



Social Protection Committee

Indicators Sub-group

SPC/ISG/2023/12/4

2024 ISG Work Programme

1. Introduction

The work programme of the Indicators Sub-Group (ISG) of the Social Protection Committee (SPC) for 2024 will focus on contributing to delivering on the 2024 SPC priorities, follow up of 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 2024. In addition, the ISG will contribute as necessary to in-depth thematic work in the context of the open method of coordination for social protection and social inclusion (Social OMC). Furthermore, the ISG will continue to provide evidence and analysis to monitor the social effects of the rise in the cost of living.

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 2024 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 2024.

2. Review of monitoring/reporting frameworks and follow up on the European Pillar of Social Rights and implementation of its Action Plan

- **Follow up to the European Pillar of Social Rights and implementation of its Action Plan, including monitoring of the poverty and social exclusion target for 2030**

The ISG will contribute as necessary to relevant aspects related to the implementation of the Action Plan on the European Pillar of Social Rights and in particular the monitoring of progress towards the EU and national poverty and social exclusion targets for 2030. 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 social scoreboard, SPPM, JAF, etc.)¹. It will reflect, jointly with the EMCO Indicators Group (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 also review improvements to the timeliness of indicators. Specific activities in this area will include:

¹ European Pillar of Social Rights Scoreboard, Social Protection Performance Monitor (SPPM) and Joint Assessment Framework (JAF).

- **Reflection 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, including on the possible inclusion of secondary indicators in the scoreboard.

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

Timely estimates of the social situation are essential as highlighted by the COVID-19 crisis and the recent cost of living crisis. The ISG will follow Eurostat work on improving the timeliness of social indicators and on flash estimates of key income-based indicators (and the possibility to extend estimates to cover other indicators). It will further discuss the possibility to use flash estimates more systematically in the EU monitoring framework, as well as possible other data sources (such as “financial distress” indicators).

- **Joint Assessment Framework (JAF)**

The ISG will review the Joint Assessment Framework together with the EMCO Indicators Group and the European Commission. This will cover aspects such as the continuing review of the structure and content of the social part of the JAF, the visualisation and dissemination of JAF outputs, and the JAF methodology, in view of its improvement and further development and use for the purposes of the Social Open Method of Coordination.

- **Benchmarking**

The ISG will continue the work on benchmarking as tasked by the SPC. The ISG will also, whenever called upon, review and update already existing frameworks.

- **Assessing social impacts of EU policies**

The ISG will follow developments in the field of assessing the social impacts of EU policies, including distributional impact assessment and 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 2024:

- The ISG will, in collaboration with EMCO IG, review the current monitoring frameworks in view of updating them to the context of implementation of the Action Plan on the European Pillar of Social Rights and its targets for 2030, also with the overall aim to simplify and consolidate them.
- It will make progress on the availability and use of timelier indicators of the social situation, including the more systematic use of flash estimates.

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 and the monitoring of progress towards the EU and national poverty and social exclusion targets for 2030, 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, and also reflect on the schedule for its production in view of earlier availability of EU-SILC data. The ISG will also continue collecting statistics derived from administrative data on benefit recipients and provide analysis and evidence on social aspects of the cost of living crisis.

➤ Social Protection Performance Monitor (SPPM)

The ISG will continue the work on updating the SPPM, especially regarding the set of key social indicators, in view of recent statistical developments and ISG adoption of new indicators (including in the context of the JAF revision). It will produce an update of the SPPM dashboard based on the set of available EU-SILC 2024 data.

➤ Thorough review of the Portfolio of EU Social Indicators

Following on to the intermediate update conducted in 2022, the ISG will continue to carry out a detailed review of the Portfolio of EU Social Indicators in view of its further updating and streamlining, and improving its user friendliness.

Planned deliverables for 2024

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.

Indicators and tools

- Update of the Social Protection Performance Monitor
- Review and streamline the Portfolio of EU Social Indicators

4. Thematic work

➤ Social inclusion

• Inequality

The ISG will further explore indicators on inequalities, including about the middle-income group and about environmental inequalities. It will also give an update on the evolution of purchasing power.

- **Active inclusion indicators**

In line with the 2022 joint SPC-EC report on minimum income, the ISG will review potential areas for further expansion of the benchmarking framework on minimum income in different dimensions (such as eligibility criteria, access to services and labour market transitions and incentives) and resume the exploration of indicators for measuring the quality of social services (encompassing inter alia such criteria as: accessibility, availability, affordability and coverage). Together with the Commission, the ISG will also develop an outline of the next joint SPC EC report on minimum income due in 2025.

