and topics can be applied for, which organisations in which countries become beneficiaries, how much funding is available, and how application processes work.

Trade unions should familiarise themselves with the different structural and investment funds and their programme guides and analyse which ones could match their needs, with a view to applying for funding.

1 The EGAF can be activated also for fired workers, to improve skills and employability and foster better positions.

Annex I: The Principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights.

I Equal opportunities and access to the labour market

1. Education, training and life-long learning

Everyone has the right to quality and inclusive education, training, and lifelong learning in order to maintain and acquire skills that enable them to participate fully in society and successfully manage transitions in the labour market.

2. Gender equality

Equality of treatment and opportunities between women and men must be ensured and fostered in all areas, including participation in the labour market, terms and conditions of employment and career progression.
Women and men have the right to equal pay for work of equal value.

3. Equal opportunities

Regardless of gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, everyone has the right to equal treatment and opportunities regarding employment, social protection, education, and access to goods and services available to the public. Equal opportunities of under-represented groups shall be fostered.

4. Active support to employment

Everyone has the right to timely and tailor-made assistance to improve employment or self-employment prospects. This includes the right to receive support for job search, training and requalification. Everyone has the right to transfer social protection and training entitlements during professional transitions.
Young people have the right to continued education, apprenticeships, traineeships or a job offer of good standing within 4 months of becoming unemployed or leaving education.
Unemployed people have the right to personalised, continuous and consistent support. The long-term unemployed have the right to an in-depth individual assessment at the latest at 18 months of unemployment.

II Fair working conditions

5. Secure and adaptable employment

Regardless of the type and duration of the employment relationship, workers have the right to fair and equal treatment regarding working conditions, access to social protection and training. The transition towards open-ended forms of employment shall be fostered.

In accordance with legislation and collective agreements, the necessary flexibility for employers to adapt swiftly to changes in the economic context shall be ensured.
Innovative forms of work that ensure quality working conditions shall be fostered. Entrepreneurship and self-employment shall be encouraged. Occupational mobility shall be facilitated.Employment relationships that lead to precarious working conditions shall be prevented, including by prohibiting abuse of atypical contracts. Any probation period should be of reasonable duration.

6. Wages

Workers have the right to fair wages that provides for a decent standard of living.
Adequate minimum wages shall be ensured, in a way that provide for the satisfaction of the needs of the worker and their family in the light of national economic and social conditions, whilst safeguarding access to employment and incentives to seek work. In-work poverty shall be prevented. All wages shall be set in a transparent and predictable way according to national practices and respecting the autonomy of the social partners.

7. Information about employment conditions and protection in case of dismissals

Workers have the right to be informed in writing at the start of employment about their rights and obligations resulting from the employment relationship, including on the probation period. Prior to any dismissal, workers have the right to be informed of the reasons and be granted a reasonable period of notice. They have the right to access effective and impartial dispute resolution and, in case of unjustified dismissal, a right to redress, including adequate compensation.

8. Social dialogue and involvement of workers

The social partners shall be consulted on the design and implementation of economic, employment, and social policies according to national practices. They shall be encouraged to negotiate and conclude collective agreements in matters relevant to them, while respecting their autonomy and the right to collective action. Where appropriate, agreements concluded between the social partners shall be implemented at the level of the Union and its Member States.Workers or their representatives have the right to be informed and consulted in good time on matters relevant to them, in particular on the transfer, restructuring and merger of undertakings and on collective redundancies.Support for increased capacity of social partners to promote social dialogue shall be encouraged.

9. Work-life balance

Parents and people with caring responsibilities have the right to suitable leave, flexible working arrangements and access to care services. Women and men shall have equal access to special leaves of absence in order to fulfil their caring responsibilities and be encouraged to use them in a balanced way.

10. Healthy, safe and well-adapted work environment and data protection

Workers have the right to a high level of protection of their health and safety at work.
Workers have the right to a working environment adapted to their professional needs and which enables them to prolong their participation in the labour market.
Workers have the right to have their personal data protected in the employment context.

Social protection and inclusion

11. Childcare and support to children

Children have the right to affordable early childhood education and care of good quality.
Children have the right to protection from poverty. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds have the right to specific measures to enhance equal opportunities.

12. Social protection

Regardless of the type and duration of their employment relationship, workers, and, under comparable conditions, the self-employed, have the right to adequate social protection.

13. Unemployment benefits

The unemployed have the right to adequate activation support from public employment services to (re)integrate in the labour market and adequate unemployment benefits of reasonable duration, in line with their contributions and national eligibility rules. Such benefits shall not constitute a disincentive for a quick return to employment.

14. Minimum income

Everyone lacking sufficient resources has the right to adequate minimum income benefits ensuring a life in dignity at all stages of life, and effective access to enabling goods and services.
For those who can work, minimum income benefits should be combined with incentives to (re)integrate into the labour market.

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15. Old age income and pensions

Workers and the self-employed in retirement have the right to a pension commensurate with their contributions and ensuring an adequate income. Women and men shall have equal opportunities to acquire pension rights.
Everyone in old age has the right to resources that ensure living in dignity.

16. Health care

Everyone has the right to timely access to affordable, preventive and curative health care of good quality.

17. Inclusion of people with disabilities

People with disabilities have the right to income support that ensures living in dignity, services that enable them to participate in the labour market and in society, and a work environment adapted to their needs.

18. Long-term care

Everyone has the right to affordable long-term care services of good quality, in particular home-care and community-based services.

19. Housing and assistance for the homeless

Everyone has the right to access social housing or housing assistance of good quality shall be provided for those in need.Vulnerable people have the right to appropriate assistance and protection against forced eviction.Adequate shelter and services shall be provided to the homeless in order to promote their social inclusion.

