

SOCIAL PROTECTION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2016

REVIEW OF THE SOCIAL PROTECTION PERFORMANCE
MONITOR AND DEVELOPMENTS IN SOCIAL
PROTECTION POLICIES



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Abbreviation	Full name
EU28	European Union (28 countries)
EU27	European Union (27 countries)
EA18/19	Euro area (18/19 countries)
BE	Belgium
BG	Bulgaria
CZ	Czech Republic
DK	Denmark
DE	Germany
EE	Estonia
IE	Ireland
EL	Greece
ES	Spain
FR	France
HR	Croatia
IT	Italy
CY	Cyprus
LV	Latvia
LT	Lithuania
LU	Luxembourg
HU	Hungary
MT	Malta
NL	Netherlands
AT	Austria
PL	Poland
PT	Portugal
RO	Romania
SI	Slovenia
SK	Slovakia
FI	Finland
SE	Sweden
UK	United Kingdom

Acknowledgments

The present report has been prepared as part of the mandate given to the Social Protection Committee (SPC) by the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) to monitor the social situation in the European Union and the development of social protection policies (art. 160 of TFEU).

The report is prepared by the Secretariat of the Committee and its Indicators' Sub-group. The Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion provided the analysis and calculations used in the report with the extensive assistance and data provision of Eurostat. The principal authors are Kornelia Kozovska, Paul Minty, and Ionut Sasu, with specific contributions from Bent-Ole Grooss, Flaviana Teodosiu and Bob Uhde. The members of the SPC and its Indicators Subgroup contributed extensively to the drafting of the report and its key messages. The report was approved by the SPC on 19 September 2016. The Council of the European Union endorsed the key messages of the report on 13 October 2016.

The list of SPC Members appears on the following link:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=758&langId=en>

The list of members of the SPC Indicators Subgroup appears on the following link:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=830&langId=en>

Main messages

(endorsed by the Council of the European Union on 13 October 2016)

1. Delivering on its mandate as per Art 160 of the TFEU, the Social Protection Committee (SPC) has produced for the Council its annual review on the social situation in the EU and the social policy developments in the Member States, based on the most recent data and information available¹. On this basis, the **SPC highlights the following findings and common priorities for social policy reforms which should guide the preparatory work for the 2017 Annual Growth Survey.**
2. The latest update of the Social Protection Performance Monitor (SPPM) points to a continued favourable evolution on the labour market, with more indicators flagging up a shift to positive changes.
3. Nevertheless, the EU continues to be far off-track in reaching its 2020 social inclusion target, with overall figures for the EU at-risk-of-poverty-or-social-exclusion rate continuing to point to stagnation at a high level.
4. For the EU the following *social trends to watch* have been identified:
 - a general continued deterioration in the relative poverty situation, its depth and persistence;
 - increases in the share of the population living in quasi-jobless households, together with rises in the at-risk-of-poverty rates for people residing in such households.
5. In 2014 there were 26.1 million children in the EU-28 living at risk of poverty or social exclusion, accounting for around 1/5 of all people living in poverty and social exclusion.
6. The most recent data shows that household incomes are increasing again in many Member States, leading to a reduction in severe material deprivation rates and in the burden of housing costs in several countries.
7. Long-term unemployment and still relatively low employment opportunities for youth (15-24) remain major challenges in the EU but some positive developments have recently been registered with falls in the NEET rate and youth unemployment.
8. The labour market participation rate of older workers as well as the income and living conditions of the elderly relative to the rest of the population continue to improve.
9. There remains wide dispersion and growing divergence in income inequality between Member States. Since 2008 income inequality has been rising in nearly half of the Member States. In order to address excessive inequality, policies can also focus on promoting equal opportunities.

¹ This has been done on the basis of the Social Protection Performance Monitor (SPPM) and the policy reforms' reporting done by Member States.

10. Nearly half of Member States have potential for improvement in terms of the effectiveness of benefits for the working age population while for several others the challenges concern the effectiveness of social services or the inclusiveness of labour markets. Some Member States have made substantial policy reforms focusing on coverage and adequacy of social benefits and their link to activation. These may include increased amounts in income support and targeting of social transfers, facilitating access to quality social services and improved monitoring tools.

11. Policy reforms based on an active inclusion approach, combining adequate income support, high quality social services and support for activation to encourage labour market (re)integration, continue to be necessary. Ensuring and improving coverage and take-up of benefit schemes should be achieved through simplifying access to benefits, avoiding very strict low income targeting and careful consideration of the adequacy of benefits. To avoid the fragmentation of service delivery, Member states should make better efforts to introduce and provide integrated services tailored to individual needs. Incentives to work should be enhanced.

12. In the vast majority of Member States challenges are identified in relation to poverty or social exclusion for persons in vulnerable situations, making it clear that the inclusiveness and fairness of social protection systems is a key challenge across the EU. Reducing child poverty and breaking the poverty cycle across generations require integrated strategies that combine prevention and support. These strategies should aim at facilitating support to parents' access to the labour market, and enhancing preventive approaches through early intervention and increased support to families.

13. Significant differences remain in the access to quality health care by income level. Recognizing Member States' national competence in the delivery and organisation of health services and medical care, further policy efforts at national level are necessary to ensure universal access to high quality health services, while securing their adequate and sustainable financing and making use of innovations and technological developments.

14. Access to adequate, affordable and quality long-term care, with an increasing focus on preventing the need for long-term care, remains a priority. This may imply a shift from a primarily reactive to an increasingly proactive policy approach, such as in social and health care, which seeks both to prevent the loss of autonomy and thus reduce the need for long-term care services, and to boost effective and good quality long-term care, integrating the health and social care elements of long-term care provision.

15. Addressing the impact of ageing and promoting longer working lives has driven extensive pension reforms in recent years, such as through equalising retirement ages for women and men and aligning the pension age with life expectancy. These efforts should continue but **more needs to be done to ensure the adequacy of future pensions** for many Member States. Pension schemes can uphold their legitimacy and attractiveness by relying on a mix of measures that reinforce both their adequacy and sustainability. **Reducing unemployment and encouraging longer stay in labour markets today, including through raising the labour market participation of women, will be crucial for the future sustainability and adequacy of pension benefits.** Reducing the pension gender gap should also be a major focus of policy efforts. In addition to that, policies promoting cost-effective and safe complementary savings for retirement are an important part of the necessary mix of measures to ensure future pension adequacy for many Member States. Pension reforms require broad political and public support, with social partners having a key role in this respect.

16. **Social investment, preventive approaches and gender mainstreaming in policy formation are needed to strengthen all people's capacities to participate actively in society and the economy.** Social impact assessment should be included in policy development and the distributional impact of different policy options be considered.

17. Overall, improving the performance of social protection systems in terms of poverty prevention and reduction, including through effective social insurance and social assistance as well as social investment, will be essential to progress towards achieving the 2020 poverty and social exclusion target and contribute to continuous improvement of employment and social outcomes² in the EU. **Member States should maintain their efforts and ensure that social protection systems deliver better social outcomes while maximising the positive impact on employment and growth.**

² 2015 Council Conclusions on Social Governance for an Inclusive Europe (Council document 14129/15)

I. Introduction

This edition of the annual Social Protection Committee (SPC) report reflects the merging of the two previous annual reports of the SPC on monitoring the social situation in the Member States and the European Union and the annual review of recent social policy reforms, which were produced as part of its mandate as set out in article 160 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

The SPC is an advisory policy Committee which provides a representative forum for multilateral social policy coordination, dialogue and cooperation at EU level. It brings together policy makers from all EU Member States and the Commission in an effort to identify, discuss and implement the policy mix that is most fitted to respond to the various challenges faced by Member States in the area of social policies. It uses the social open method of coordination as the main policy framework combining all major social policy strands - social inclusion, pensions, health and long-term care - and focuses its work within these strands.

The main objective of the 2016 SPC Annual Report is to deliver on the mandate of the Committee and, through its analysis, to provide input to the Council on identifying the main social policy priorities to recommend to the Commission in the context of the preparation of the 2017 Annual Growth Survey. On the basis of the Social Protection Performance Monitor (SPPM) and Member States' social reporting, the report aims at i) analysing **the social situation**³, especially the progress towards the Europe 2020 target on reducing poverty and social exclusion and the latest common *social trends to watch*, and **the most recent social policy developments in Europe**, and ii) **identifying the key structural social challenges facing individual Member States as well as their good social outcomes**. Separate annexes to the report provide more detailed reviews of social developments, recent social policy reforms and initiatives as well as the policy conclusions from the latest peer and in-depth thematic reviews conducted under the auspices of the SPC, a summary of the Council Conclusions adopted over the last year relating to social protection and detailed SPPM country profiles for each Member State.

³ The figures quoted in this report are based on data available around 17 May 2016, unless otherwise stated.

II. Progress on the Europe 2020 poverty and social exclusion target

The commitment made in 2010 by the EU Heads of States and Governments to lift at least 20 million people out of being at risk of poverty or social exclusion⁴, in the context of the Europe 2020 strategy, could have been a significant step forward. It stressed the equal importance of inclusive growth alongside economic objectives for the future of Europe, and it introduced a new monitoring and accountability scheme⁵. Within the framework of the Europe 2020 strategy, Member States set national poverty and social exclusion targets (Table 1). However, the individual poverty-reduction ambitions of the Member States sums to a figure much lower than the EU level commitment to reduce poverty and social exclusion by 20 million and are not always based on the headline composite indicator, the at-risk-of-poverty-or-social-exclusion rate (AROPE).

Despite the fact that 8 Member States registered significant falls in the share of the population at risk of poverty and social exclusion in 2014 and only 2 observed significant rises, at EU level the aggregate figure for the EU at-risk-of-poverty-or-social-exclusion (AROPE) rate still points to continued stagnation at a high level. The latest aggregate EU figures on living and income conditions in the EU show that the EU is not making any significant progress towards achieving its target of lifting at least 20 million people from the risk of poverty or social exclusion by 2020, and is in fact significantly further away from the target than in 2008. In 2014 there were around 4.6 million more people living at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU28 compared to 2008⁶, and a total of 122.2 million or close to 1 in 4 Europeans. Underlying little change in the AROPE rate are more substantial changes in its components, with a noticeable reduction in severe material deprivation being more-or-less counter-balanced by rises in the share of people living in (quasi-) jobless households and especially in the share at risk of poverty.

Figure 1 shows time series since 2005 for the EU27 aggregate⁷. The overall trend masks persisting divergence between Member States. Increases in the AROPE rate between 2008-2014 have been observed mainly in the countries most affected by the economic crisis (CY, EL, IE, and ES and IT), have continued in a number of Eastern European countries with some of the biggest challenges related to poverty and social exclusion (BG, HU) but also started registering such a trend in countries such as MT, even though still below the EU average, and also in countries with some of the lowest shares of AROPE and solid welfare systems like LU and SE. The AROPE rate has remained more or less stable compared to 2008 in AT, BE, CZ, DE, FI, FR, LV, LT, NL, PT and the UK, while it has decreased in only three countries in the whole of the EU, namely PL, RO and SK

⁴ The EU poverty and social exclusion target is based on a combination of three indicators – the at-risk-of-poverty rate, the severe material deprivation rate, and the share of people living in (quasi-)jobless (i.e. very low work intensity) households. It considers people who find themselves in any of these three categories and, while very broad, it reflects the multiple facets of poverty and social exclusion across Europe. This definition extends the customary concept of relative income poverty to cover the non-monetary dimension of poverty and labour market exclusion.

