

Social Protection Committee

2015/0802(CNS) - 12/01/2015 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to establish a social protection committee.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the Council adopts the act after consulting the European Parliament but without being obliged to follow its opinion.

BACKGROUND: in its [Resolution](#) of 16 February 2000, the European Parliament welcomed the Commission's communication and the creation of such a group in order to enhance cooperation in the field of social protection by, among other things, setting up a group of high-level officials.

In its Conclusions of 17 December 1999 on the strengthening of cooperation for modernising and improving social protection, the Council supported the Commission's proposal to establish a mechanism for enhanced cooperation, brought about by the work of the group of high-level officials, for the implementation of this action.

The Social Protection Committee set up by Council Decision 2000/436/EC repealed and replaced by Decision 2004/689/EC **clearly demonstrated its utility** as an advisory body for both the Council and the Commission and has contributed actively to the development of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC), as established by the Lisbon European Council on 23 and 24 March 2000.

In its Conclusions of June 2013, the European Council stated that the social dimension of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) should be strengthened. It is also important to ensure better coordination of employment and social policies, while fully respecting national competences.

In October 2013, it held that the coordination of economic, employment and social policies will be further enhanced in line with existing procedures while fully respecting national competences.

CONTENT: the proposed Council Decision aims to **establish a Social Protection Committee, with advisory status**, to promote cooperation on social protection policies between Member States and with the Commission.

Functions and tasks: the tasks of the Committee shall be:

- to **monitor the social situation** and the development of social protection policies in the Member States and the Union;
- to promote **exchanges of information**, experience and good practice between Member States and with the Commission;
- to **prepare reports, formulate opinions** or undertake other work within its fields of competence, at the request of either the Council or the Commission or on its own initiative.

To fulfil its tasks the Committee may, inter alia:

- make use of the **open method of coordination**, including by applying jointly agreed monitoring instruments and implementing mutually agreed evaluation arrangements in the implementation of common objectives agreed by the Council;

- contribute to all aspects of the **European Semester** within its field of competence and report on them to the Council;
- work, as appropriate, in **cooperation with other relevant bodies and committees** dealing with social and economic policy matters, such as the [Employment Committee](#), the Economic and Financial Committee, the Economic Policy Committee and the Working Party on Public Health at Senior Level.

In fulfilling its mandate, the Committee shall **cooperate with the social partners**. The European Parliament shall be informed regarding the activities of the Committee.

Membership and operation: the Committee's membership shall consist of two representatives appointed by each Member State and two representatives of the Commission. The Committee shall elect its Chairperson from among the members appointed by the Member States for a term of two years, which shall be renewable once.

Decision 2004/689/EC shall be repealed as from the date of the first meeting of the Committee following the entry into force of this decision.