- **Child poverty**

In November 2023, the SPC endorsed the first version of the monitoring framework for the European Child Guarantee Recommendation, developed by the ISG, and granted a new mandate to the ISG. In line with this mandate, the ISG will update and work further on the monitoring framework aiming to address some of the remaining gaps identified, including on the basis of the biennial progress reports due in Spring 2024. It will also update the Benchmarking Framework for Childcare and Support to Children, in line with the monitoring aspects of the Council Recommendation on the Revision of the Barcelona Targets on early childhood education and care, and in cooperation with EMCO IG and other groups as necessary.

- **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 or others such as health when data from surveys will be available. 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. The ISG, in cooperation with the EMCO IG, will discuss indicators for setting employment targets for persons with disabilities.

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

The ISG will look into the area of homelessness and housing exclusion with the aim to further refine indicators (e.g. concerning the way housing benefits are treated in the housing cost overburden rate indicator) and discuss possible ways to monitor housing deprivation on a more regular basis. It will contribute as relevant to the analytical projects under the umbrella of the European Platform on Combatting Homelessness, in particular the EU-funded project carried out by the OECD on data mapping and monitoring systems and the pilot project on a European Homelessness Count.

- **Indicators on Social and Labour Aspects of the Fair Digital Transition**

The ISG will follow work on indicators relevant to monitor the social and labour aspects of the fair digital transition, and in particular examine the use of existing indicators and the need for additional indicators to assess the fairness of the digital transition.

In this context the ISG will focus in particular on further developing a set of indicators related to access and affordability of digital infrastructures and contribute to the monitoring process in this area.

➤ **Indicators on Social and Labour Aspects of the Fair Transition towards Climate Neutrality**

The ISG will follow work on indicators relevant to monitor the social and labour aspects of the fair transition towards climate neutrality, and in particular examine the use of existing indicators and the need for additional indicators to assess the fairness of the transition. In this context the ISG will focus in particular on further developing a set of indicators related to energy poverty, transport poverty and carbon and environmental footprint inequality and contribute to the monitoring process in this area.

– **Transport poverty**

The ISG will follow and support work on a definition and indicators of transport poverty (focusing on affordability, accessibility and availability of transport). Pros and cons of the various definitions will be considered, as well as different data sources and methodologies for adequately measuring and monitoring transport poverty in the EU. Results will be assessed also in comparison to standard social indicators.

– **Carbon and environmental footprint inequality**

The ISG will follow and support work on strengthening data availability and indicators on carbon and environmental footprint inequality based on the ongoing work by EMPL-JRC on “*Distributional assessment of the consumption footprint of households in the EU: addressing carbon and other environmental footprints.*” (The research project will provide a new, ready-to-use dataset of the consumption footprint of EU households (April 2024) as well as analysis on the level and distribution of the consumption footprint across several dimensions: income, geographical, socio-demographic, consumption areas and product groups (July and Sept 2024)).

➤ **Health**

The ISG will support the further development of the OMC health work stream and follow closely the work of DG SANTE on measuring access to healthcare, including considering the feasibility of new indicators for future work on the JAF Health framework of indicators.

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 Working Party on Public Health (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. In particular, it will continue to contribute as necessary to the development of a framework of indicators for monitoring the implementation of the Council Recommendation on access to high-quality affordable long-term care, building on the joint work on common indicators on long-term care and other monitoring frameworks. In addition, the ISG will follow the work of the EUROSTAT Task Force on LTC in order to improve the availability and quality of indicators relating to LTC.

➤ **Pensions**

The ISG will support the finalisation of the 2024 Pension Adequacy Report as necessary.

➤ **Reconciliation of private and professional life**

On the basis 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**

In addition to updating existing indicators, the ISG will focus efforts on further development of the indicator framework for monitoring access to social protection for workers and the self-employed in the context of the 2019 Council Recommendation on access to social protection. The work will build on recent analyses of possible improvements to the indicators of effective access and adequacy and the presentations made at the ISG in 2022 and 2023 (notably from OECD and the Joint Research centre). The aim will be to test the feasibility of improving the indicators for these two dimensions, building on both EU and national level data as well as on simulation tools. Moreover, some areas of further developments listed in chapter 8 of the monitoring framework (version 0) will also be investigated during 2024 (e.g. social situation of self-employed, measurement of new forms of work). Other areas of improvements could relate to formal coverage (clarification of concepts, use of MISSOC) and transparency (mapping existing surveys and data, suggesting indicators).

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

The ISG will follow analytical work on social resilience, including on the resilience of social protection systems. If tasked by the SPC, it will explore indicators, methods and frameworks for timely analysis of the role of social investment in supporting sustainable and inclusive growth and socio-economic resilience.