⁵ COM (2010) 758 final

⁶ The reference year, due to data availability, for the target adopted in 2010

⁷ Note that figures here refer to the EU27 aggregate, since time series for the EU28 aggregate are not available back to 2005.

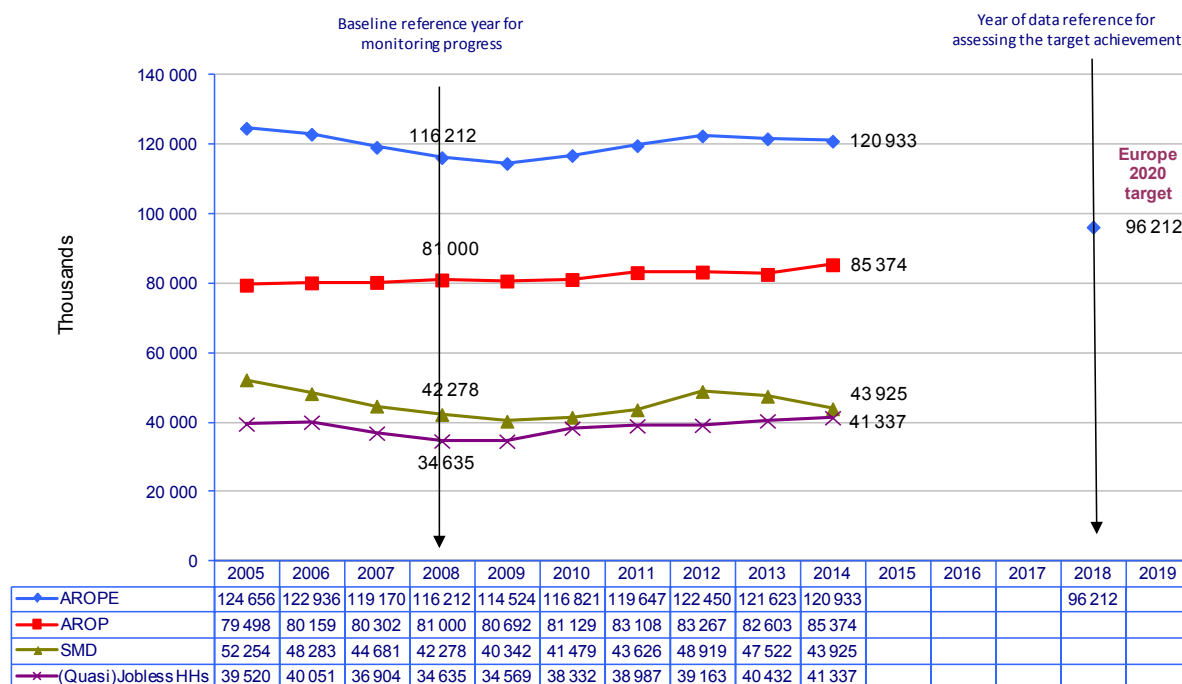
(Figure 2). In contrast to the generally worsening trend in the years since the crisis hit, several Member States have registered significant improvements between 2013 and 2014, most notably IE, HU, LV and LT.

Table 1. Europe 2020 poverty and social exclusion target - national targets

	National 2020 target for the reduction of poverty or social exclusion (in number of persons)
EU28	20 000 000
BE	380 000
BG	260 000 persons living in monetary poverty*
CZ	100 000
DK	Reduction of the number of persons living in households with very low work intensity by 22 000 by 2020*
DE	Reduce the number of long-term unemployed by 320 000 by 2020*
EE	Reduction of the at risk of poverty rate after social transfers to 15%, equivalent to an absolute decrease by 36 248 persons*
IE	Reduce the number of person in combined poverty (either consistent poverty, at-risk-of-poverty or basic deprivation) by at least 200 000*
EL	450 000
ES	1 400 000-1 500 000
FR	1 900 000
HR	Reduction of the number of persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion to 1 220 000 by 2020
IT	2 200 000
CY	27 000 (or decrease the percentage from 23.3% in 2008 to 19.3% by 2020)
LV	Reduce the number of persons at the risk of poverty and/or of those living in households with low work intensity by 121 thousand or 21 % until 2020*
LT	170 000 (and the total number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion must not exceed 814 000 by 2020)
LU	6 000
HU	450 000
MT	6 560
NL	Reduce the number of people aged 0-64 living in a jobless household by 100 000 by 2020*
AT	235 000
PL	1 500 000
PT	200 000
RO	580 000
SI	40 000
SK	170 000
FI	140 000 (Reduce to 770 000 by 2020 the number of persons living at risk of poverty or social exclusion)
SE	Reduction of the % of women and men aged 20-64 who are not in the labour force (except full-time students), the long-term unemployed or those on long-term sick leave to well under 14%*
UK	New statutory and non-statutory Life Chances measures*

Source: National Reform Programmes. Notes: * denotes countries that have expressed their national target in relation to an indicator different to the EU headline target indicator (AROPE). For some of these Member States (BG, DK, EE, LV) it is expressed in terms of one or more of the components of AROPE, but for the others (DE, IE, NL (age range differs), SE and UK (target not yet defined)) the target is neither in terms of the AROPE nor the standard definition of one or more of its components.

Figure 1. Evolution of the Europe 2020 poverty and social exclusion target in the EU27 (figures in 1000s)



Source: Eurostat (EU-SILC)

Note: AROPE – at-risk-of-poverty-or-social-exclusion rate; AROP – at-risk-of-poverty rate; (Quasi-)jobless HHs – share of population living in (quasi-)jobless households (i.e. very low work intensity (VLWI) households); SMD – severe material deprivation rate. For the at-risk-of poverty rate, the income reference year is the calendar year prior to the survey year except for the United Kingdom (survey year) and Ireland (12 months preceding the survey). Similarly, the (quasi-) jobless households (i.e. very low work intensity) rate refers to the previous calendar year while for the severe material deprivation rate, the reference is the current survey year.

Figure 2. At-risk-of-poverty-or-social-exclusion rate (in %), evolution (in pp) 2013-2014 and 2008-2014

	EU28	EU27	EA18	EA19	BE	BG	CZ	DK	DE	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	HR	IT
2014	24.4	24.4	23.5	23.5	21.2	40.1	14.8	17.9	20.6	26.0	27.6	36.0	29.2	18.5	29.3	28.3
2013-2014 change in pp	~	~	~	~	~	n.a.	~	~	~	n.a.	-1.9	~	1.9	~	~	~
2008-2014 change in pp	n.a.	~	1.9	1.8	~	3.2	~	n.a.	~	1.7	3.9	7.9	5.4	~	n.a.	2.8
	CY	LV	LT	LU	HU	MT	NL	AT	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	FI	SE	UK
2014	27.4	32.7	27.3	19.0	31.8	23.8	16.5	19.2	24.7	27.5	39.5	20.4	18.4	17.3	16.9	24.1
2013-2014 change in pp	~	-2.4	-3.5	~	-3.0	~	~	~	-1.1	~	-0.9	~	-1.4	1.3	~	-0.7
2008-2014 change in pp	4.1	~	~	3.5	3.6	3.7	~	~	-5.8	~	-4.7	1.9	-2.2	~	2.0	~

Source: Eurostat (EU-SILC)

Notes: i) For UK, changes in the survey vehicle and institution in 2012 might have affected the results on trends since 2008 and interpretation of data on the longer term trend must therefore be particularly cautious; ii) Only statistically and/or substantively significant changes have been marked in green/red (positive/negative changes), using Eurostat computations of significance of net change. "~" refers to stable performance (i.e. insignificant change).

III. Overview of the social situation in the European Union⁸

It is now three years since the EU economy started its slow though consistent recovery following a double-dip recession. Economic activity has expanded in most Member States, but the recovery remains uneven. Increases in employment in the EU have progressed gradually in line with economic growth, and compared to the trough observed in mid-2013, employment has increased by almost 7 million people. As a result, the employment rate for the EU returned to its pre-crisis level by the fourth quarter of 2015, but large disparities remain across countries. The increase in employment has extended to all sub-population groups and unemployment, including youth unemployment, continues to slowly recede in the EU (although the impact of this is yet to be fully reflected in all social indicators). Household incomes and financial conditions of EU households continue to improve, thanks mainly to higher income from work. Nevertheless, despite the gradual improvements, labour market and social conditions remain very challenging.

The latest 2016 update of the Social Protection Performance Monitor⁹, which is based on 2014 EU-SILC data and 2015 LFS data, points to a continued favourable evolution especially on the labour market, with more indicators flagging up a shift to positive changes. However, as shown in the previous section, the recent improvements in the labour market are not yet fully reflected in many of the main social indicators and overall figures for the EU at-risk-of-poverty-or-social-exclusion rate still point to stagnation at a high level.¹⁰

For the EU as a whole the following main negative trends, or *"social trends to watch"* (i.e. where around a third or more of all Member States show a significant deterioration in the given indicator), are identified for the most recent period for which data is available for the given indicator (Figure 3):

- A general continued deterioration in the (relative) poverty situation, with rises in the extent of poverty as recorded by the **poverty risk for the population as a whole** in many Member States (11 MS), in the depth of poverty (i.e. the **poverty gap**) in several countries (8 MS) and in its persistence as shown by rises in the persistent at-risk-of poverty rate in 10 MS.¹¹
- Increases in the **share of the population living in (quasi-)jobless households** (registered in 9 MS), together with rises in the **at-risk-of-poverty rates** for people residing in such households (registered in 11 MS). The latter points to a reduction in the adequacy of social benefits in many countries.¹²

⁸ A more detailed review of the latest social developments, based on a more extensive examination of the trends in the indicators in the SPPM dashboard together with supplementary indicators, is provided in Annex 1 to this report.

