



Social Protection Committee

Indicators Sub-group

SPC/ISG/2020/11/3 REV

2021 ISG Work Programme

1. Introduction

The ISG work programme for 2021 will focus on contributing to delivering on the 2021 SPC priorities, the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR) and its Action Plan for implementation, the European Semester, and relevant priorities arising from the Commission Work Programme 2021. In addition, the ISG will regularly monitor the social situation following the COVID-19 outbreak, and contribute as necessary to in-depth thematic work in the context of the social OMC. Furthermore, the ISG will provide evidence and analysis measuring the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic using EU-SILC as soon as the first harmonised data on this becomes available.

Given these priorities and on-going activities, the work of the ISG will focus on the main areas listed below. The impact of new activities that the SPC decides to undertake in the course of 2021 will be assessed on an ongoing basis and the ISG work programme will be adjusted as necessary. Annex 1 contains an overview of next year's provisional meeting dates and agendas, with an indication of the timing of the main activities over 2021.

2. Follow up to the assessment of the Europe 2020 Strategy and on the European Pillar of Social Rights and implementation of its Action Plan

- **Follow up to the Europe 2020 Strategy and its headline poverty and social exclusion target**

The ISG will follow up on the findings of the joint assessment report of the EMCO and SPC on the Europe 2020 Strategy, in particular on issues related to the Committees' monitoring and reporting frameworks. It also stands ready to contribute to relevant aspects related to the implementation of the Action Plan on the European Pillar of Social Rights, including potential targets, taking into account the UN 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals and the European Council's strategic agenda for the EU for the period 2019-2024.

The ISG will continue its monitoring and analysis of the Europe 2020 poverty and social exclusion headline target, in view of providing a final assessment of the progress achieved against the target.

It will review the analytical content of the draft Joint Employment Report, and in particular, the assessment based on the EPSR scoreboard.

➤ **Review of the current social monitoring framework**

The ISG will continue to review the current social monitoring framework (EPSR scoreboard, SPPM, JAF). It will reflect, jointly with EMCO IG, on the scope to simplify and consolidate the existing tools in line with the findings from the assessment report of the EMCO and SPC on the Europe 2020 Strategy. It will further examine how the monitoring framework can be adapted to include more policy lever indicators and better reflect the social investment dimension of welfare systems, and more generally, review improvements to the timeliness of indicators. Specific activities in this area will include:

○ **Reflect on the role of the EPSR scoreboard**

Jointly with EMCO IG, the ISG will reflect on the role of the EPSR scoreboard in relation to the action plan on the EPSR and other existing monitoring tools.

○ **Timeliness of social indicators and flash estimates**

Timely estimates of the social situation are of increased importance due to the COVID-19 crisis. The ISG will follow Eurostat work on improving the timeliness of social indicators and on flash estimates of key income-based indicators.

○ **Joint Assessment Framework (JAF)**

The ISG will review the Joint Assessment Framework together with the EMCO Indicators Group and the European Commission. The ISG will also assess the JAF methodology in view of its improvement and further development.

○ **Benchmarking**

The ISG will continue the work on benchmarking as tasked by the SPC. In particular, it will complete the benchmarking framework on childcare and support to children, and complete the work on a benchmarking framework for pension's adequacy. The ISG will also, whenever called upon, review already existing frameworks (i.e. minimum income).

○ **Assessing social impact of EU policies**

The ISG will follow developments in the field of assessing the social impact of EU policies, including the Better Regulation (BR) Package, the governance of the assessment of the social impact of new initiatives, and the social impact of CSR linked reforms at the national level. The ISG will support the implementation of BR Guidelines and efforts to quantify the social impacts by reviewing possibilities to improve availability, accessibility and timeliness of evidence (including administrative data).

Planned deliverables for 2021:

- The ISG will, in collaboration with EMCO IG, review the current monitoring frameworks with the overall aim to simplify and consolidate them.
- The ISG will make a final assessment of the progress achieved against the 2020 poverty and social exclusion headline target.
- Finalise the benchmarking framework on childcare and support to children.
- Finalise the benchmarking framework on pension adequacy.

