

The Employment Committee

The Secretariat



Arrangements for 2021 EMCO Social Dialogue Review with the involvement of national and European social partners

19 November 2021, 14:00-17:00, WebEx (videoconference)

This document sets out the proposed arrangements for the **2021 EMCO Social Dialogue review with the social partners**.

Background

In 2016, EMCO conducted its first review on the social partner involvement in the European Semester with the participation of the European social partners. All Member States were covered by the review, which aimed to assess how the involvement of social partners worked in practice. Written conclusions were not produced on this occasion.

The 2016 review having been considered to be a success, a second review was organised in 2017. This was a more focused review, looking in detail at 14 Member States – i.e. those identified within the European Semester – and focusing on where social dialogue in policymaking had been identified as insufficient or where major reforms had recently been introduced. It led to the Committee agreeing for the first time country-specific conclusions in June 2018.

Further reviews were held in 2018, 2019 and 2020. These reviews examined a number of Country-Specific Recommendations (CSRs) and recitals related to social dialogue, along with case studies. Country-specific conclusions were submitted to the EPSCO Council.

As in 2020, the 2021 review will be conducted in a format of a videoconference, it is therefore proposed to focus the review on the countries who received CSRs in recent Semester cycles, as well as examine one case study.

Date

The next review will take place on **19 November 2021, in the afternoon** (3 hours). The working language of the meeting will be English.

Scope

The scope of the review is defined by Employment Guideline 7:

"Building on existing national practices, and in order to achieve more effective social dialogue and better socioeconomic outcomes, Member States should ensure the timely and meaningful involvement of the social partners in the design and

implementation of employment, social and, where relevant, economic reforms and policies, including by supporting increased capacity of the social partners. Member States should foster social dialogue and collective bargaining. The social partners should be encouraged to negotiate and conclude collective agreements in matters relevant to them, fully respecting their autonomy and the right to collective action..."

The review will look at dimensions of social partner involvement in reforms and policies, including in the context of the European Semester.

The discussion will focus on the following question:

- 1) Were the social partners involved in a timely and meaningful way in the design and implementation of relevant reforms and policies?
- 2) Did this involvement cover the design and implementation of employment and social reforms and policies?

Collective bargaining will not be covered by this review.

Selection of countries

The Member States for the review are countries with a relevant Country-Specific Recommendation in 2019 and 2020:

- **Hungary**
- **Poland**
- **Romania**

It is foreseen that the case study of an active role of social partners in designing and delivering employment, social or education policy reforms will be based on experiences and practices applied in Finland.

Format of the meeting

The meeting will start with introductory remarks by the Chair, Commission and EU social partners.

The case study will be presented and followed by reactions and Q&A.

Following the discussion on the case study, the three Member States having relevant CSRs under review will present the recent developments as regards the CSRs implementation since the last review, also taking into account the context of the COVID-19 crisis where relevant.

Each presentation will be followed by a short Q&A, where EMCO members, social partners and the Commission will be invited to ask questions for clarification. During the Q&A, EMCO members will be encouraged to refer to their own experience, if relevant. The Chair will then give the floor to the Commission to provide an assessment on the measures presented.

Structure of the reviews

Each individual review will have maximum 40 minutes allocated to it and will be structured as follows:

- the country under review will present recent policy developments to implement the CSR (10-12 min);
- reactions and questions from other MS (5 min), national social partners (5 min), Commission (5 min);
- the country under review will respond to the points made and questions (5 min);
- assessment by the Commission (5 min);
- conclusions by the Chair (2-3 min);
- after the meeting, the Chair will draw written horizontal and country-specific conclusions;
- EMCO members will then be invited to make comments on the conclusions in writing following the meeting.

Preparation of the meeting

The EMCO secretariat will provide to the **Member States under review** and **the national social partners** standardized templates for presenting and discussing the national measures, both in written form and as a PowerPoint presentation.

The EU social partners should contact their affiliates in the countries under review (HU, PL, RO). They should confirm **as soon as possible by 28 October 2021** to the EMCO secretariat that affiliates from those countries will be able to attend the meeting.

The following timeline is suggested for the 2021 review:

Date	Milestone
28 October	EU and national social partners to confirm their attendance
5 November	The Member States under review submit their filled-in fiche to the EMCO Secretariat (EMPL-EMCO@ec.europa.eu)
10 November	National social partners complete the specific sections reserved to them in the MS fiches
15 November	Commission's questions sent to the Member States under review via the EMCO Secretariat

19 November	Meeting (Member States under review will be invited to reply to the Commission's questions during the meeting)
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Follow-up of the reviews: preparation of conclusions

The outcome of the meeting will be EMCO Chair's conclusions. These will be agreed with the Committee via a written procedure after the meeting. They will be submitted to the EPSCO Council in March 2022.

The European social partners will be invited to submit comments on the individual country reviews and on the EMCO conclusions and these will be circulated to participants in EMCO and in the European Commission.

DRAFT AGENDA

19 November 2021, 14:00 – 17:00, WebEx

1. Introductory remarks (20 min)

- EMCO Chair – 5 min
- Commission – 5 min
- EU Social Partners – 10 min

2. EUROFOUND presentation (15 min)

Q&A (5 min)

3. Presentation of a case study (good practice) and Q&A – 25 min

- Presentation by **Finland** – 10 min
- National social partners – 2x5 min
- Q&A – 10 min

Break (10 min)

4. Review of 3 Member States having relevant CSRs in 2019 and 2020 (3x40=120 min)

For each of the three Member States (**Hungary, Poland, Romania**):

- the country under review will present recent policy developments to implement the CSR (10-12 minutes);
- reactions and questions from other MS (5 min), social partners (5 min), Commission (5 min);
- the country under review will respond to the points made and questions (5 min);
- assessment by the Commission (5 minutes);
- Chair's brief concluding remarks (2-3 minutes).

5. AOB