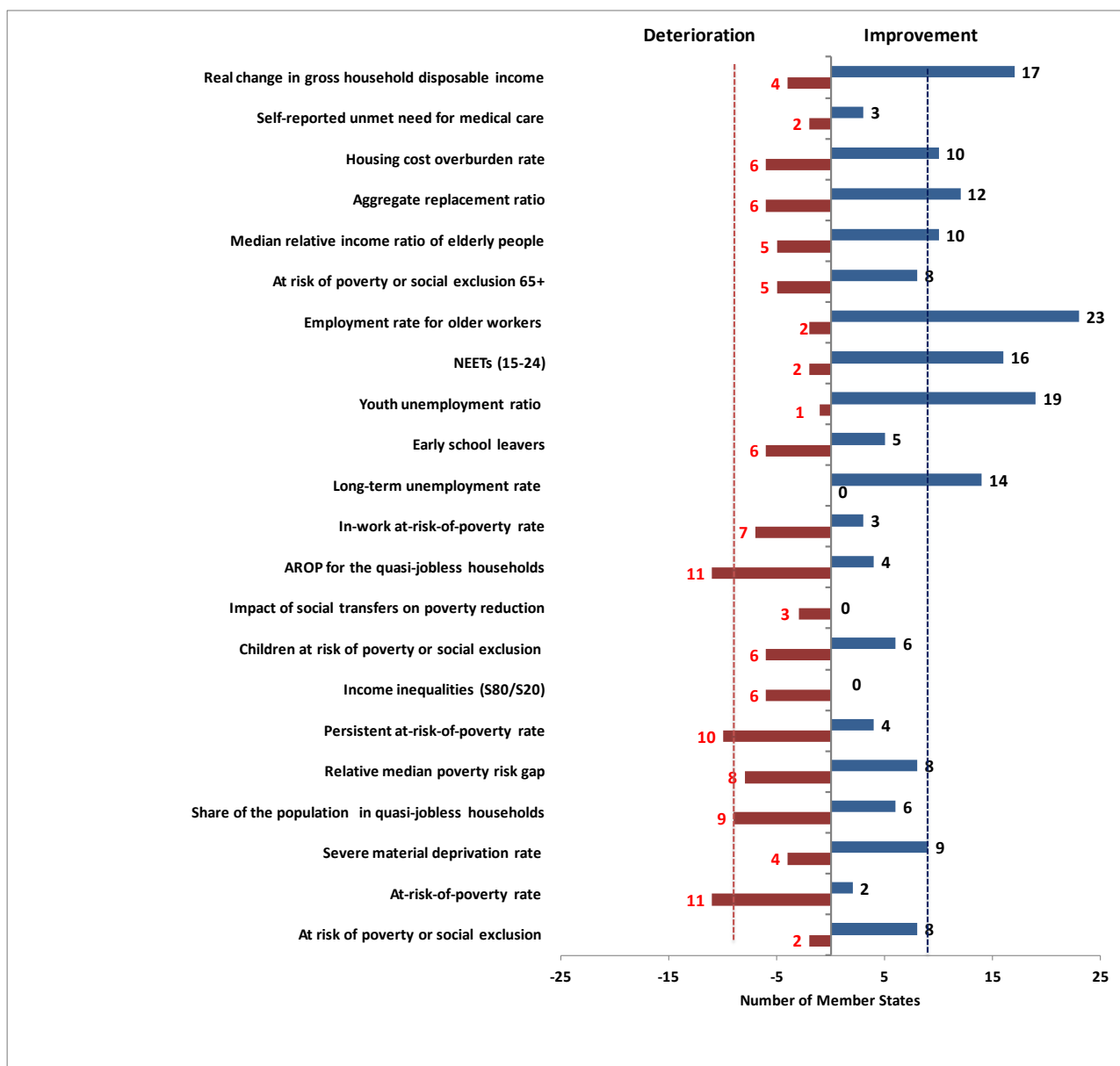
⁹ The SPPM is a tool which uses a set of key EU social indicators for monitoring developments in the social situation in the European Union.

¹⁰ For preliminary analysis of the partially available EU-SILC 2015 data see the later section entitled *"Latest indications from available 2015 EU-SILC data"*.

¹¹ These trends refer to underlying income data for the period 2012-2013.

¹² Note that *these trends generally refer to EU-SILC 2013-2014, i.e. income data for the period 2012-2013.*

Figure 3: Social trends to watch and areas of improvement for the period 2013-2014*



Source: Social Protection Performance Monitor

Note: i) For 2014 BG registered a major break in the time series for the material deprivation indicator (SMD), so SMD and AROPE trends for BG have not been considered for the evolutions with regard to these EU-SILC indicators. ii) For 2014 EE registered a major break in series for EU-SILC variables. As a result EU-SILC based indicators are not generally comparable to 2013 for this country and EE has therefore not been considered in the trends to watch for these indicators. iii) For 2014 UK registered a break in the time series for the housing cost overburden indicator, so the change in this indicator has not been considered in the trends to watch.

*For EU-SILC based indicators the changes generally refer to 2012-2013 for income and household work intensity indicators, and to 2013-2014 for SMD and unmet need for medical care. Changes in gross household disposable income refer to 2013-2014. LFS-based indicators (LTU rate, early school leavers, youth unemployment ratio, NEETS (15-24), ER (55-64)) refer to the more recent period 2014-2015.

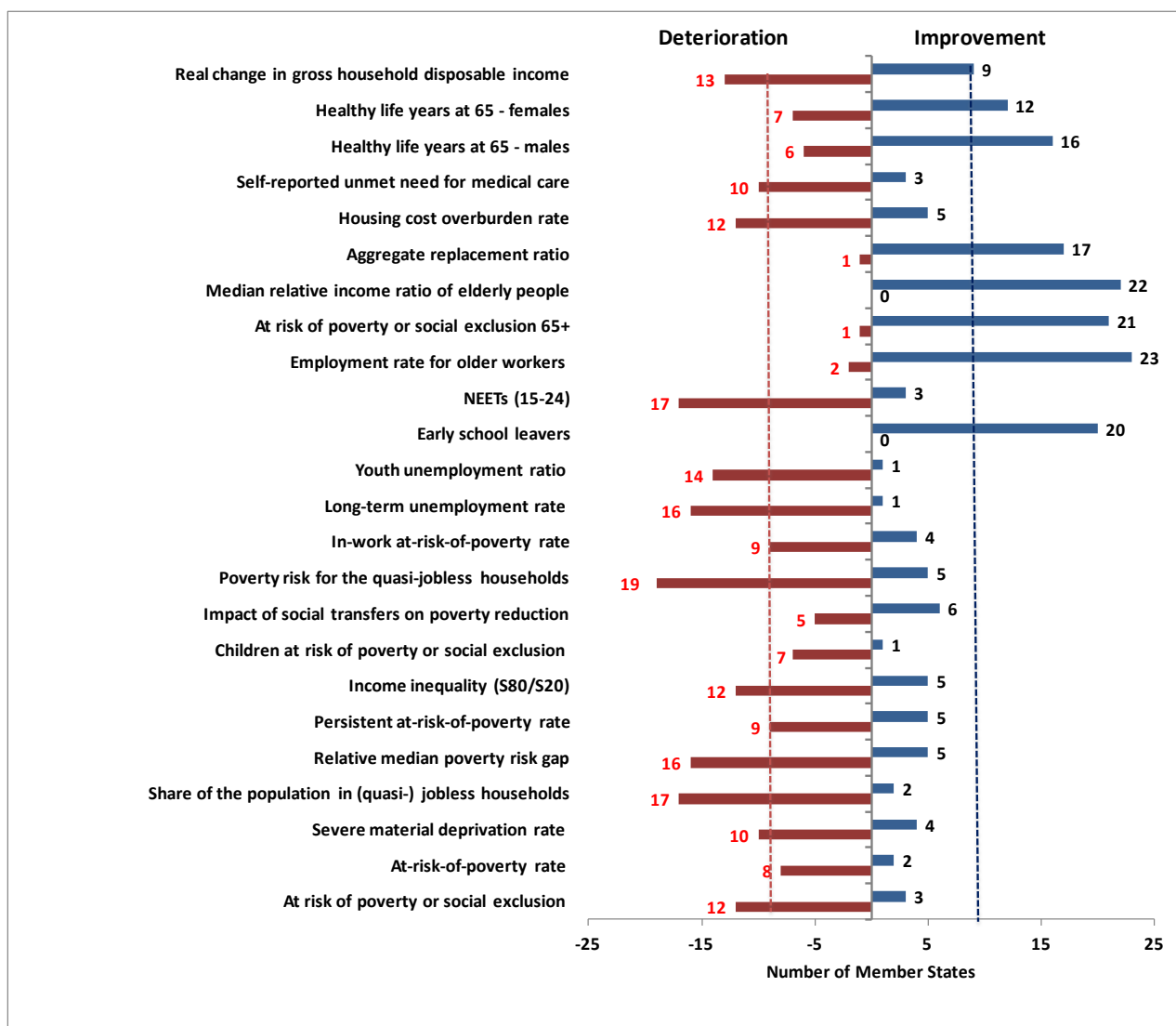
In contrast, **positive developments** in the social situation can be observed in the following areas:

- rises in **real gross household disposable income** (in 17 MS) along with reductions in the **housing cost overburden rate** in 10 MS and in the **severe material deprivation rate** (in 9 MS). This reflects improvement in household incomes and financial conditions of EU households in the most recent period, benefitting from stronger economic activity and improved labour markets;
- a reduction in **long term unemployment** in 14 MS;
- clear signs of **reductions in youth exclusion**, with falls in the NEET rate (in 16 MS) and the youth unemployment ratio (in 19 MS) over the period 2014-2015, reflecting continued improvements in the labour market;
- further improvement in the **labour market participation of older workers** over 2014-2015 (as evidenced by increases in the employment rate for 55-64 year olds in 23 MS);
- continued improvement in the **income and living conditions of the elderly** (with rises in the aggregate replacement ratio in 12 MS and in the median relative income ratio of elderly people in 10);
- a reduction in **the risk of poverty or social exclusion for the overall population** (in 8 MS).

Looking at the longer-term developments since the beginning of the financial and economic crisis, and the Europe 2020 strategy, for most social areas the situation remains considerably worse compared to 2008, despite signs of recent improvement (Figure 4). The areas with the most substantial deterioration compared to 2008 are:

- **Increased risk of poverty or social exclusion** (in 12 MS), reflecting mainly rises in the **share of the population living in (quasi-)jobless households** (in 17 MS) and **falls in living standards** (as evidenced by rises in **severe material deprivation** in 10 MS), against a background of declines in **real gross household disposable income** in 13 MS;
- **increased income inequality** (in 12 MS) and a rise in the **depth of poverty** (with the poverty gap up in 16 MS);
- still strong signs of **youth exclusion** (with significant increases in the NEET rate and the youth unemployment ratio in around two-thirds of MS);
- **increased (long-term) exclusion from the labour market** in general (with rises in the long-term unemployment rate and in the share of the population in (quasi-) jobless households in around two-thirds of MS), together with rises in the **poverty risk for people living in (quasi-) jobless households** in 19 MS;
- rises in the **housing cost overburden rate for households** (in 12 MS);
- increases in **self-reported unmet need for medical care** (10 MS)

Figure 4: Social trends to watch and areas of improvement for the period 2008-2014*



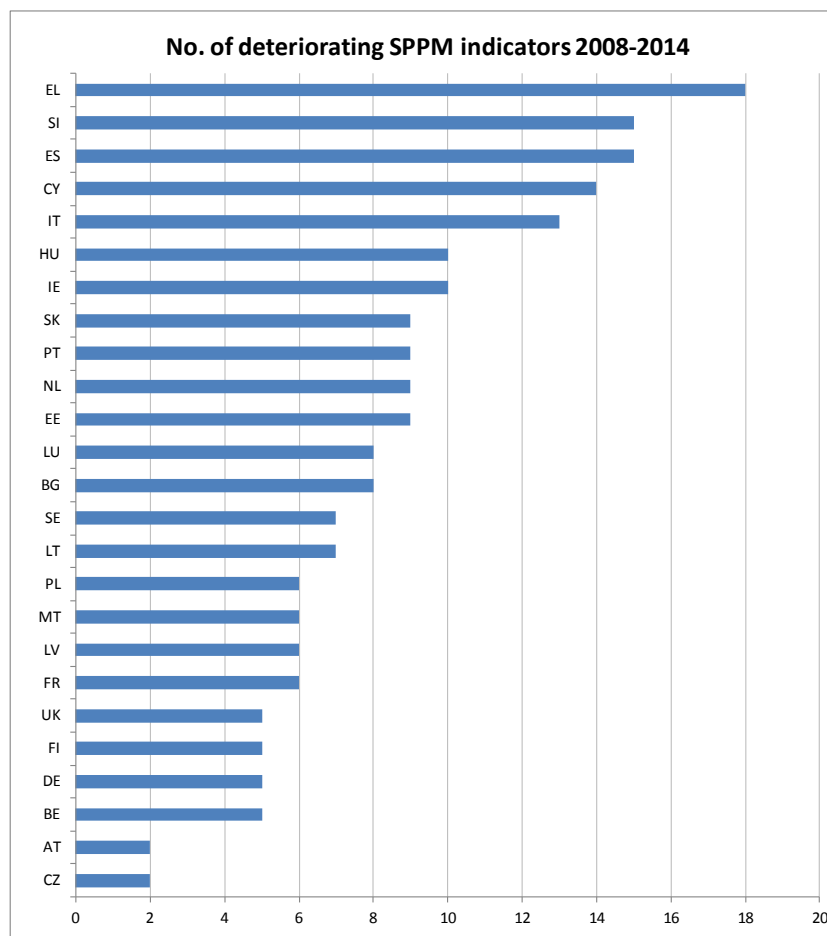
Source: Social Protection Performance Monitor

