



**COUNCIL OF
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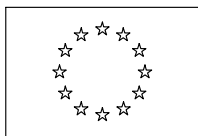
COVER NOTE

from : Council General Secretariat

to : Delegations

Subject : **Work Programme of the Employment Committee 2009**

Delegations will find annexed the Work Programme of the Employment Committee for 2009, as adopted in accordance with the Committee's rules of procedure.



The Employment Committee

EMCO Work Programme 2009

INTRODUCTION

The main obligations of the Committee relate to the preparation of the EPSCO Council proceedings with regard to the European Employment Strategy and its instruments – in particular, the Employment Guidelines, the Joint Employment Report and the recommendations on the implementation of national employment policies. The Committee also considers other requests from the Council and other policy issues responding to initiatives from the Commission.

Working methods

In accordance to the discussions carried in 2008 on the working methods, the Committee will execute its advisory role to EPSCO through the preparation of opinions – as foreseen by the Council decision establishing the Committee - and discussions papers. The agenda of EMCO will also be better articulated with the work of the EPSCO Council. In order to carry its tasks, EMCO will be supported by its sub-groups: the Ad-Hoc Group¹ will reinforce its preparatory role to EMCO providing more analytical work to underpin the policy debates; the Indicators Group² will continue to support EMCO in the quantitative description and analysis of the policy issues. In case needed, small working groups of members of the Committee may also be constituted.

EMCO will continue to work together with the Social Protection Committee (SPC) to ensure coordinated input to EPSCO Council and will collaborate with the Economic Policy Committee (EPC) in the context of the Lisbon Strategy. EMCO will also co-operate with social partners and exchange views with representatives of the EFTA countries. The Mutual Learning Programme managed by the Commission will continue provide opportunities for exchange of national experiences and good practices.

¹ See work programme of the EMCO Ad Hoc Group for 2009

² See work programme of the EMCO Indicators Group for 2009

EMCO ACTIVITIES AND PRIORITIES FOR 2009

In light of future employment challenges facing the European Union and the reflections on its working methods undertaken in 2008, it is proposed that the Committee focuses its activities in 2009 around the following issues:

The Lisbon cycle

Like in previous years, EMCO will concentrate part of its efforts on monitoring progress in the delivery of Lisbon structural reforms and the implementation of the European Employment Strategy. In the first quarter of the year, EMCO will, in cooperation with the SPC, prepare its input to the **Key Messages Paper** to be transmitted to the EPSCO Council. The Committee will also prepare the finalisation of the Joint Employment Report, examine the Recommendations proposed by the Commission, focussing in particular on the employment dimension and adopt an opinion on the Employment Guidelines. The basis for this work will be the Commission's 2008 December Package.

The **current financial and economic context** may also require particular attention from the Committee. While maintaining a focus on the implementation of policies designed to tackle medium- and long- term challenges, EMCO will monitor the employment effects of the financial crisis and analyse the short-term measures being taken at EU and national level to address the issue. This issue will be a permanent item of EMCO meetings till signs of recovery become visible.

Further to this, the Committee will continue to examine the Member States' performance on the employment dimension of the National Reform Programmes through the Cambridge Review. In order to step up the exchange of best practices in the context of the **multilateral surveillance**, the Committee has concluded to hold more multilateral reviews throughout the year. To this end, in 2009 the multilateral surveillance exercise is composed of four elements:

- A thematic review on "skills and adapting education and training systems to new competence requirements "(Integrated Guideline 24) in the first quarter of 2009 by the Ad-Hoc group;
- A thematic review on "inclusive labour markets and make work pay" (Integrated Guideline 19) in the third quarter of 2009 by the Ad-Hoc group;
- Adoption of indicators to be used for the monitoring and analysis of progress in the delivery of Lisbon reforms in the second quarter of 2009 by EMCO ;
- The Cambridge Review in autumn 2009 (format to be decided).

The Ad-Hoc Group will present its conclusions on the two thematic reviews to EMCO before the Cambridge Review. These conclusions will be an important input to the Cambridge Review Report to be transmitted to the December EPSCO Council. The review on inclusive labour markets will also constitute EMCO's contribution to the monitoring of Active Inclusion Strategies.

The post-2010 agenda

Beyond the regular monitoring of the European Employment Strategy, EMCO will also reflect on the **future of the Lisbon strategy post-2010**. The 2008 Spring European council invited "*the Commission, the Council and the National Lisbon coordinators to start reflecting on the future of the Lisbon strategy in the post-2010 period*".

President Barroso has already opened the debate with National Lisbon Coordinators highlighting three challenges: globalisation, demographic trends and the transformation of the EU into a low-carbon economy. The Commission intends to present its proposal at the end of 2009.

In order to contribute to the debate, EMCO will address the future of Growth and Jobs Strategy in the first half of 2009 and submit a discussion paper to June EPSCO Council and an opinion at a later stage. The discussion will be focussed on four elements: strategic priorities, governance, employment targets & benchmarks and assessment methodology. Due to the technical nature of the latter, the Indicators Group, according to its mandate, would be expected to provide technical advice/support for the definition of benchmarks and/or quantitative targets. EMCO will also give a mandate to the Indicators group to explore the different methodological options taking into account not only the current work being carried in cooperation with the LIME working group but, above all, consider the employment policy areas that cannot be covered by the LAF methodology such as quality of work or flexicurity.