20. Access to essential services

Everyone has the right to access essential services of good quality, including water, sanitation, energy, transport, financial services and digital communications. Support for access to such services shall be available for those in need.

Annex II: Lists of contact information – Economic Counsellors in the European Commission's national representation offices

Table 1 – Economic Counsellors in the European Commission's national representation office.

COUNTRY	CONTACT PERSON	TITLE	E-MAIL	TELEPHONE	WEBSITE
Austria	Tim Joris Kaiser	Economic Counsellor	Tim-Joris.kaiser@ec.europa.eu	+43 1 516 18-334	https://austria.representation.ec.europa.eu/
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	Tatiana Lambin	Economic Analyst - European Semester	tatiana.lambin@ec.europa.eu	+32 02 298 52 73	
	Selma Neuber	Political Rapporteur	selma.neuber@ec.europa.eu	+32 02 296 59 83	
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Croatia	Hana Huzjak	Economic Counsellor	Hana.HUZJAK@ec.europa.eu	+385 1 4681 301	https://croatia.representation.ec.europa.eu/
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Annex III: National ministries in charge of the European Semester coordination

Country	National ministry (role)	Commission - European Semester (Country Recommendations 2025)
Austria	Federal Ministry of Finance — Federal Ministry of Finance (Bundesministerium für Finanzen)Federal Ministry of Finance (Bundesministerium fur Finanzen)	Commission: European Semester documents for Austria. (European Commission)Austria. (European Commission)
Belgium	Federal Public Service Finance (FPS Finance) — FPS Finances / SPF Finances (FPS Treasury leads EU fiscal contacts).	Commission: European Semester documents for Belgium. (European Commission)
Bulgaria	Ministry of Finance — Ministry of Finance (Министерство на финансите) (has EU economic policy / European Semester coordination unit).	Commission: European Semester documents for Bulgaria. (European Commission)
Croatia	Ministry of Finance — Ministarstvo financija (prepares Convergence / Stability programmes and the National Reform Programme).	Commission: European Semester documents for Croatia. (European Commission)
Cyprus	Ministry of Finance — Ministry of Finance (Υπουργείο Οικονομικών) (DG Growth page on the European Semester).	Commission: European Semester documents for Cyprus. (European Commission)
Czechia	Ministry of Finance — Ministry of Finance (Ministerstvo financí) (publishes fiscal forecasts and EU coordination linked to the Semester).	Commission: European Semester documents for Czechia. (European Commission)
Denmark	Ministry of Finance — Finansministeriet (national coordinator for budgetary / fiscal input to EU processes).	Commission: European Semester documents for Denmark. (European Commission)
Estonia	Ministry of Finance — Rahandusministeerium (deals with euro-area / EU economic policy and Semester inputs).	Commission: European Semester documents for Estonia. (European Commission)
Finland	Ministry of Finance — Valtiovarainministeriö (publishes a dedicated European Semester page).	Commission: European Semester documents for Finland. (European Commission)
France	Ministry of Economy and Finance — Ministère de l'Économie, des Finances et de la Souveraineté industrielle et numérique (Bercy publishes Semester guidance and positions).	Commission: European Semester documents for France. (European Commission)
Germany	Federal Ministry of Finance — Bundesministerium der Finanzen (BMF)	European Semester documents — Germany. (European Commission)
Greece	Ministry of National Economy & Finance — Υπουργείο Οικονομικών / Υπουργείο Εθνικής Οικονομίας και Οικονομικών	European Semester documents — Greece. (European Commission)
Hungary	Ministry of Finance — Pénzügyminisztérium (coordinates fiscal inputs to EU processes)	European Semester documents — Hungary. (European Commission)
Ireland	Department of Finance (and co-ordination with Department of Public Expenditure & Reform) — Department of Finance	European Semester documents — Ireland. (European Commission)
Italy	Ministry of Economy and Finance — Ministero dell'Economia e delle Finanze (MEF)	European Semester documents — Italy. (European Commission)
Latvia	Ministry of Finance — Finanšu ministrija	European Semester documents — Latvia. (European Commission)
Lithuania	Ministry of Finance — Finansų ministerija	European Semester documents — Lithuania. (European Commission)
Luxembourg	Ministry of Finance — Ministère des Finances (often coordinating with PM/Chancellery for EU strategy)	European Semester documents — Netherlands. (European Commission)
Malta	Ministry for Finance — Ministry for Finance (often works with OPM on EU engagement)	European Semester documents — Malta. (European Commission)

Netherlands	Ministry of Finance — Ministerie van Financiën (Ministry of Economic Affairs also involved on reforms)	European Semester documents — Netherlands. (European Commission)
Poland	Ministry of Finance — Ministerstwo Finansów (coordination with ministries for reforms & investment)	European Semester documents — Poland. (European Commission)
Portugal	Ministry of Finance — Ministério das Finanças (and Ministry of Economy on reforms)	European Semester documents — Portugal. (European Commission)
Romania	Ministry of Finance — Ministerul Finanțelor	European Semester documents — Romania. (European Commission)
Slovakia	Ministry of Finance — Ministerstvo financií	European Semester documents — Slovakia. (European Commission)
Slovenia	Ministry of Finance — Ministrstvo za finance	European Semester documents — Slovenia. (European Commission)
Spain	Ministry of Finance — Ministerio de Hacienda (and Ministry of Economic Affairs: Ministerio de Asuntos Económicos y Transformación Digital for reforms)	European Semester documents — Spain. (European Commission)
Sweden	Ministry of Finance — Finansdepartementet	European Semester documents — Sweden. (European Commission)

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