3. Monitoring of the social situation and the development of social policies

➤ Preparation of the SPC Annual Report

The ISG will contribute to the update on the social situation in the European Union, through preparing specific inputs based on its monitoring tools, on-going work as well as through providing analysis based on the EU social indicators. It will review the technical and analytical content of the annual report, as well as the methodology for identifying the Key Social Challenges (KSCs) and Good Social Outcomes (GSOs). The ISG will also continue collecting statistics derived from administrative data on benefit recipients and COVID-19 crisis support measures and provide analysis and evidence on social aspects of the crisis.

➤ Social Protection Performance Monitor (SPPM)

The ISG will continue the work on updating the Social Protection Performance Monitor, especially regarding the set of key social indicators in view of recent statistical developments and ISG adoption of new indicators. An update of the SPPM dashboard based on the complete set of EU-SILC 2019 data will be produced by spring 2021. If possible, the impact of the COVID-19 crisis will be reflected in this work.

➤ Regular monitoring of the social situation following the COVID-19 outbreak

The ISG, in cooperation with the EMCO Indicators Group, will produce regular monitoring reports on the social situation following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. For this it will use the more timely data and information from the sources suggested in the joint methodological note on exploring timely data sources/indicators, including the more frequent updates of the benefits recipients data collected via the ISG and the recently established reporting on the crisis support measures implemented by Member States. Eurostat nowcasts of poverty and income inequality indicators and relevant studies on the social impact of the crisis will also be used. When following up this work the ISG will consider ways to improve the comparability of data provided by Member states.

In carrying out the above monitoring activities, and given the risk that the timeliness and quality of the usual data collections underpinning social indicators will this year be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, the ISG will take into account Eurostat advice on this and discuss the greater use of nowcasting exercises.

Planned deliverables for 2021

Reports

- The ISG will contribute to the SPC annual report through an update on the social situation in the European Union and analysis based on the EU social indicators.
- It will provide regular monitoring reports on developments in the social situation following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Indicators and tools

- Update the Social Protection Performance Monitor

4. Thematic work

➤ **Social inclusion**

• **Review of the At-risk-of-poverty-or-social-exclusion (AROPE) Indicator**

Following the recent development of new indicators on (severe) material and social deprivation and the review of the quasi-jobless households indicator, the ISG will review the existing AROPE indicator and make changes as necessary. In relation to this work, it will provide guidance on the future use of the existing severe material deprivation indicator and the new material and social deprivation indicator.

• **Inequality**

Following up on the set of indicators agreed to monitor income inequalities and inequalities of opportunities, the ISG will also explore further work in the areas of the evolution of the middle class and the assessment of the distributional impacts of public policies and of the green transition.

➤ **Active inclusion indicators**

The Council Conclusions on minimum incomes invite the Commission and the Committees (SPC with the involvement of EMCO) to prepare periodically a joint report to analyse and review the progress achieved in the development of minimum income protection in the Member States. The report should cover access, adequacy and enabling aspects of minimum income protection. To support this activity of the SPC, the ISG will:

- follow recent work on the OECD pilot project on developing a strictness indicator of activation requirements for income support beneficiaries.
- explore the use of additional sources for the benchmarking framework such as EUROMOD (including for assessing the adequacy of benefits).

Following the discussions held in 2019, the work on policy indicators for measuring the quality of social services, encompassing inter alia such criteria as: accessibility, availability, affordability and coverage will resume once the Commission completes the mapping exercise of relevant services and quality indicators available at national level. The results of the mapping exercise undertaken in 2018 provides information on so-called mainstream social services, while further work is needed focusing on personal targeted services. On the basis of a study focusing on this dimension, further work on monitoring quality of social services will resume.

➤ **Child poverty**

Based on the existing monitoring framework for the implementation of the 2013 Recommendation on Investing in Children, the ISG will continue to support the monitoring of this Recommendation and will contribute to follow up work in the context of the Child Guarantee.

➤ **Situation of persons with disabilities**

Together with the Commission, the ISG will continue to develop new indicators for monitoring the situation of persons with disabilities. This includes further development of indicators in the area of education for persons with disabilities (for example early school leavers) and employment. It will also explore the possibility to include the new indicators for persons with disabilities in the joint assessment framework (JAF), and new indicators following the inclusion of a disability question in social surveys.

