

Glossary: Open method of coordination (OMC)

Statistics Explained

The **open method of coordination**, abbreviated as **OMC**, was created as part of the [European Union \(EU\)](#) employment policy and the Luxembourg process, and it has been defined as an instrument of the [Lisbon strategy](#) (2000).

The OMC provides a new framework for cooperation between the [Member States](#), whose national policies can thus be directed towards certain common objectives. Under this intergovernmental method, the Member States are evaluated by one another (peer pressure), with the [Commission](#)'s role being limited to surveillance. The [European Parliament](#) and the Court of Justice play virtually no part in the OMC process.

The open method of coordination takes place in areas which fall within the competence of the Member States, such as employment, social protection, social inclusion, education, youth and training.

It is based principally on:

- jointly identifying and defining objectives to be achieved (adopted by the [Council](#));
- jointly established measuring instruments (statistics, indicators, guidelines);
- benchmarking, i.e. comparison of the Member States' performance and exchange of best practices (monitored by the Commission).

Depending on the areas concerned, the OMC involves so-called "soft law" measures which are binding on the Member States in varying degrees but which never take the form of directives, regulations or decisions. Thus, in the context of the Lisbon strategy, the OMC requires the Member States to draw up national reform plans and to forward them to the Commission. However, youth policy does not entail the setting of targets, and it is up to the Member States to decide on objectives without the need for any European-level coordination of national action plans.

Further information

- [Employment and social inclusion indicators](#) (Dedicated section on Eurostat website)
- [Eurofound - Open method of coordination](#)