Note: i) For AT, break in series in 2011 for persistent poverty (so trend not considered for the period compared to 2008); ii) For BE, major break in 2011 in the self-reported unmet need for medical examination (so trend not considered for the period compared to 2008); iii) For 2014 BG registered a major break in the time series for the material deprivation indicator (SMD) and AROPE indicator, so longer-term changes are presented for the period 2008-2013 only. iv) For DK, breaks in series for the period 2008-2014 which mainly affect indicators related to incomes and to a lesser degree variables highly correlated with incomes (so trends not considered for the period compared to 2008 for these); v) For 2014 EE registered a major break in series for EU-SILC variables, so longer-term changes for these are presented for the period 2008-2013 only; vi) For HR, the long-term comparison for EU-SILC-based indicators is relative to 2010 as no EU-SILC data published by Eurostat before then. vii) For RO, breaks in series in 2010 for LFS-based indicators, so changes for the period 2008-2015 not considered for those variables; viii) For UK, changes in the survey vehicle and institution in 2012 might have affected the results on trends since 2008 and interpretation of data on the longer-term trend must therefore be particularly cautious. * For LFS-based indicators (LTU rate, early school leavers, youth unemployment ratio, NEETS (15-24), ER (55-64)) 2015 figures used, hence 2008-2015.

The dashboard indicators show there have also been a number of improvements, notably in the areas of **increasing number of healthy life years** and **significant decreases in the number of early school leavers in Europe** (in 20 MS). There have also been **improvements in the relative situation of the older generation**. The labour market situation of older workers has improved markedly, as evidenced by increases in the employment rate for the age group 55-64 in 23 Member States. The relative situation of the elderly aged 65 and over also shows clear signs of improvement, with decreases in the number of elderly living at risk of poverty or social exclusion as well as an improvement in their income situation with respect to the rest of the population in around three-quarters of Member States. However, this trend should be interpreted with great caution as it does not necessarily show an improvement in absolute terms. As pension income remained stable during the economic crisis while the working age population suffered from substantial income loss (wage decreases, job loss and decreases in benefit levels), the relative, but not necessarily the absolute, position of the elderly has improved, highlighting the important role of pension systems.

Figure 5 shows the number of social indicators in the SPPM dashboard for which a given country has registered a significant deterioration over the period 2008 to 2014. The Member States with the most worrisome outcomes are Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Spain and Slovenia, with deterioration on 13 indicators or more. At the other end of the scale, Belgium, Finland, Germany and the UK have only registered significant deterioration on 5 indicators, while for Austria and the Czech Republic it was only 2. Note that these results refer to the period 2008 to 2014 and that the 2015 data available for some countries, such as ES, HU and PT (see the later section on “Latest indications from available 2015 EU-SILC data”) indicate positive trends that might impact on the assessment based on Figure 5.

Figure 5: Number of SPPM key social indicators with significant deterioration between 2008 and 2014* by Member State



Source: Social Protection Performance Monitor

Note: i) For AT, break in series in 2011 for persistent poverty (so trend not considered for the period compared to 2008); ii) For BE, a major break in 2011 in the self-reported unmet need for medical examination (so trend not considered for the period compared to 2008); iii) For 2014 BG registered a major break in the time series for the material deprivation indicator (SMD) and AROPE indicator, so longer-term changes are taken for the period 2008-2013 only for these indicators; iv) For DK, breaks in series for the period 2008-2014 which mainly affect indicators related to incomes and to a lesser degree variables highly correlated with incomes, so changes since 2008 not available for several variables and hence total number of deteriorating variables not shown for DK; v) For 2014 EE registered a major break in series for EU-SILC variables, so longer-term changes for these are taken for the period 2008-2013 only; vi) For HR, the long-term comparison for EU-SILC-based indicators is relative to 2010 as no EU-SILC data published by Eurostat before then; vii) For RO, break in series in 2010 for LFS-based indicators, so changes for the period 2008-2015 not available for several variables and hence total number of deteriorating variables not shown; viii) For UK, changes in the survey vehicle and institution in 2012 might have affected the results on trends since 2008 and interpretation of data on the longer-term trend must therefore be particularly cautious; ix) The bars refer to the number of SPPM indicators which have registered a statistically (and substantively, where relevant) significant deterioration between 2008 and 2014. * For LFS-based indicators (LTU rate, early school leavers, youth unemployment ratio, NEETS (15-24), ER (55-64)) 2015 figures used, hence 2008-2015.

SPPM dashboard

		EU28	EU27	EA18	EA19	BE	BG	CZ	DK	DE	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	HR	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU	HU	MT	NL	AT	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	FI	SE	UK	
Europe 2020	At risk of poverty or social exclusion (in %)																																	
	2014	24.4	24.4	23.5	23.5	21.2	40.1	14.8	17.9	20.6	26.0	27.6	36.0	29.2	18.5	29.3	28.3	27.4	32.7	27.3	19.0	31.8	23.8	16.5	19.2	24.7	27.5	39.5	20.4	18.4	17.3	16.9	24.1	
	2013-2014 change in pp	~	~	~	~	~	n.a.	~	~	~	n.a.	-1.9	~	1.9	~	~	~	~	-2.4	-3.5	~	-3.0	~	~	~	-1.1	~	-0.9	~	-1.4	1.3	~	-0.7	
	2008-2014 change in pp	n.a.	~	1.9	1.8	~	3.2	~	n.a.	~	1.7	3.9	7.9	5.4	~	n.a.	2.8	4.1	~	~	3.5	3.6	3.7	~	~	-5.8	~	-4.7	1.9	-2.2	~	2.0	~	
	At-risk-of-poverty rate (in %)																																	
	2014	17.2	17.2	17.1	17.1	15.5	21.8	9.7	12.1	16.7	21.8	15.6	22.1	22.2	13.3	19.4	19.4	14.4	21.2	19.1	16.4	15.0	15.9	11.6	14.1	17.0	19.5	25.4	14.5	12.6	12.8	15.1	16.8	
	2013-2014 change in pp	~	~	~	~	~	0.8	1.1	~	0.6	n.a.	1.5	-1.0	1.8	~	~	~	~	1.8	-1.5	~	~	~	1.2	~	~	0.8	3.0	~	~	1.0	~	0.9	
	2008-2014 change in pp	n.a.	~	1.1	~	~	~	~	n.a.	1.5	~	~	2.0	2.4	~	n.a.	~	~	~	-4.7	~	~	3.0	2.6	~	~	~	~	2.2	1.7	~	2.9	-1.9	
	At-risk-of-poverty threshold for a single person household (levels in pps, changes as real change in national currency in %)																																	
	2014	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	11755	4052	6654	11992	11530	5545	9598	5166	8517	11584	4644	9165	9457	4392	4557	16962	4535	9300	11283	12997	5736	6075	2454	8597	5883	11550	12368	10160	
	2013-2014 change in %	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	~	15.1	~	~	~	n.a.	~	-7.0	~	~	~	~	-9.0	10.8	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	
	2008-2014 change in %	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	9.3	38.1	7.2	n.a.	~	~	~	-15.7	-34.2	~	~	~	-8.8	-18.1	~	~	~	~	14.2	~	6.4	22.8	-5.8	16.2	~	27.8	5.1	15.3	-6.7
Severe material deprivation rate (in %)																																		
2014	8.9	8.9	7.3	7.4	5.9	33.1	6.7	3.2	5.0	6.2	8.4	21.5	7.1	4.8	13.9	11.6	15.3	19.2	13.6	1.4	24.0	10.2	3.2	4.0	10.4	10.6	25.0	6.6	9.9	2.8	0.7	7.3		
2013-2014 change in pp	-0.7	-0.7	~	~	0.8	n.a.	~	~	~	n.a.	-1.5	1.2	0.9	~	-0.8	~	~	-4.8	-2.4	~	-3.8	~	0.7	~	-1.5	~	-3.5	~	~	~	-0.7	-1.0		
2008-2014 change in pp	n.a.	~	1.4	1.5	~	~	~	n.a.	~	2.7	2.9	10.3	3.5	~	n.a.	4.1	6.2	~	~	~	~	6.1	5.9	1.7	-1.9	-7.3	~	-7.9	~	-1.9	~	~	2.8	
Population living in (quasi-) jobless households (in %)																																		
2014	11.2	11.1	11.9	11.9	14.6	12.1	7.6	12.1	10.0	7.6	21.1	17.2	17.1	9.6	14.7	12.1	9.7	9.6	8.8	6.1	12.8	9.8	10.2	9.1	7.3	12.2	6.4	8.7	7.1	10.0	6.4	12.2		
2013-2014 change in pp	~	~	0.7	0.7	0.6	-0.9	0.7	~	~	n.a.	-2.8	-1.0	1.4	1.5	~	0.8	1.8	~	-2.2	~	~	~	~	~	1.3	~	~	~	0.7	~	1.0	-0.7	-1.0	
2008-2014 change in pp	n.a.	1.9	2.6	2.6	2.9	4.0	~	n.a.	-1.7	3.1	7.4	9.7	10.5	~	n.a.	1.7	5.2	4.2	2.7	~	~	~	2.0	1.7	~	5.9	-1.9	2.0	1.9	2.5	~	1.8		
Intensity of poverty risk	Relative median at-risk-of-poverty gap (in %)																																	
	2014	24.6	24.6	24.8	24.8	18.8	33.2	18.0	18.5	23.2	22.0	17.2	31.3	31.6	16.6	27.9	28.2	18.5	23.6	22.7	16.3	22.3	17.8	16.9	20.1	23.2	30.3	35.1	22.0	29.0	13.9	20.4	19.6	
	2013-2014 change in pp	~	~	~	~	~	2.3	1.4	-5.0	2.8	n.a.	~	-1.4	~	~	~	~	~	-3.9	-2.1	-1.2	1.3	-1.3	~	-1.2	~	2.9	2.5	1.6	4.9	-1.1	~	~	
Persistence of poverty risk	Persistent at-risk-of-poverty rate (in %)																																	
	2014	10.4	10.3	10.5	n.a.	9.5	16.5	3.4	5.1	9.5	11.2	n.a.	14.5	14.3	7.9	13.2	12.9	7.3	10.8	16.0	8.7	8.6	10.6	7.7	8.5	10.7	12.0	9.5	7.1	7.0	7.6	6.5		
	2013-2014 change in pp	~	~	~	n.a.	~	3.1	~	n.a.	-1.1	n.a.	2.1	2.2	~	n.a.	~	-2.7	-1.3	5.8	~	1.3	2.1	1.2	~	1.7	~	3.2	2.0	n.a.	~	n.a.	-1.3		
Income inequalities	Income quintile ratio (\$80/\$20)																																	
	2014	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	3.8	6.8	3.5	4.1	5.1	6.5	4.8	6.5	6.8	4.3	5.1	5.8	5.4	6.5	6.1	4.4	4.3	4.0	3.8	4.1	4.9	6.2	7.2	3.7	3.9	3.6	3.9	5.1	
	2013-2014 change in %	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~
Child poverty and social exclusion	At-risk-of-poverty or social exclusion rate of children (% of people aged 0-17)																																	
	2014	27.8	27.7	25.6	25.7	23.2	45.2	19.5	14.5	19.6	23.8	30.3	36.7	35.8	21.6	29.0	32.1	24.7	35.3	28.9	26.4	41.8	31.3	17.1	23.3	28.2	31.4	50.5	17.7	23.6	15.6	16.7	31.3	
	2013-2014 change in pp	~	~	~	~	1.3	n.a.	3.1	~	~	n.a.	-3.6	~	3.2	0.8	~	~	~	-3.0	-3.1	-6.5	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~
Effectiveness of social protection system	Impact of social transfers (excl. pensions) on poverty reduction (%)																																	
	2014	34.1	34.1	33.5	33.7	43.6	20.1	43.6	55.0	33.2	23.2	58.1	15.0	28.6	44.6	35.1	21.5	41.5	21.5	30.6	40.6	43.6	33.2	45.5	44.5	26.4	27.0	10.9	42.2	35.7	53.6	47.0	42.7	
	2013-2014 change in pp	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	n.a.	-5.3	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	-5.3	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~
Social consequences of labour market	At-risk-of-poverty rate for the population living in (quasi-) jobless households																																	
	2014	58.2	58.1	59.3	59.4	62.2	67.7	67.1	43.8	65.0	70.9	49.0	51.1	63.1	52.3	63.3	59.7	51.7	73.0	70.9	58.3	63.2	64.1	48.7	54.1	55.9	59.5	59.7	61.4	79.3	52.9	66.5	50.0	
	2013-2014 change in pp	2.0	2.0	~	~	~	-4.3	13.6	~	~	n.a.	7.9	-7.3	1.8	-8.1	~	~	~	5.1	4.9	6.4	~	~	8.9	~	~	~	10.4	4.6	5.7	~	-7.2	8.8	
Social consequences of labour market	In-work at-risk-of-poverty rate (in %)																																	
	2014	9.6	9.6	9.4	9.4	4.8	9.3	3.6	4.8	9.9	11.8	5.5	13.2	12.6	8.0	5.7	11.1	7.8	8.3	8.4	11.1	6.7	5.7	5.3	7.2	10.7	10.7	19.5	6.4	5.7	3.7	7.8	8.7	
	2013-2014 change in pp	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7	~	2.1	~	~	1.3	n.a.	1.0	~	2.0	~	~	~	-1.2	-0.8	~	~	~	~	0.8	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	
Social consequences of labour market	Long-term unemployment rate (in %)																																	
	2015	4.5	4.5	5.5	5.5	4.4	5.6	2.4	1.7	2.0	2.4	5.3	18.2	11.4	4.3	10.3	6.9	6.8	4.5	3.9	1.9	3.1	2.4	3.0	1.7	3.0	7.2	3.0	4.7	7.6	2.3	1.5	1.6	
	2014-2015 change in pp	~	~	-0.6	~	~	-1.3	~	~	~	-0.9	-1.3	-1.3	-1.5	~	~	-0.8	-0.9	~	-0.9	~	~	~	~	~	~	-0.8	-1.2	~	-0.6	-1.7	~	~	-0.6
2008-2015 change in pp	1.9	2.0	2.6	2.6	1.1	2.7	~	1.2	-1.9	~	3.6	14.5	9.4	1.7	5.0	3.9	6.3	2.6	2.6	~	~	~	~	~	~	3.6	n.a.	2.8	~	1.1	~	~	~	

