

UPDATING AND UPGRADING THE ETUC SEMESTER TOOLKIT

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TIMEFRAME

NEW ISSUES THAT REQUIRE AN UPDATING OF THE ETUC SEMESTER TOOLKIT (EST)

1. The ASGS 2022 has introduced some novelties in the EU Semester. The most relevant concerns the monitoring and implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), including the national recovery and resilience plans (NRRPs).
2. The social dimension of the EU Semester will result reinforced thanks to new policy tools agreed during the Porto Social Summit, last May. In particular, Member States will be called upon to contribute to the achievement of the Headline Targets on Employment, Skills, and Poverty.
3. The ETUC has adopted positions that establish a common intent of action amid its members. In particular:
 - a. the employment targets have to be achieved increasing labour market participation of groups that are currently mostly excluded and ensuring access to stable jobs. Surely women and young workers belongs to this category in all member states and all ETUC members should insist upon. Other group must be closely monitored and supported because particularly exposed such as the long-term unemployed, 55+ workers, migrants, people with disabilities, workers temporary or unstable working contracts etc. National plans can address challenges that are more urgent in each EU country. The ETUC analysis and the EU_SDG 8 index helps identify challenges and establish priorities to set national policies on the sustainability track.
 - b. Concerning education and training, the common objective is to increase adult participation in training for skilling, re-skilling and upskilling with the main objective to adapt the workforce to change. However, this target should be aimed at stabilising the employment relationship and improve workers positions in their own companies that is why we insist on the need to increase participation of adults in employment in training VET activities. This part is particularly to define concrete measures to just transition in the field of access to jobs and equality.
 - c. Finally, the poverty targets should consider that the Headline target refers to the 2019 poverty levels. In 2022, people in poverty or at risk of poverty have increased also because of the harmful consequences of the pandemic. It means that member states are called to take out of poverty more than 15 million of people. The poverty targets should be made for specific groups that in each country are more at risk, starting from policies that address situations of deprivation so that extreme poverty can be banned from the EU.
4. Still, the Social Scoreboard has been enriched of new indicators so that a wider range of social challenges can be caught and submitted to a common EU action, so that coordination of policy can trigger a social progress for all European people. This has to be reflected in the capacity of ETUC members to identify rights and policies that the EPSR wants to promote to address social challenges or imbalances.
5. The implementation of a common strategy aimed at identifying social challenges and coordinate the trade union response is aimed at establishing a practice that prepares the trade union movement to better exploit the upcoming Social Imbalance Procedure.
6. This toolkit confirms the 4 blocks strategy based on: pursuing a people's recovery, implementing the EPSR, linked up with the UN 2030 agenda; reinforcing the strategic thinking and far looking policy design (RETHINKING Block).

7. To cover all these new aspects the European Semester Toolkit of the ETUC will use the following tools:
 - i. Monitoring and assessing investments and social policies in the national recovery and resilience plans
 - ii. Trade union plans to implement the EPSR and achieve the Porto's Headline Targets.
 - iii. Trade Union Proposals for Country Specific Recommendations
 - iv. A survey on the trade union involvement in the implementation of RRF and in the EU Semester
 - v. A training action to skill and re-skill TUSLOs
 - vi. EST Portal
 - vii. Rethinking Block
 - viii. Update of the #EU_SDG8 index

TOOL 1: MONITORING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RRF

8. This tool draws the attention on investment and social policies within the National and Recovery Plans. Concerning investment, the European Commission's monitoring displays what investments Member States are implementing through the RRF, according to the priorities and eligibility criteria set in the RRF Regulation. Therefore, the ETUC can focus its survey on trade union priorities (concerning investments and their relevance in terms of resources or urgency). This would allow the ETUC and its member organisations to match the government decisions with the trade union requirements and compare governments choices and trade union desiderata.
9. It should be noted that the European Commission's reporting is not very detailed on the social dimensions of NRRPs. It implies that the ETUC has to gather information concerning both NRRP contents and trade union demands. This exercise will help us evaluate the rate of consistency of social policies decided the governments and those proposed by trade unions. This would also give us the possibility to measure how much the RRF matches trade union priorities and workers' expectations.
10. In order to ensure comparability of information and streamline TUSLOs' workloads, the ETUC has designed a closed-answer interactive exercise in all EU languages. Submitting a response to the survey requires between 15 and 30 minutes.

TOOL 2: PROVIDING TRADE UNION PLANS TO IMPLEMENT THE EUROPEAN PILLAR OF SOCIAL RIGHTS.