➤ **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 2024

Thematic work

- Completion of the monitoring framework for the Recommendation on access to high quality and affordable long term care.
- Update and further develop the monitoring framework for the Recommendation on access to social protection for workers and the self-employed.

- Review of the benchmarking framework on minimum income and identification of potential areas for further expansion.
- Developing an outline of the 2025 joint SPC EC report on minimum income.
- Development of additional indicators on the distribution of income (e.g. for the middle-income group) as well as further development of indicators related to energy poverty, transport poverty and carbon and environmental footprint inequality.
- Further develop the monitoring framework for the European Child Guarantee Recommendation.

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

The ISG will follow up on issues identified in the 2022 seminar to mark 20 years of the existence of the group. In particular, the ISG will:

- explore addressing some of the remaining priority gaps identified in coverage of indicators. The ISG will also explore how to include more contextual information in order to help users to better interpret the available indicators;
- further explore the use of alternative data sources that could complement the traditional ones, such as administrative data and Eurostat data on the joint distribution on income, consumption and wealth;
- further reflect on practical improvements to working methods and organisation, and on the dissemination of ISG outputs

The ISG will follow up on the implementation of the framework regulation for Integrated European Social Statistics (IESS). It will also review and enhance its indicators wherever necessary on the basis of new data or analysis. For example, 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 explore potential methodological improvements to the calculation of tax-benefit indicators through the recent extension of the EUROMOD Hypothetical Household Tool (HHoT), and 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 and explore strengthening the ability to analyse the link between social policy and economic policy.

It will also review the European data strategy developed by the Commission and recent Council conclusions in the ECOFIN filière that had included elements related to social statistics, and reflect on the implications of these for ISG work. It will continue to 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, further development of the JAF, and the review of the current social monitoring framework.

The ISG will monitor research of potential interest for ISG work, especially through cooperation with services of the Commission including the JRC and will liaise where needed with the MISSOC and MINET networks. It will also collaborate with academics and international organizations, such as OECD, developing research relevant for the group's activities.

Provisional schedule of topics per ISG meeting in 2024²
(provisional - to be expanded/completed)

ISG Meetings dates 2024	Provisional agenda items
17-18 January (part joint with EMCO IG) <i>(Physical)</i>	Joint meeting with EMCO IG <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draft Joint Employment Report - LTC monitoring framework – workforce dimension Inequality indicators - mapping of the distribution of income Review of the European data strategy developed by the Commission and recent ECOFIN Council conclusions related to social statistics
22 February <i>(Virtual)</i>	LTC monitoring framework Access to social protection monitoring framework Benchmarking framework on childcare and support to children JRC presentation of new research findings on impact of child cash support on child poverty Update on ESSPROS developments, including timeliness improvements
20-21 March <i>(Physical)</i>	SPC annual report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - outline and data issues, including of SPPM Social aspects of the fair digital transition LTC monitoring framework – workforce dimension Environmental inequalities JRC presentation on methodological improvements to the calculation of tax-benefit indicators through the EUROMOD Hypothetical Household Tool (HHoT) - tbc

² As regards the planning of the remaining thematic areas in the revision of Portfolio of EU Social Indicators and work on housing-related indicators, this will require further internal Commission reflection before deciding on the appropriate timing of discussions on these.

25 April <i>(Virtual)</i>	LTC monitoring framework – informal carers Access to social protection monitoring framework ECG monitoring framework
22 May <i>(Virtual)</i>	LTC monitoring framework (back-up) Minimum Income Benchmarking Framework (tbc)
18-19 June <i>(Physical)</i>	SPC annual report preparation (results from SPPM dashboard update, key social challenges exercise) Eurostat update on flash estimates/nowcasting of social indicators LTC monitoring framework - finalisation Access to social protection monitoring framework
12 September <i>(Virtual)</i>	SPC annual report (finalisation) Access to social protection monitoring framework
22-23 October <i>(Physical)</i>	Review of indicators for monitoring of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) ECG monitoring framework Carbon and environmental footprint monitoring indicators Pension monitoring framework (update) Draft outline of the 2025 Joint SPC-COM report on adequate minimum income
19 November <i>(Virtual)</i>	2025 ISG Work programme – initial discussion Annual update by Eurostat on EU-SILC developments including progress on timelier production of EU-SILC Eurostat update on work on joint distributions of income, consumption and wealth and the statistical links between micro and macro perspectives Access to social protection monitoring framework
16-17 December (part joint with EMCO IG) <i>(Physical)</i>	Joint meeting with EMCO IG (Draft JER etc.) 2025 ISG Work programme – finalisation