		EU28	EU27	EA18	EA19	BE	BG	CZ	DK	DE	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	HR	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU	HU	MT	NL	AT	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	FI	SE	UK
Youth exclusion	Early school leavers (in %)																																
	2015	11.0	11.0	11.7	11.6	10.1	13.4	6.2	7.8	10.1	11.2	6.9	7.9	20.0	9.3	2.8	14.7	5.3	9.9	5.5	9.3	11.6	19.8	8.2	7.3	5.3	13.7	19.1	5.0	6.9	9.2	7.0	10.8
	2014-2015 change in pp	~	~	~	~	~	~	0.7	~	0.6	~	~	-1.1	-1.9	~	~	~	-1.5	1.4	~	3.2	~	~	~	~	-3.7	1.0	0.6	~	~	~	-1.0	
	2008-2015 change in pp	-3.7	-3.8	-4.7	-4.7	-1.9	-1.4	~	-4.7	-1.7	-2.8	-4.5	-6.5	-11.7	-2.5	-1.6	-4.9	-8.4	-5.6	-2.0	-4.1	~	-7.4	-3.2	-2.9	~	-21.2	n.a.	~	~	~	~	-6.1
	Youth unemployment ratio (15-24)																																
	2015	8.4	8.4	8.9	8.8	6.6	5.6	4.1	6.7	3.5	5.5	7.6	12.9	16.8	9.1	14.3	10.6	12.3	6.7	5.5	6.1	5.4	6.1	7.7	6.1	6.8	10.7	6.8	5.8	8.4	11.7	11.2	8.6
	2014-2015 change in pp	-0.8	-0.8	-0.6	-0.7	~	-0.9	-1.0	-1.1	~	~	-1.3	-1.8	-2.2	~	-1.0	-1.0	-2.2	-1.2	-1.1	~	-0.6	~	-0.9	~	-1.3	-1.2	~	-1.0	-0.8	1.0	-1.5	-1.2
	2008-2015 change in pp	1.5	1.5	2.0	1.9	~	1.8	~	~	~	~	6.3	5.1	2.0	5.6	4.1	8.5	~	1.5	~	~	~	~	3.8	~	1.1	3.9	n.a.	1.3	2.2	2.9	~	~
	NEETs (15-24)																																
	2015	12.0	12.0	12.2	12.2	12.2	19.3	7.5	6.2	6.2	10.8	14.3	17.2	15.6	11.9	18.5	21.4	15.2	10.5	9.2	6.2	11.6	10.4	4.7	7.5	11.0	11.3	18.1	9.5	13.7	10.6	6.7	11.1
2014-2015 change in pp	~	~	~	~	~	-0.9	-0.6	~	~	-0.9	-0.9	-1.9	-1.5	~	-0.8	-0.7	-1.8	-1.5	0.7	~	-2.0	~	-0.8	~	-1.0	-1.0	1.1	~	0.9	~	~	-0.8	
2008-2015 change in pp	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.2	2.1	1.9	~	1.9	-2.2	2.1	~	5.8	1.3	1.4	6.9	4.8	5.5	-1.3	~	~	~	2.1	1.3	~	2.0	1.1	n.a.	3.0	2.6	2.8	-1.1	~	
Active ageing	Employment rate of older workers (55-64) in %																																
	2015	53.3	53.4	53.2	53.3	44.0	53.0	55.5	64.7	66.2	64.5	55.6	34.3	46.9	48.7	39.0	48.2	48.2	59.4	60.4	38.4	45.3	40.3	61.7	46.3	44.3	49.9	41.1	36.6	47.0	60.0	74.5	62.2
	2014-2015 change in pp	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.3	3.0	1.5	1.5	0.6	~	2.6	~	2.6	1.8	2.7	2.0	1.3	3.0	4.1	-4.2	3.5	2.5	1.8	1.2	1.8	2.1	-2.0	1.2	2.2	0.9	~	1.2
	2008-2015 change in pp	7.8	7.9	8.9	8.9	9.5	7.0	7.9	6.3	12.4	2.1	1.7	-8.7	1.4	10.5	1.9	13.9	-6.6	~	~	7.4	4.2	14.4	10.2	8.7	7.5	12.7	~	n.a.	3.8	7.7	3.5	4.4
Pension adequacy	At risk of poverty or social exclusion for the elderly (65+) in %																																
	2014	17.8	17.7	16.0	16.2	17.3	47.8	10.7	10.8	17.4	35.0	10.3	23.0	12.9	10.1	29.7	20.2	27.2	39.3	31.9	6.4	19.0	23.3	6.9	15.7	18.2	21.1	33.2	20.1	13.4	17.0	16.5	19.3
	2013-2014 change in pp	~	~	~	~	-2.2	n.a.	~	~	1.4	n.a.	~	~	-1.6	-0.7	-2.2	-1.8	~	3.2	~	~	~	2.5	~	~	-1.5	0.8	-1.8	-2.9	~	~	~	1.2
	2008-2014 change in pp	n.a.	-5.6	-4.2	-4.2	-5.6	-7.9	-1.8	n.a.	1.9	-12.9	-9.0	-5.1	-13.3	-4.0	n.a.	-4.2	-22.1	-19.5	-8.0	~	~	~	-2.8	-5.5	-8.7	-6.6	-16.0	-4.3	-8.5	-6.9	~	-9.2
	Median relative income of elderly people																																
	2014	0.94	0.94	0.95	0.95	0.77	0.82	0.84	0.78	0.90	0.63	0.91	1.00	1.03	1.02	0.88	0.99	0.75	0.71	0.77	1.11	1.05	0.78	0.89	0.95	0.99	0.94	1.04	0.91	0.91	0.79	0.83	0.86
	2013-2014 change in %	~	~	~	~	~	7.9	~	2.6	1.1	n.a.	~	-3.8	3.0	~	~	~	~	-7.8	-4.9	~	1.9	~	-1.1	~	1.0	~	~	4.6	1.1	1.3	2.5	-1.1
	2008-2014 change in %	n.a.	10.6	9.2	10.5	~	24.2	6.3	n.a.	~	11.3	23.0	16.3	24.1	7.4	n.a.	12.5	27.1	34.0	10.0	14.4	~	6.8	6.0	8.0	~	13.3	22.4	8.3	15.2	9.7	6.4	16.2
	Aggregate replacement ratio																																
	2014	0.56	0.56	0.57	0.56	0.47	0.44	0.55	0.45	0.45	0.47	0.38	0.60	0.60	0.69	0.40	0.64	0.39	0.44	0.45	0.85	0.62	0.56	0.50	0.60	0.63	0.63	0.64	0.45	0.62	0.51	0.60	0.50
2013-2014 change in %	~	~	~	~	~	12.8	~	2.3	-4.3	n.a.	~	~	~	4.5	8.1	3.2	~	-6.4	-6.2	9.0	~	~	6.4	~	5.0	6.8	-1.5	-2.2	1.6	4.1	3.4	-5.7	
2008-2014 change in %	n.a.	14.3	16.3	14.3	~	29.4	7.8	n.a.	~	11.1	-22.4	46.3	42.9	6.2	n.a.	25.5	18.2	46.7	~	46.6	~	36.6	16.3	~	12.5	23.5	30.6	~	14.8	~	~	16.3	
Health	Self reported unmet need for medical care																																
	2014	3.6	3.6	n.a.	n.a.	2.4	5.6	1.1	1.4	1.6	11.3	3.7	10.9	0.6	2.8	3.3	7.0	4.7	12.5	3.7	0.8	2.5	1.1	0.5	0.1	7.8	3.5	9.3	0.2	2.1	3.3	1.5	2.1
	2013-2014 change in pp	~	~	n.a.	n.a.	~	-3.3	~	~	~	2.9	~	1.9	~	~	~	~	~	~	-1.3	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	-1.1	~	~	~	~
	2008-2014 change in pp	n.a.	~	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-9.7	~	~	~	4.0	1.9	5.5	~	~	n.a.	1.8	1.9	2.6	-1.8	~	~	~	~	~	1.8	2.4	-1.5	~	~	2.5	~	1.1
	Healthy life years at 65 - males																																
	2014	8.6	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	11.0	8.7	8.5	11.0	6.8	4.9	11.4	7.7	10.1	10.4	6.0	7.8	10.4	4.0	6.1	11.3	6.0	13.3	10.7	8.4	7.5	6.9	5.9	7.8	4.3	8.8	15.2	9.7
2008-2014 change in %	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	5.8	~	13.3	-8.3	7.9	22.5	22.6	-14.4	~	19.5	n.a.	~	14.3	-16.7	~	5.6	7.1	26.7	8.1	13.5	7.1	~	-25.3	-15.2	43.3	10.0	16.0	-9.3	
Healthy life years at 65 - females																																	
2014	8.6	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	11.0	9.6	9.3	12.8	6.7	6.0	12.3	7.1	9.4	10.7	5.8	7.3	8.8	4.6	6.1	10.8	6.1	13.7	10.2	7.7	8.1	5.6	5.7	8.6	3.6	9.3	16.7	10.6	
2008-2014 change in %	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	5.8	~	13.4	~	~	39.5	19.4	-15.5	6.8	5.9	n.a.	~	15.8	-6.1	-7.6	-6.9	~	18.1	5.2	~	5.2	~	-28.7	-8.5	33.3	~	19.3	-9.4	
Access to decent Housing	Housing cost overburden rate																																
	2014	11.4	11.4	11.3	11.3	10.4	12.9	10.5	15.6	15.9	8.3	5.5	40.7	10.9	5.1	7.5	8.5	4.0	9.6	7.1	6.8	12.8	1.6	15.4	6.6	9.6	9.2	14.9	6.4	9.0	5.1	7.8	12.1
	2013-2014 change in pp	~	~	~	~	0.8	-1.4	-1.2	-2.3	~	n.a.	~	3.8	0.6	~	-0.9	~	0.7	-1.8	-1.1	1.2	-1.5	-1.0	~	-0.6	-0.7	0.9	~	~	~	~	n.a.	
2008-2014 change in pp	n.a.	~	3.1	3.1	-2.1	~	-2.3	n.a.	n.a.	3.6	2.2	18.5	1.5	~	n.a.	~	2.2	~	~	2.1	3.1	1.2	-1.7	1.7	~	~	1.6	-3.8	2.0	3.4	~	~	-4.2
Evolution in real household disposable income	Real change in gross household disposable income (in %)																																
	2013-2014 change in %	1.6	n.a.	n.a.	0.7	~	n.a.	1.6	1.5	1.4	2.1	0.8	-1.2	0.6	1.2	0.9	~	-12.7	4.1	2.4	n.a.	2.8	n.a.	1.1	~	2.7	~	-21.5	1.4	3.2	-1.0	2.1	0.6
	2008-2014 change in %	2.4	n.a.	n.a.	-2.2	~	6.5	~	6.0	4.0	-2.8	-9.1	-32.3	-8.6	3.5	-8.0	-9.6	-21.0	-14.7	-4.9	n.a.	-2.3	n.a.	~	~	13.7	-8.9	-11.5	-5.0	5.4	4.0	16.8	3.6

