Procedure file

Basic information

INI - Own-initiative procedure	2019/2212(INI)	Procedure lapsed or withdrawn
European Semester for economic policy coordination: Employment and Social Aspects in the Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy 2020 Subject 4.10 Social policy, social charter and protocol 4.15 Employment policy, action to combat unemployment 5.05 Economic growth		

Key players

European Parliament	

Key events

19/12/2019	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
19/12/2019	Referral to associated committees announced in Parliament		
20/02/2020	Vote in committee		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2019/2212(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure lapsed or withdrawn

Documentation gateway

Committee draft report		PE646.831	15/01/2020	EP	
Committee opinion	FEMM	PE646.892	06/02/2020	EP	
Committee opinion	CULT	PE646.848	19/02/2020	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A9-0025/2020	28/02/2020	EP	

European Semester for economic policy coordination: Employment and Social Aspects in the Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy 2020

The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs adopted an own-initiative report by Klára DOBREY (S&D, HU) on the European Semester for economic policy coordination: employment and social aspects in the annual sustainable growth strategy 2020.

The report reiterated the need to put sustainability, social inclusion and peoples well-being at the heart of the EUs economic policy-making, ensuring that social, environmental and economic objectives have equal priority.

General aspects

Although Members welcomed the annual sustainable growth strategy (ASGS) 2020, they stressed that the EUs new growth strategy will have to contribute to the creation of quality sustainable jobs and the strengthening of competitiveness, innovation and productivity and maximise benefits for health, quality of life and resilience while moving towards a circular and carbon-neutral economy. They also called for fairness and social rights to have equal importance in the new economic model as environmental sustainability and macro-economic stability.

The Commission is called on to identify EU-specific targets and headline indicators in relation to the SDGs to reflect the realities and challenges facing the EU in the area of employment and social affairs, to measure the effectiveness of policy decisions, and to ensure better targeting of funding and a proper and coherent follow-up to the Europe 2020 strategy.

Members welcomed the inclusion of the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR) in the ASGS 2020. They called for fairness and social rights to have equal importance in the new economic model as environmental sustainability and macro-economic stability. Greater involvement of relevant ministers in charge of social, health and environmental affairs in the Semester Process at Council level is called for by the Members.

Member States are urged to implement all country specific reports (CSRs), including those on employment and social aspects.

Equal opportunities

Members called on the Commission and the Member States to tackle inequalities and fight discrimination, including by promoting adequate wages, high collective bargaining coverage, equal opportunities in education and training, gender equality and universal access to quality services. They stressed that national tax and benefit systems must be designed in a way not only to ensure financial sustainability but also to reduce inequalities, promote fairness and transparency, and provide incentives for labour market participation.

Poverty and social exclusion

The Commission is called on to present a comprehensive EU anti-poverty strategy based on integrated active inclusion and to establish a European Child Guarantee with adequate funding and well-designed support services, in order to contribute to childrens equal access to free quality healthcare, free quality education, free quality childcare, decent housing and adequate nutrition.

The report stressed the importance of increasing funding for the most deprived under the new European Social Fund Plus as a key element of European solidarity and a way of helping to combat the worst forms of poverty in the EU, such as food deprivation and child poverty.

An EU framework for national homelessness strategies should be presented as well as for social and affordable housing.

Gender equality

Members called on the Commission to deliver a directive on pay transparency. They called for more efforts to close the gender employment, pay and pensions gaps, and to tackle disincentives for women to work.

Demographic change and pensions

The report noted that demographic changes pose a serious challenge to economic growth and will have a long-term impact on numerous aspects, including pension systems and healthcare. The Commission and the Member States should introduce measures designed to address these challenges, including in the CSRs and through common guidelines.

Members stressed that public pension systems should provide an adequate retirement income well above the poverty threshold, either in isolation or in combination with occupational pension systems.

Just transition

The report stressed that decisive support is needed to help society, workers and businesses to face the challenges of digitalisation and the transition to carbon neutrality. It called for strategies and support for those worst affected by the transition, especially vulnerable people. Members welcomed the creation of a Just Transition Fund and called on the Commission to ensure its implementation is consistent with other cohesion funds. The committee called on the Member States to increase investment in social protection systems in order to enhance their resilience.

The Commission and the Member States are called on to ensure adequate and equitable social and environmental investment in a true just transition as well as in the implementation of the EPSR and the achievement of the SDGs.