

European Semester for economic policy coordination: employment and social priorities for 2025

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The European Parliament adopted by 351 votes to 260, with 70 abstentions, a resolution on the European Semester for economic policy coordination: employment and social priorities for 2025.

Implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR)

Members considered that the European Union must strengthen their efforts to achieve the 2030 social goals by implementing the EPSR and ensuring upward social convergence. The Commission is called upon to ensure that the 2026 Joint Employment Report (JER) includes an analysis of the social dimension of national medium-term fiscal structural plans related to social resilience.

The resolution underlined the importance of the Social Scoreboard and the Social Convergence Framework in identifying risks and monitoring progress in reducing inequalities, strengthening social protection systems, and promoting decent working conditions and support measures for workers to manage transitions. Members regretted the lack of data on wealth concentration, given that the richest 10% hold 56% of total wealth.

The Commission should analyse progress towards the **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs) related to employment and social policy, as well as progress towards eliminating social and occupational discrimination. Member States should also implement the Employment Guidelines, focusing on education and training for all, new technologies such as AI, and recent policy initiatives on platform work, affordable and decent housing, and tackling labour and skills shortages.

Developing quality jobs

Members affirmed the importance of investing in developing workforce skills and vocational training and ensuring quality jobs, with an emphasis on the individual right to training and lifelong learning. They called on Member States to develop **upskilling and reskilling measures** in collaboration with local stakeholders. Addressing labour shortages in the EU also requires **increased labour mobility** within the EU. Member States must facilitate the recognition of skills and qualifications in the EU, including for third-country nationals.

Members welcomed the announcement of a **Roadmap for Quality Jobs** to ensure a just transition for all. The Commission is invited to include in this roadmap considerations for measures related to the use of AI and algorithmic management in the world of work.

Supporting young people and vulnerable groups

The number of young people leaving education and training early, particularly among vulnerable groups, remains high. Members called Member States to strengthen the **Youth Guarantee** and invest in the quality and attractiveness of vocational education and training (VET) and in programmes to equip learners with the basic skills needed for the digital world of work.

The resolution also stressed the need to:

- update the **EU Disability Strategy** by incorporating new initiatives such as a European Employment and Skills Guarantee for Persons with Disabilities;
- address the significant barriers faced by **Roma** in employment, in light of the objective of ensuring that at least 60% of Roma are in paid work by 2030;
- invest in education and training for all to ensure universal access to high-quality public education and vocational training programmes;
- include specific recommendations on **housing** affordability in the European Semester and promote investments that support quality, long-term housing solutions that are truly affordable for low-income households;
- develop national **homelessness** strategies and develop measures to end homelessness in the EU by 2030;
- undertake urgent EU action to combat the high levels of **poverty and social exclusion** in the EU, particularly among children, young people, and the elderly;
- increase funding for the **European Child Guarantee** to provide it with a dedicated budget of at least EUR 20 billion;
- develop a European action plan for **mental health** and promote a comprehensive EU strategy on loneliness and access to professional healthcare.

Wage inequality and working conditions

Parliament recalled that real wages are still below their pre-pandemic level, while productivity has remained roughly the same. It stated that better enforcement of **minimum wages** and expanding the sectors practicing collective bargaining can have a beneficial effect on wage inequality.

Member States are encouraged to ensure **decent working conditions**, including decent wages, a good work-life balance, and better social protection for both employees and the self-employed. Members called on the Commission to present a proposal on teleworking and the right to disconnect and called for initiatives to combat exclusion from the workforce resulting from long-term sick leave.

Parliament called for **demographic issues** to be prioritised in EU cohesion policy and invited the Commission to declare a 'European Year of Demography'.

Members stressed the importance of **reducing the administrative burden** on businesses while ensuring compliance with social standards and labour law. They believe that better support for SMEs can foster innovation and the creation of quality jobs and called for increased support for social economy enterprises.

The **cost of living** crisis, particularly rising housing and energy costs, is seen as a factor in precariousness requiring support policies. Members also warn of the social risks arising from the crisis in the automotive sector and call for strengthened social dialogue.

Lastly, the resolution stressed the need for timely and harmonised data to **improve evidence-based policy-making** and targeted social investments.