Note: i) Only significant changes have been highlighted in green/red (positive/negative changes). "~" refers to stable performance (i.e. insignificant change). Eurostat calculations on statistical significance of net change have been used where available, combined with checks for substantive significance in some cases. In all the remaining cases a 1pp threshold (0.5 pp for annual changes in LFS-based indicators) has been used for all percentage-based indicators or for indicators based on ratios and the healthy life years indicators a 5% threshold has been used as specified in the SPPM methodological paper approved by the SPC (see the following table for full details); ii) The method used to estimate the statistical significance of the net changes, based on regression and developed by Net-SILC2 (an EU funded network consisting of a group of institutions and researchers conducting analysis using EU-SILC) is still under improvement; iii) For AT, break in series in 2011 for persistent poverty ("n.a." shown for the period compared to 2008); iv) For BE, major break in 2011 in the self-reported unmet need for medical examination ("n.a." shown for the period compared to 2008); v) For BG, major break in the time series for the material deprivation indicators, so SMD and AROPE are reported as not available for the latest year period, and the change 2008-2013 is used for the longer period compared to 2008; vi) For DK, breaks in series for the period 2008-2014 which mainly affect indicators related to incomes and to a lesser degree variables highly correlated with incomes ("n.a." shown for the period compared to 2008 for these); vii) For EE, major break in series in 2014 for variables in EU-SILC due to implementation of a new methodology based on the use of administrative files. Hence change in EU-SILC based indicators not available for the latest year period, and change 2008-2013 used for the longer period compared to 2008; viii) For FR, there is a break in series in 2014 for the "youth unemployment ratio" and in 2013 and 2014 for the "NEETs" indicator; ix) For HR, the long-term comparison for EU-SILC-based indicators is relative to 2010 as no EU-SILC data published by Eurostat before then; x) For RO, breaks in series in 2010 for LFS-based indicators, so changes for the period 2008-2015 not shown for those variables; xi) For UK, changes in the EU-SILC survey vehicle and institution in 2012 might have affected the results on trends since 2008 and interpretation of data on the longer-term trend must therefore be particularly cautious. For the housing cost overburden rate, break in series in 2014 ("n.a." shown for the latest year period, i.e. the change compared to 2013).

Latest indications from available 2015 EU-SILC data

Some 10 Member States have already reported on the results of the 2015 EU-SILC survey¹³, with 23 MS providing early estimates on the severe material deprivation (SMD) indicator. This section presents the findings from this most recent available data. The table below shows figures available for the changes in the SPPM indicators between 2014 and 2015, highlighting where changes are significant¹⁴.

Results for the SMD indicator, regarded as one of the more timely indicators available from EU-SILC, strongly suggest that household incomes and financial conditions have continued to improve over the very latest period. The severe material deprivation rate has declined significantly over 2014-2015 in 12 of the 23 Member States for which figures are available, and has only risen significantly in one. Among the more limited number of countries (11) with figures on the share of the population living in (quasi-)jobless households, half have shown a significant reduction and only one a significant increase. In contrast, none of the 11 Member States reported a significant fall in the at-risk-of poverty rate, while 2 reported noticeable increases.

The combined result of these changes in the various components of the overall at-risk-of-poverty-or-social-exclusion rate (AROPE) are significant reductions in AROPE in 4 out of the 10 countries for which figures are available, and only one Member State reporting a significant rise.

Developments in the indicators focusing on current pensions adequacy suggest that perhaps the well-established trend of improvement in the relative income and living conditions of the elderly may be starting to reverse, with more mixed developments among the available data on the aggregate replacement ratio and the median relative income ratio of elderly people, along with the at-risk-of-poverty-or-social-exclusion rate for the elderly. However, this reflects to some extent the re-adjustment in the income distribution as the improvement in the labour market situation feeds through to a pick up in income for the working age population.

On many of the other EU-SILC based indicators in the SPPM, results tend to be mixed across those countries for which figures are already available.

13 This refers to the situation at the beginning of July 2016, at which time 10 Member States (AT, BG, DK, EL, ES, FI, HU, LV, NL and PT) had reported data for the SILC-based indicators included in the SPPM, with data also available for HR on many of them. For the SMD indicator, further countries provided early estimates of this indicator, with provisional figures available for a further 13 countries, resulting in figures for 23 Member States being available in total at that time.

14 The estimates of significance used are the ones employed to investigate the changes 2013-2014.

Dashboard of changes 2014-2015 for available EU-SILC based figures

	2014-2015 change	EU28	EU27	EA18	EA19	BE	BG	CZ	DK	DE	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	HR	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU	HU	MT	NL	AT	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	FI	SE	UK	
Europe 2020	At risk of poverty or social exclusion (in %)																																	
	2014-2015 change in pp	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1.2	n.a.	-0.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-0.3	-0.6	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-1.8	n.a.	n.a.	-3.6	n.a.	0.3	-0.9	n.a.	-0.9	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-0.5	n.a.	n.a.	
	At-risk-of-poverty rate (in %)																																	
	2014-2015 change in pp	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.2	n.a.	0.1	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-0.7	-0.1	n.a.	1.0	n.a.	n.a.	1.3	n.a.	n.a.	-0.1	n.a.	0.5	-0.2	n.a.	0.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-0.4	n.a.	n.a.	
	At-risk-of-poverty threshold for a single person household (levels in pps, changes as real change in national currency in %)																																	
	2014-2015 change in %	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1.7	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	11.8	n.a.	n.a.	4.9	n.a.	n.a.	-0.6	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.4	n.a.	n.a.	
Intensity of poverty risk	Severe material deprivation rate (in %)																																	
	2014-2015 change in pp	0.2	0.1	0.4	0.3	-0.1	1.1	-1.5	0.5	n.a.	-1.7	n.a.	0.7	-0.7	-0.3	-0.1	-0.1	0.4	-2.8	n.a.	0.3	n.a.	-4.6	-2.1	-0.7	-0.4	-2.3	-1.0	-0.4	-0.8	n.a.	-0.6	n.a.	-1.2
	Population living in (quasi-) jobless households (in %)																																	
	2014-2015 change in pp	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-0.5	n.a.	-0.6	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-0.4	-1.7	n.a.	-0.1	n.a.	n.a.	-1.8	n.a.	n.a.	-3.4	n.a.	0.0	-0.9	n.a.	-1.3	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.8	n.a.	n.a.	
	Relative median at-risk-of-poverty gap (in %)																																	
	2014-2015 change in pp	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-2.9	n.a.	3.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-0.7	2.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1.9	n.a.	n.a.	-0.5	n.a.	0.4	0.4	n.a.	-1.3	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-0.7	n.a.	n.a.	
Persistence of poverty risk	Persistent at-risk-of-poverty rate (in %)																																	
	2014-2015 change in pp	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-0.3	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-0.7	n.a.	n.a.	-1.4	n.a.	-0.4	0.3	n.a.	1.6	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1.3	n.a.	n.a.	
Income inequalities	Income quintile ratio (S80/S20)																																	
	2014-2015 change in %	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	4.4	n.a.	0.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.0	1.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.0	n.a.	n.a.	0.0	n.a.	0.0	-2.4	n.a.	-3.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.0	n.a.	n.a.	
Child poverty and social exclusion	At-risk-of poverty or social exclusion rate of children (% of people aged 0-17)																																	
	2014-2015 change in pp	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-1.5	n.a.	1.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1.1	-1.4	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-4.0	n.a.	n.a.	-5.7	n.a.	0.1	-1.0	n.a.	-1.8	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-0.7	n.a.	n.a.	
Effectiveness of social protection system	Impact of social transfers (excl. pensions) on poverty reduction (%)																																	
	2014-2015 change in pp	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	2.4	n.a.	-2.3	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1.1	-2.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-3.9	n.a.	n.a.	-1.6	n.a.	-0.0	1.2	n.a.	-0.8	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.1	n.a.	n.a.	
	At-risk-of-poverty rate for the population living in (quasi-) jobless households																																	
2014-2015 change in pp	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	7.7	n.a.	0.8	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.5	-1.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	3.9	n.a.	n.a.	-6.6	n.a.	1.4	-5.0	n.a.	-2.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-0.1	n.a.	n.a.		
Social consequences of labour market	In-work at-risk-of poverty rate (in %)																																	
	2014-2015 change in pp	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-1.5	n.a.	0.3	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.2	0.6	n.a.	0.2	n.a.	n.a.	1.1	n.a.	n.a.	2.6	n.a.	0.3	0.6	n.a.	0.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-0.2	n.a.	n.a.	
Pension adequacy	At risk of poverty or social exclusion for the elderly (65+) in %																																	
	2014-2015 change in pp	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	4.0	n.a.	-0.9	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-0.2	0.8	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	2.8	n.a.	n.a.	-1.9	n.a.	-0.8	-1.7	n.a.	0.6	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-2.5	n.a.	n.a.	
	Median relative income of elderly people																																	
	2014-2015 change in %	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-13.4	n.a.	-1.3	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	4.0	-1.9	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-8.5	n.a.	n.a.	-3.8	n.a.	0.0	3.2	n.a.	-2.1	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	2.5	n.a.	n.a.	
Access to decent Housing	Aggregate replacement ratio																																	
	2014-2015 change in %	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-6.8	n.a.	0.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1.7	10.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-4.5	n.a.	n.a.	4.8	n.a.	4.0	3.3	n.a.	-3.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	2.0	n.a.	n.a.	
	Housing cost overburden rate																																	
2014-2015 change in pp	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1.9	n.a.	-0.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.2	-0.6	n.a.	0.0	n.a.	n.a.	-1.5	n.a.	n.a.	-4.3	n.a.	0.2	-0.2	n.a.	-0.1	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-0.2	n.a.	n.a.		