➤ **Homelessness and housing exclusion, Housing conditions**

The ISG will look into the area of homelessness and housing exclusion with the aim to further develop indicators and improve the availability of data in this area.

➤ **Energy poverty**

The ISG will also follow work on energy poverty and be ready to contribute to the monitoring process in this area.

➤ **Health**

The ISG will support the further development of the OMC health work stream and conduct further work on the JAF Health framework of indicators, including considering the feasibility of new indicators to measure access to healthcare.

The ISG will maintain regular contact with Eurostat and international organisations such as OECD and WHO in terms of policy needs and priorities in the area, and follow-up the work of the WPPH working group on Health System Performance Assessment.

➤ **Long term care**

The ISG will support the further development of the OMC long-term care work stream. It will complete the monitoring framework for LTC, including by identifying indicators that can be commonly used in the context of the OMC on long-term care and by including indicators specifically on quality of long-term care. In addition, the ISG will follow the future work of the planned EUROSTAT Task Force on LTC in order to improve the availability and quality of indicators relating to LTC.

➤ **Pensions**

The ISG will complete the benchmarking framework on pension adequacy.

➤ **Reconciliation of private and professional life**

Following the finalisation of the guidance manual and indicator framework on comparative EU-level data on the reconciliation of private and professional lives, the ISG, in coordination with the EMCO IG, will follow-up as necessary on Member States' progress in preparing for and delivering the data required for the Directive on reconciliation of private and professional life.

➤ **Access to social protection**

The ISG will develop further the recently adopted indicator framework for monitoring access to social protection for workers and the self-employed in the context of the recent Council Recommendation on access to social protection.

➤ **Social resilience, especially regarding social protection systems**

Follow analytical work on social resilience, including the resilience of social protection systems.

➤ **Social indicators for monitoring of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

The ISG will follow work on social indicators for monitoring of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and contribute as necessary to the further development of the indicators in this area.

Planned deliverables for 2021

Thematic work

- Further development of the monitoring frameworks for LTC and health.
- Further development of the monitoring framework for the Recommendation on access to social protection for workers and the self-employed.
- The ISG will complete a review of the AROPE indicator.

5. On-going activities on enhancing statistical capacity and methods

The ISG will follow up on issues identified in the 2018 seminar on ISG monitoring capacities. In particular, the ISG will explore how to include more contextual information (such as on the types of national social protection systems) in order to help users to better interpret the available indicators. It will also explore the use of alternative data sources that could possibly complement the existing surveys mainly used for social indicators, such as administrative data. It will review and enhance its indicators wherever necessary on the basis of new data or analysis.

In the course of 2021, the ISG will ensure its continuing contribution to the work of the Task Force on the revision of the EU-SILC legal basis and will follow closely its progress. It will follow up on the legal procedures stemming from the framework regulation for European statistics relating to persons and household, based on data at individual level collected from samples (IESS). It will follow up on the implementation of IESS.

The ISG will collaborate further with Eurostat on the possibility of inclusion of non-monetary income components in the definition of income. In this regard, it will follow closely and provide guidance on any follow up to the Eurostat project on “Social transfers in kind”. It will also follow up on the recommendations contained in the report on Net-SILC2 analysis on “Monitoring the evolution of income poverty and real incomes over time” and on related work carried out under Net-SILC3.

The ISG will follow and advise the work Eurostat is carrying out in compiling and analysing existing data to better describe the joint distributions of income (including a follow-up on the use of tax data to enhance the SILC data on the income distribution), consumption and wealth and the statistical links between micro and macro perspectives.

It will explore developing indicators which give a better view of the dynamic aspects of the social situation, such as indicators on poverty transitions, persistence and recurrence, making greater use of the longitudinal component of EU-SILC.

The ISG will support the EMCO IG as necessary in the further development of the LTU Recommendation monitoring framework.

The ISG will also work, in collaboration with the Commission, on ways to measure and analyse social spillovers, upward convergence, and explore strengthening the ability to analyse the link between social policy and economic policy. It will follow up on the aims of European Commission Communication on ‘GDP and beyond - measuring progress in a changing world’. It will also follow the use of social indicators in the Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure (MIP) scoreboard.