11. Making reference to the Action Plan of the EPSR, the ETUC members will be asked to provide detailed information on what policies, reforms or other actions have to be planned and implemented to achieve the EPSR objectives with specific reference to the Headline indicators on employment, training and poverty.
12. When performing this exercise, ETUC members will be asked to report on what policies improve the country performance under the EU-SDG 8 indicator of the ETUC, giving priority to policies that improve economic well-being of people, reinforce position of all workers on the labour market and remove vulnerabilities of workers. #EU_SDG8 index can be consulted here https://est.etuc.org/?page_id=858

13. An Online questionnaire will give the possibility to report on
- MORE AND BETTER JOBS. This box will be used to provide inputs on how to achieve the HEADLINE TARGET on employment: *at least 78% of the population aged 20 to 64 should be in employment by 2030*. ETUC members will report on what reforms or policy proposals are needed in their own country to create inclusive labour markets and tackle vulnerability of workers.
 - SKILLS AND EQUALITY. This box will be used to provide inputs on how to achieve the HEADLINE TARGET: *at least 60% of all adults should be participating in training every year by 2030*. ETUC Member will report on how workers and labour markets are prepared to go through the digital and green transitions, in order to ensure fairness and just transition
 - SOCIAL PROTECTION AND INCLUSION. This box will be used to provide inputs on how to achieve the HEADLINE TARGET: *a reduction of at least 15 million - down from 2019 levels - in the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion*. ETUC members will report on how their governments intends to fight poverty and ensure adequate levels of social protection (including pensions). Specific focus will be given to policies that ban extreme deprivation or forms of absolute poverty in all groups.

TOOL 3: PROPOSALS FOR COUNTRY SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

14. As the Semester 2022 will deliver country specific recommendations, the ETUC invites its member organisations to advance proposals at early stage in order to influence the CSR proposed by the European Commission and those adopted by the Council of the EU.
15. Trade union proposals will reflect the analysis and proposals illustrated in tools 1 and 2, and namely concerning investment and social aspects of national plans in Semester 2022.
16. A PDF file will be provided with 3 boxes to be filled in in order to collect max 3 proposals of country specific recommendation per country.
17. The ETUC Secretariat will provide support and guidance to perform this exercise.

TOOL 4: STATE OF INVOLVEMENT OF SOCIAL PARTNERS IN THE EU SEMESTER AND RRF

18. Considering that the rules and practices for social partners involvement in the implementation of the RRF and national plans are not clear and stable, the ETUC in cooperation with the ETUI will provide a qualitative analysis of the TU involvement at the end of Semester 2022. Based on practices matured this year, it will be possible to elaborate a survey tool that encompasses all existing practices and can ensure a quicker and comparable collection of data.
19. Involvement of social partners is a precondition for success of the RFF and for that reason the ETUC is offering opportunities to its members to meet country-desks at the European Commission in DG Jobs and social rights, and DG Economic and financial affairs. Such dialogues should motivate and support dialogue at national level. Meetings with the EU Commission are always available in the Events section of the EST Portal.

TOOL 5: TRAINING FOR TUSLO

20. Rotation of members is a recurrent issue in ETUC groups. However, during the 2 years of the pandemic, the TUSLO group went through a relevant change among its components.
21. Although the Semester is becoming a better-known process among trade union officials, newly appointed TUSLO may need training to master the ETUC methodology, to cooperate with other TUSLO and increase impact at national level.
22. Furthermore, the economic governance of the EU is in continuous evolution and it requires updating TUSLO skills on annual basis.
23. The ETUC is convinced that this kind of training is more effective if taking place in person. For that reason the ETUC propose a annual training for old and new TUSLO.

TOOL 6: RETHINKING BLOCK

24. For the last two years, the ETUC has started the European Semester reflecting on challenges that EU and member states have to address in the next and farther future. The RETHINKING sessions have shown to be particularly important to define the ETUC priorities for the upcoming Semester and receive attention from main ETUC stakeholders. Also in 2022, the ETUC will organise a RETHINKING session between the 25th of August and 10th of September.

TOOL 7: EST PORTAL

25. This toolkit will operate under the ETUC Semester Toolkit Porta (est.etuc.org). A TUSLO reserved area is accessible using the same credential used for the ETUC official website. All TUSLO are preauthorised to use the reserved area of the EST Portal.
26. The ETUC help-desk is always active and composed by
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TOOL 8: UPDATING OF THE ETUC INDEX FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH AND DECENT WORK (#EU_SDG 8 index).

27. The #EU_SDG8 index monitor the potential of sustainability of national economy and expresses it with a single figure. Being part of the ETUC effort to develop a Beyond GDP Narrative, the overall #EU_SDG index is composed of 3 sub-indexes: economic well-being, labour market inclusiveness, vulnerability of workers. In total, 27 indicators compose the #EU_SDG8 index.
28. The index is updated on annual basis when data of the previous year are made available. This happens generally in the month of May.

TIMEFRAME

29. This toolkit will be implemented according to the following timeline:

8 – 17 February. Tool Involvement of Social Partners – consultation with the European Commission in the framework of the Semester 2022 and spring package (country reports, NRRPs and CSRs)

15 February – 15 March. Questionnaires on implementation of NRRPs (investments and social aspects) and TU plans to implement the EPSR. Issuing of the ETUC Report on NRRPS and National Plans to implement the EPSR.

15 March – 1 April: gathering of TU CSRs and publication of the ETUC Report: TU Proposals for social CSRs.

April: promotion of the ETUC reports at the EU institutions and national governments

May: Update of the #EU_SDG8 index

June: survey on TU Involvement in the EU Semester 2022 and in the implementation of NRRPs and publication of the ETUC Report on Trade Union Involvement in the EU Semester and implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

End August/September: Rethinking session

Financial staff.

Sticker on the signature list