Note: i) Only significant changes have been highlighted in green/red (positive/negative changes). "n.a." refers to data not (yet) being available. Eurostat calculations on statistical significance of net change have been used where available, combined with checks for substantive significance in some cases. In all the remaining cases a 1pp threshold has been used for all percentage-based indicators or for indicators based on ratios a 5% threshold has been used; ii) The method used to estimate the statistical significance of the net changes, based on regression and developed by Net-SILC2 (an EU funded network consisting of a group of institutions and researchers conducting analysis using EU-SILC) is still under improvement; iii) SMD figures for BE, CY, CZ, EE, FR, HR, IT, LT, MT, PL, RO, SI, and UK are provisional.

IV. Main recent social policy developments in the EU Member States¹⁵

Social inclusion, poverty reduction and Roma inclusion

Improving the functioning of social protection systems and reducing poverty has been a continuous focus of the policy reforms adopted by a number of Member States. The 2016 National Reform Programmes (NRPs) show that Member States are making efforts to address issues related to coverage and adequacy of social benefits and their link to activation. Some Member States increased the amount of income support or maintained it as a universal benefit, others have focused on unemployment benefits and social assistance and their better link to activation and on improved targeting and coverage for social transfers. Member States are also making efforts to develop comprehensive databases on the recipients of social benefits and services as a way to improve monitoring and targeting. Conditionality has generally been increased and availability for work has been more tightly enforced in many of the Member States concerned.

Several Member States took action to **facilitate access to quality social services** in order to reduce the risk of poverty or social exclusion. Some of them adopted measures to provide **support for those furthest from the labour market** in their reintegration into working life as well as ensuring social participation for those who cannot work. Many Member States focused their **reform efforts on addressing child poverty and family benefits**, aiming in particular at facilitating support to parents' access to the labour market, and enhancing preventive approaches through early intervention and increased support to families.

Providing integrated services tailored to individual needs increases the efficiency and effectiveness of spending. While some Member States already provide integrated services and 'one-stop-shops', others lack policy coordination at the national level, leading to fragmentation and inconsistencies in service provision.

Adequate and sustainable pensions

Reforming pension systems has consistently been an important element of the structural reforms agenda for many Member States. Most of those reforms have aimed at promoting longer working lives in line with growing life expectancy, while some have focused on such aspects as equalising the pension age for men and women or developing supplementary savings. The 2016 National Reform Programmes show that the majority of Member States are making progress in addressing their challenges. Given the complexity of pension reforms and the involvement of social partners in the negotiation process, reforms are more often being implemented in the context of a multiannual cycle.

¹⁵ For a detailed review, see Annex 2.

Increasing the retirement age is a priority for the majority of Member States. At present, 26 out of 28 Member States have adopted provisions for increasing the statutory retirement age, including 9 who have decided or planned to directly link future increases to changes in life expectancy. Two Member States were recommended to bring forward or adopt harmonised pensionable ages for men and women. Moreover, 4 Member States were called on to link pensionable age with changes in life expectancy and, in one case, to close the gap between statutory and effective retirement age.

Many Member States have also taken steps to **limit early retirement pathways**, increase incentives for later retirement and revise the calculation of benefits. In this context, a number of Member States are in the process of reviewing **access to disability pensions and reforming work incapacity schemes** in order to facilitate labour market participation and the accumulation of pension rights. Others focus on increases to minimum pension benefits as a way to strengthen social protection for those most in need.

To ensure the success of these reforms, complementary measures are still necessary to maintain incomes after retirement, such as extending working lives and providing opportunities and incentives to get additional retirement incomes through complementary pension savings. Some Member States are combining measures to reform their pensions systems with initiatives in the labour market aimed at improving the employability of older workers, while others are developing broader active ageing strategies.

The reform strand where least progress has been made is the **development of supplementary retirement savings**. Only a few Member States have taken significant steps to improve the coverage and quality of supplementary pensions. Last year, two Member States took action to adjust their complementary pension schemes, while one Member State continued with efforts to align the special pension schemes for some professions with those for other workers.

Recent reforms have significantly contributed to bringing the cost of ageing under control so that public pension expenditure projections for the EU28 for 2060, in terms of percentage of GDP, are not higher than the pension expenditure in 2013. Many MS are expected to lower pension costs, but several MS are still increasing spending. Nonetheless, the long-term sustainability of the pensions systems cannot stem only from reforms aimed at curbing future spending trends; it is also essential to balance sustainability with adequacy concerns and to ensure that women and men have adequate incomes in old age.

Accessible, high-quality and sustainable health care

The main focus of the reforms in the area of health has been on ensuring **cost-effectiveness and sustainability of healthcare**. Population ageing and other factors, such as the high costs of innovative technologies and medicines, are putting increased pressure on the financial sustainability of health systems and the ability to provide adequate healthcare for all. Ensuring universal access to high quality care while guaranteeing the financial sustainability of health

systems require increased efforts to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of health systems. The 2016 NRPs point out that most Member States are taking measures to address cost effectiveness and sustainability challenges.

Most of the challenges for these Member States relate to long-term fiscal sustainability, inefficient use of resources, access and inequities in access to healthcare, availability of a qualified health workforce, low public funding or poor health outcomes. Moreover, they point to deficiencies in the governance of the healthcare sector. The centralisation of the procurement system has been undertaken in several Member States as an effective measure for reducing both the cost of drugs and of medical supplies. Increasing the use of generic drugs has also been employed in some Member States as a way to reduce expenditure for pharmaceuticals.

Some Member States have embarked on ambitious health reforms defining long-term priorities in the field of healthcare. These are in many cases done in the context of multiannual, comprehensive national health strategies. Similarly, reforms in hospital care, including linking hospital financing to outcomes, developing out-patient care and reviewing procurement arrangements constitute a significant part of Member States' efforts in ensuring better efficiency in spending. For this purpose, a few Member States introduced mechanisms for the measurement of hospital efficiency, hospital benchmarking and ranking.

Several Member States have also made efforts to improve the transparency of procedures and the availability of information, as well as to enhance patients' rights and choice of health care providers and to reduce the waiting time for health care services. Addressing fragmentation in services and the re-organisation of governance arrangements are other areas of important policy effort. Still, the reforms initiated in a number of Member States need to be deepened so as to ensure a sustainable financing basis for health systems as well as adequate access to health care services and health insurance, including for the most vulnerable.

Adequate social protection for long-term care needs

The 2016 NRPs reveal that the policy measures in the area of long-term care focus mainly on **improving cost-effectiveness** and addressing concerns over **provision and access to adequate long-term care** services. The measures adopted by some Member States aim at addressing these challenges through structural reforms such as a shift from institutional to community-based care, strengthened support to informal carers and improved policies for prevention, rehabilitation and independent living. However, more efforts are necessary to ensure the sustainability of long-term care and to facilitate the access to adequate, affordable and quality long-term care. In order to achieve this, Member States should adopt a proactive policy approach, promoting independent living and preventing the loss of autonomy, reducing thus the need for long-term care services.

V. Key social challenges and good social outcomes: summary of findings

The SPPM analysis of Member States' key social challenges and good social outcomes, considering trends from 2011 to 2014¹⁶, reflects the different performance of social protection systems across the European Union during the second part of the crisis and the beginning of the recovery period.

Preventing poverty and social exclusion through inclusive labour markets, adequate and sustainable social protection and high quality services

For the general population across the EU28, the at-risk-of-poverty-or-social-exclusion rate (AROPE) appears to be a key challenge in 5 Member States (BG, EL, HU, PT, RO), with good outcomes registered in 2 Member States (AT and CZ). The situation appears to be better if only the Eurozone is considered, with only 2 Euro area countries displaying AROPE as a key challenge. An analysis of the subcomponents of this indicator shows that monetary (relative) poverty is a key challenge in 2 Member States (LV and LU), severe material deprivation in 4 Member States (BG, CY, EL and HU), and (quasi-) jobless households in 5 Member States (BE, CY, EL, ES and IE). For the EU28, severe or persistent poverty represents a key challenge in 8 Member States (BG, EL, ES, HU, LT, PT, RO, SK), 5 of these countries being Eurozone members. Income inequality appears as a key challenge in 5 Member States (BG, CY, EL, ES and RO), out of which 3 are in the Euro area.

The housing situation, as reflected by either housing cost overburden or housing deprivation, is a key challenge in 7 Member States (DE, EL, HU, LV, PT, SI, SK), with FI displaying particularly good social outcomes in this regard and also SK specifically with regard to housing deprivation.

Looking specifically at the risk of poverty and social exclusion of persons in vulnerable situations, the analysis shows particular challenges concerning persons with disabilities (in 14 Member States – BE, BG, CZ, CY, DE, EE, ES, FI, LT, LV, MT, NL, RO, SE), Roma (in 5 Member States – BG, ES, HU, RO, SK), migrants and refugees (in 6 Member States – AT, DE, DK, ES, FR, NL), and low-skilled and unemployed people (in 3 Member States – BE, EE, MT). Concerning persons with disabilities, particularly positive outcomes can be noted in AT, FR, LU, and SK.

Breaking the intergenerational transmission of poverty – tackling child poverty

For children, the at-risk-of-poverty-or-social-exclusion rate appears to be a key challenge in 7 Member States (BG, EL, ES, HU, LU, MT, RO), with FI displaying particularly good social outcomes in this regard. An analysis of the subcomponents of this indicator shows that monetary poverty of children is a key challenge in 3 Member States (ES, LT and LU), severe material deprivation of children in 1 MS (EL), and the share of children living in (quasi-) jobless households in 4 MS (BE, CY, HU and IE).

¹⁶ For some Member States this was a particularly challenging period as they were under economic and financial adjustment programmes.

The impact of social transfers in reducing child poverty, the at-risk-of poverty rate of children living in households with different levels of work intensity and the poverty gap are indicative of how effective social protection of children is in a given country. Based on these indicators, effectiveness challenges have been identified for 13 Member States (DE, ES, IT, LT, LU, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, SI, SK, UK) and particularly good outcomes in DK and IE. The housing situation for children appears as a particular challenge in LV and PT.