6. Cooperation with other relevant groups and organisations

The ISG will cooperate with other relevant groups of other Committees, including the working group on Social Protection Statistics and the related ESSPROS Task Force on methodology, the Eurostat Working Group on Public Health Statistics and the EPC LIME group. It will continue its close collaboration with the EMCO Indicators group including concerning interactions between the labour market and social inclusion (and especially on the monitoring framework for and implementation of the Council recommendation on the integration of the long-term unemployment

into the labour market, on aspects related to social services and income provision), and further development of the JAF.

The ISG will monitor research of potential interest for ISG work, especially through cooperation with several services of the Commission including the JRC, It will also collaborate with academics and international organizations, such as OECD, developing research relevant for the group.

Provisional schedule of topics per ISG meeting in 2021

ISG Meetings dates 2021	Provisional agenda items
20-21 January	<p>20 January (pm)</p> <p>Joint meeting with EMCO IG (tbc)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Joint Employment Report • Regular monitoring report on employment and social situation <p>21 January</p> <p>Review of the AROPE indicator – initial discussion</p> <p>LTC indicators</p> <p>Update on PAR and LTC reports by the subgroup Chairs</p> <p>Monitoring framework to assess access to social protection for workers and the self-employed</p> <p>Benchmarking childcare and support to children</p>
3-4 March	<p>Update of SPPM dashboard results (EU-SILC 2019)</p> <p>SPC annual report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - outline and data issues - review of methodology for identifying Key Social Challenges (KSCs) and Good Social Outcomes (GSOs) <p>Review of current social monitoring framework, including methodological issues and the scope to simplify and consolidate – initial discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Action Plan for European Pillar of Social Rights - role of the EPSR scoreboard and other existing monitoring tools <p>Review of the AROPE indicator</p> <p>Benchmarking childcare and support to children</p> <p>Monitoring framework to assess access to social protection for workers and the self-employed</p>

22 April (tbc)	(reserve meeting, need tbc)
20 May	<p>Review of current social monitoring framework, including methodological issues and the scope to simplify and consolidate</p> <p>Benchmarking framework on pension adequacy</p> <p>Inequality indicators</p> <p>2021 Pensions Adequacy Report - presentation</p> <p>2021 Long-Term Care Report - presentation</p> <p>Minimum income</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - OECD pilot project on developing a strictness indicator of activation requirements for income support beneficiaries - explore the use of additional sources for the benchmarking framework such as EUROMOD
22 June	<p>Monitoring framework to assess access to social protection for workers and the self-employed</p> <p>Inequality indicators</p> <p>SPC annual report preparation (results from SPPM dashboard update, key social challenges exercise)</p> <p>Update on ESSPROS developments</p> <p>LTC indicators</p> <p>Indicators on access to quality social services</p> <p>Social resilience</p> <p>DG RTD on research projects in the social field</p>
21 September	<p>SPC annual report (finalisation)</p> <p>Further development of JAF Health</p> <p>Presentation of findings from 2020 ESDE review</p> <p>Energy poverty</p> <p>Monitoring framework to assess access to social protection for workers and the self-employed</p>

	<p>Benchmarking framework on pension adequacy</p> <p>Final report on the ABSPO project</p>
20-21 October	<p>Eurostat update on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - work on joint distributions of income, consumption and wealth and the statistical links between micro and macro perspectives - progress on timelier production of EU-SILC and flash estimates/nowcasting of social indicators <p>LTC indicators</p> <p>Indicators on access to quality social services</p> <p>Further development of JAF Health</p> <p>Homelessness and housing exclusion, Housing conditions – review of results of 2018 SILC ad-hoc module variables on housing difficulties</p> <p>Monitoring framework to assess access to social protection for workers and the self-employed</p> <p>Review of indicators for monitoring of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</p> <p>2022 ISG Work Programme</p>
7-8 December	<p>Joint meeting with EMCO IG (Draft JER etc.)</p> <p>Final assessment of progress achieved against Europe 2020 poverty and social exclusion headline target</p> <p>2022 ISG Work programme</p> <p>Monitoring framework to assess access to social protection for workers and the self-employed</p> <p>Benchmarking framework on pension adequacy</p> <p>Annual update by Eurostat on EU-SILC developments</p>