New skills for new jobs

In accordance to the Commission work programme 2008, the New Skills for New Jobs initiative will be adopted at the end of 2008.

EMCO will start its activities in 2009 by an open discussion on this initiative and reflect how it should/can be articulated with the agenda post 2010. This will be followed by the Ad-Hoc review on skills as mentioned above. In line with the priorities of the Czech Presidency, EMCO will also deepen its understanding of the link between skills and mobility and migration with a view to deliver an opinion to EPSCO. To support the debate, the Commission will present its analytical work on migration and mobility.

In the second half of 2009, EMCO will return to the Commission initiative to take stock of progress made and discuss further steps. The results of 16 sectoral studies on emerging competences and economic activities may also be presented by the Commission. Finally, the Committee will enrich its knowledge on the situation regarding skills, jobs matching and labour market transitions based on the Commission's future analytical work.

Employment and climate change

In order to contribute to the raising political debate around the transformation of EU to a low-carbon economy EMCO will deepen further its analysis on the implications of climate change on employment. To this end, EMCO will give a mandate to the Ad-Hoc Group to: 1) collect existing experience from Member States on environmental and energy policies that are being implemented and may have an impact on the national labour market measures; 2) to reflect on the adequate employment policy responses at EU and national level. This work will provide analytical grounds to the policy discussion EMCO will carry on the foreseen Commission Communication on this topic.

Flexicurity

Focus will be centred on the implementation of the recently adopted flexicurity approaches. During autumn 2009, the Committee will discuss the Commission's stocktaking exercise on flexicurity policies after two years of the adoption of the common principles. The Committee will discuss the state-of-play of reforms based on analytical work prepared by the Ad-Hoc Group and during the Cambridge Review. EMCO will also treat the final report from the Indicators group on how to present, monitor and analyse flexicurity policies using input-, process- and output indicators.

Bringing more people into work

In line with the priorities of the Swedish Presidency, the Committee will prepare a discussion paper and/or an opinion to transmit to the November EPSCO Council (tbc) on the importance of increasing the number of people at work and the number of hours worked: facilitating transitions into the labour market as well as enabling those already in the labour force to be at work. The Swedish Presidency will prepare studies and policy papers to foster the debate.

The Employment Committee



ANNEX I

EMCO Meetings 2009 – Draft Agenda

1 st quarter 2009	2nd Quarter 2009
<p>9 January</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Input to 2009 Spring European Council - Key messages paper (KMP),: first discussion • "New Skills for new jobs": policy debate • Employment and climate change: mandate to the Ad Hoc Group • Election of Chair and Vice-chairs <p><i>Input: COM December Package; COM communication "New skills for new jobs"</i></p> <p>16/17 February</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with social partners • Financial & economic crisis and employment : monitoring • Input to 2009 Spring European Council - Key messages paper, Joint Employment Report, Employment Guidelines, Recommendations: discussion and finalisation • Skills and mobility (incl. transitional arrangements and migration): policy debate • Lisbon post 2010 - strategic priorities: first discussion <p><i>Input: COM December Package; COM update on Recovery Plan (tbc);COM analytical work on mobility; external experts</i></p>	<p>28 April</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial & economic crisis and employment : monitoring • Skills and mobility: finalisation opinion • Lisbon post 2010 - strategic priorities, targets&benchmarks, governance and assessment methodology: drafting and approval discussion paper& annexes <p><i>Input: COM and Indicators Group analytical work on methodology and targets; Ad-Hoc draft of opinion on skills and mobility</i></p> <p>24 June</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial & economic crisis and employment : monitoring • Multilateral surveillance - indicators (adoption) and Cambridge Review format (first discussion) • Strategic priorities of PROGRESS: discussion <p><i>Input: Indicators Group reports on indicators</i></p>

<p>26/27 March (informal Prague)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial & economic crisis and employment : monitoring • Skills and mobility: policy debate and preparation of opinion • Lisbon post 2010 - strategic priorities and governance: cont. discussion <p><i>Input: COM analytical work on mobility; Ad-Hoc analytical work on post-2010; external experts</i></p>	
3th Quarter 2009	4th Quarter 2009
<p>15 September</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with social partners • Climate change and employment: policy debate and preparation of discussion paper • Bringing more people into work: policy debate and mandate to Ad-Hoc Group • Lisbon post 2010: policy debate and preparation of opinion • Multilateral surveillance: Cambridge Review: format (cont.) <p><i>Input: COM communication and Ad-Hoc analytical work on climate change and employment; SE Presidency studies on labour supply</i></p>	<p>9 October</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexicurity stocktaking: policy debate • Climate change and employment: finalisation discussion paper • New skills for new jobs: state of play and sectoral analysis • Multilateral surveillance: Cambridge Review: format (finalisation) • Work Programme 2010: first discussion <p><i>Input: COM staff working document on flexicurity;; Ad-Hoc analytical work on flexicurity; COM 16 sectoral analysis of emerging competences</i></p> <p>27/28 October (informal Stockholm)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobs matching and transitions: policy debate • Bringing more people into work: finalisation opinion • Multilateral surveillance: conclusions of reviews on "skills" and "inclusive labour markets" • Work Programme 2010: finalisation <p><i>Input: Ad-Hoc draft of opinion on bringing more people into work; COM analytical work on job matching and labour market transitions; Ad-Hoc report on thematic reviews</i></p> <p>12/13 November</p> <p>Multilateral surveillance: Cambridge Review</p>