Active inclusion - tackling poverty in working age

Specifically for the working age population, monetary poverty appears as a key challenge in 3 Member States (ES, IT and PT) and the share of adults living in (quasi-) jobless households in 5 Member States (CZ, EE, FI, LT, PT). In-work poverty presents a particular challenge in 6 Member States (DE, EL, ES, IT, LU, RO), with another 7 displaying particularly good social outcomes in this regard (BE, CZ, DK, FI, HR, NL, SI).

The effectiveness of social benefits has been assessed based on the impact of social transfers in reducing working age poverty, notably in terms of adequacy, coverage, and take-up of social assistance and unemployment benefits. Based on this approach, effectiveness challenges have been identified for 13 Member States (BG, CY, DE, EL, ES, HU, HR, IT, LT, LV, PL, RO, SK) with as many as 13 member states with particularly good outcomes (AT, BE, BG, CZ, CY, DK, EL, FI, FR, HU, IE, MT, SE). Key challenges related to the effectiveness of social services are evident in 5 Member States (BG, EE, ES, PT, RO), in particular related to access, quality, or co-operation with the employment services.

The inclusiveness of labour markets, as reflected by the at-risk-of-poverty rate for adults living in (quasi-)jobless households, proves to be a key challenge in DK, LU, NL and SK. The housing situation of the working age population appears as challenging in NL.

Elderly poverty/adequate income and living conditions of the elderly

Concerning the elderly, the at-risk-of-poverty-or-social-exclusion rate appears to be a key challenge in 6 Member States (BG, DE, EE, LT, LV, RO), monetary poverty in 4 Member States (DE, LT, SE, SI), and severe material deprivation in 2 MS (BG and LT). ES and NL show particularly good results in addressing the risk of poverty or social exclusion of the elderly. Similarly, BE, CZ, PT and SK show particularly low results in monetary poverty of the elderly.

The impact of social transfers in reducing old age poverty, the aggregate replacement ratio, the median relative income, and the poverty gap are indicative of how effective are pensions systems and social protection more generally in terms of allowing for a decent living of the elderly in a given country. Based on these indicators, effectiveness challenges have been identified for 9 Member States (BE, CY, DE, EE, HR, LT, LV, PL and SI) and particularly good outcomes in 6 Member States (AT, BG, CY, FI, LU and PT). The housing situation of the elderly presents a key challenge in 3 Member States (IT, LU and PT).

In terms of necessary policy reforms, particular challenges appear in AT concerning aligning the statutory pension age with life expectancy and in AT and RO as regards equalising the retirement ages for women and men.

Health and long-term care

The health status of the population, assessed in terms of life expectancy at birth and at 65 and healthy life years at birth and at 65, proves to be a key challenge for 9 Member States (BG, EE, HU, HR, LT, LV, PL, RO, SK), with only 2 displaying particularly good results (ES and PT). The effectiveness of curative or preventive health care, assessed in terms of potential years of life lost, amenable mortality and preventable mortality, proves to be a challenge for 9 Member States (BG, EE, HU, HR, LT, LV, PL, RO, SK). 12 Member States have a key challenge as concerns access to health care, based on self-reported unmet needs for medical care due to cost, waiting time, or distance (BG, CY, EE, EL, HU, IE, IT, LT, LV, PL, PT and RO).

Challenges related to the cost-effectiveness of the health systems typically reflect problems of the balance between in-patient and out-patient care, inefficiencies in the allocation of resources in the hospital sector, issues with pharmaceutical pricing and reimbursement, or insufficient availability and coverage of e-Health services. 9 Member States (AT, BG, CZ, CY, IE, LV, PL, SI and SK) register key challenges in this area.

The insufficient provision of long-term care services or sub-optimal design of the long-term care system has been identified as a key challenge in ES, IT, SI and SK.

Conclusions

Nearly two-thirds of the EU Member States (18) are faced with structural challenges related to the at-risk-of-poverty-or-social-exclusion rate for the different age categories.

These outcomes suggest that, while roughly one third of the EU Member States have a satisfactory or good performance in reducing poverty and social exclusion, about two thirds could further improve the effectiveness and efficiency of their social protection systems in order to prevent and protect against poverty and social exclusion throughout all stages of an individual's life.

For the working age population, nearly half of the Member States (13) have challenges as concerns the effectiveness of benefits, while for several others the challenges concern effectiveness of social services or inclusiveness of their labour markets. These outcomes suggest that policy reforms based on an active inclusion approach, combining adequate income support, high quality social services and support for activation to encourage labour market (re)integration, continue to be needed in a significant number of Member States.

Social investment and preventive approaches, including in healthcare, long-term care, social services, child and other dependents' care, housing support and rehabilitation services, are needed to strengthen people's capacities to participate actively in society and the economy. With 28 social challenges identified in relation to poverty or social exclusion for persons in vulnerable situations,

such as persons with disabilities, migrants and refugees, or Roma populations, it is clear that the inclusiveness and fairness of social protection systems is a key challenge across the EU.

Further reforms are also needed to enhance the quality of and access to health care, as well as the cost-effectiveness of health systems, which appear as key challenges in around one third of the Member States. Access to adequate, affordable and quality long-term care, with an increasing focus on prevention, remains a priority. Policy reforms to help maintain retirement incomes and ensure adequate pensions, equalise retirement ages for women and men, and align the statutory pension age with life expectancy are still necessary in a few Member States.

Synthesis table of key social challenges and good social outcomes, 2011-2014¹⁷

Social policy area	Subcategory	EU-28 sum (c)	EU-28 sum (g)	EA sum (c)	EA sum (g)	AT	BE	BG	CZ	CY	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HU	HR	IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK	UK	
1. Preventing poverty and social exclusion through inclusive labour markets, adequate and sustainable social protection and high quality services	At-risk of poverty and social exclusion for general population (AROPE)	5	2	2	1	g		c	g					c				c										c	c					
	<i>At-risk-of-poverty</i>	2	2	2	1							g											c	c		g								
	<i>Severe material deprivation</i>	4	1	2	1			c		c					c			c							g									
	<i>(Quasi-)jobless households (VLWI)</i>	5	4	5	2		c			c					c	c					c			g	g				g	g				
	Severe poverty and/or inequality for general population																																	
	<i>Severe or persistent poverty (gap, persistence)</i>	8	5	5	3			c	g			g			c	c	g	g	c				c	g				c	c			c		
	<i>Income inequality (S80/S20)</i>	5	4	3	3		g	c	g	c					c	c	g												c		g			
	Housing situation for general population	7	2	6	2						c				c		g		c						c			c			c	c/g		
	Poverty and social exclusion of persons in vulnerable situations																																	
	<i>Poverty and social exclusion of persons with disabilities</i>	14	4	10	4	g	c	c	c	c	c			c		c	c	g					c	g	c	c	c		c	c		g		
	<i>Poverty and social exclusion of Roma</i>	5	/	2	/			c								c			c										c			c		
	<i>Poverty and social exclusion of migrants and refugees</i>	6	/	5	/	c						c	c			c		c									c							
<i>Poverty and social exclusion of low-skilled and unemployed</i>	3	/	3	/		c							c												c									
Regional dimension of poverty and social exclusion	5	/	3	/			c								c		c					c						c						
2. Breaking the intergenerational transmission of poverty – tackling child poverty	At-risk of poverty and social exclusion for children (AROPE)	7	1	4	1			c						c	c	g		c					c		c			c						
	<i>At-risk-of-poverty</i>	3	/	3	/										c								c	c										
	<i>Severe material deprivation</i>	1	/	1	/										c																			
	<i>(Quasi-)jobless households (VLWI)</i>	4	/	3	/		c			c									c		c													
	Effectiveness of social protection for children	13	2	11	1						c	g			c						g	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c		c	c	c	
	Housing situation for children	2	/	2	/																				c				c					

¹⁷ "c" stands for challenge;"g" stands for good social outcome

Social policy area	Subcategory	EU-28 sum (c)	EU-28 sum (g)	EA sum (c)	EA sum (g)	AT	BE	BG	CZ	CY	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HU	HR	IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK	UK		
3. Active inclusion - tackling poverty in working age	At-risk of poverty and social exclusion for working age population (AROPE)	/	1	/	1																	g													
	<i>At-risk-of-poverty</i>	3	1	3	1										c							c						c				g			
	<i>Severe material deprivation</i>	/	2	/	1									g																	g				
	<i>(Quasi-)jobless households (VLWI)</i>	5	1	4	/				c					c		c							c					c		g					
	In work poverty	6	7	5	4		g		g		c	g			c	c	g			g		c		c			g		c		g				
	Effectiveness of social benefits	13	13	8	8	g	g	c/g	g	c/g	c	g			c/g	c	g	g	c/g	c	g	c	c		c	g		c		c	g		c		
	Effectiveness of social services	5	/	3	/			c						c		c												c	c						
	Inclusive labour markets	4	/	3	/							c												c			c						c		
Housing situation for working age population	1	/	1	/																						c									
4. Elderly poverty/adequate income and living conditions of the elderly	Poverty and social exclusion in old age (AROPE)	6	2	4	2			c			c		c		g							c		c		g			c						
	<i>At-risk-of-poverty</i>	4	4	3	3		g		g		c											c						g		c	c	g			
	<i>Severe material deprivation</i>	2	2	1	1			c														g	c				g								
	Effectiveness of social protection in old age	9	6	7	5	g	c	g		c/g	c			c			g			c			c	g	c			c	g			c			
	Aligning the statutory pension age with life expectancy	1	/	1	/	c																													
	Equalising the retirement ages for women and men	2	/	1	/	c																								c					
	Housing situation for the elderly	3	/	3	/																		c		c				c						
5. Health and long-term care	Health status	9	2	4	1			c					c		g			c	c			c		c			c	c/g				c			
	Effectiveness of curative or preventive health care	9	2	4	2			c		g			c				g	c	c			c		c			c		c				c		
	Access to health care	12	2	8	2	g		c		c			c	c	g			c		c	c	c	c		c		c	c	c						
	Cost-effectiveness of health systems	9	/	6	/	c		c	c	c											c				c			c				c	c		
	Long-term care	4	/	4	/											c							c									c	c		

List of annexes

The following annexes to the report are available as separate documents:

Annex 1: Detailed review of the latest social developments in the EU: SPPM results. A more detailed review of the latest social developments, based on a more extensive examination of the trends in the indicators in the SPPM dashboard together with supplementary indicators.

Annex 2: Detailed review of recent social policy reforms and initiatives (2015-2016). A review of recent social policy reforms based on Member States' reporting in the context of the National Reform Programmes (NRPs), the National Social Reports and strategic social reporting as well as in the context of the multilateral surveillance on the implementation of the 2015 Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs).

Annex 3: Main policy conclusions from the 2015-2016 thematic and peer reviews. The conclusions and key messages from the recent peer reviews and in-depth thematic reviews conducted under the auspices of the SPC are presented.

Annex 4: Relevant Council Conclusions (October 2015-September 2016). This provides a summary of the Council Conclusions adopted over the last year relating to social protection matters, including on social governance and on integrated approaches to combatting poverty.

Annex 5: SPPM Country profiles. These provide for all Member States a detailed snapshot of the main social indicators for each country, the progress towards the national 2020 poverty and social exclusion target, the most recent evolutions in a selected number of benefit schemes, and the main, priority social challenges and good social outcomes identified for each country.

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This report delivers on the core task of the Social Protection Committee to monitor the social situation in the EU and the developments in social protection policies in the Member States. Based on a set of key indicators and Member States' reporting, the report analyses the progress towards the Europe 2020 target on reducing poverty and social exclusion together with the latest social trends to watch. The most recent social policy developments in Europe are also reported on as well as the key structural social challenges currently faced by each Member State.

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