



Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council **Brussels, 10 March 2025**

Employment and social affairs ministers will meet in Brussels on Monday, 10 March, for a half-day meeting beginning at **10.00**. The meeting will be chaired by the Polish Minister for Family, Labour, and Social Policy, **Agnieszka Dziemianowicz-Bąk**. The Commission will be represented by **Roxana Mînzatu**, Executive Vice-President for Social Rights and Skills, Quality Jobs and Preparedness.

In the context of the **European Semester**, ministers will hold a policy debate on the **challenges of the Silver Transformation: Incentives and systemic solutions for promoting voluntary, extended professional activity of older persons**.

Furthermore, the Council will be invited to approve the contribution on the employment and social aspects of the **2025 recommendation on the economic policy of the euro area**. Ministers are also expected to adopt the **2025 Joint Employment Report** and approve conclusions on this report.

Finally, the chairs of the Employment Committee and the Social Protection Committee will present their letter informing ministers about aspects in the **medium-term fiscal-structural plans** that are related to the work of the EPSCO Council.

During the meeting, items to be dealt with under '**any other business**' include information on events organised by the Polish presidency, the upcoming Tripartite Social Summit, the Union of Skills, the Pact for European Social Dialogue, directive 79/7 on the progressive implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in matters of social security, the withdrawal of the equal treatment directive, and the 2025 EMCO and SPC work programmes.

A **press conference** will take place at +/-14.45

[Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council - meeting page](#)

[Press conferences and public events by video streaming](#)

[Video coverage in broadcast quality \(MPEG4\) and photo gallery](#)

¹ This note has been drawn up under the responsibility of the Press Office.

EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL POLICY

Silver transformation

In the context of the European Semester, the Council will hold a policy debate entitled: ‘Challenges of the Silver Transformation: Incentives and systemic solutions for promoting voluntary, extended professional activity of older persons’.

Older people, and particularly older women, are at a higher risk of poverty than their working-age peers. Moreover, the EU is facing increasing skills and labour shortages as a result of population ageing (the ‘silver transformation’).

Enabling and encouraging older people to stay in or return to work would thus not only benefit older workers but may also help mitigate broader demographic challenges. However, older people continue to face barriers when it comes to accessing employment, including age discrimination, caring responsibilities, and unequal access to mainstream services.

The Council will discuss ways to increase the voluntary professional activity of older people, with a particular focus on the role of the European Semester in addressing ageing-related challenges and opportunities. Ministers will also be invited to share examples of policy incentives used in their countries to promote longer working lives.

[European Semester 2025: Challenges of the silver transformation: Incentives and systemic solutions for promoting voluntary, extended professional activity of older persons](#) (presidency steering note)

European Semester autumn package

As part of the European Semester cycle, the Council will be invited to approve the contribution on the employment and social aspects of the 2025 recommendation on the economic policy of the euro area. It is also expected to adopt the 2025 Joint Employment Report and approve conclusions on this report. Finally, the chairs of the Employment Committee and the Social Protection Committee will be invited to present their letter informing ministers of aspects in the medium-term fiscal-structural plans that are related to the work of the EPSCO Council.

The European Semester is the EU’s framework for coordinating and monitoring economic and social policies. The annual cycle begins in November, when the Commission sets the priorities for the year to come, and ends in October of the following year, when national governments submit their draft budgetary plans.

[Employment and social aspects of the 2025 Recommendation on the economic policy of the euro area](#)

[2025 Joint Employment Report](#)

[Draft Council conclusions on the 2025 Joint Employment Report](#)

[Letter from EMCO and the SPC](#)

[European Semester](#) (background information)

Other business

The following topics will be dealt with under ‘any other business’:

- Events organised by the Polish presidency (information from the presidency)
- Tripartite Social Summit (information from the presidency and the Commission)
- 2025 work programmes of the Employment Committee and the Social Protection Committee (information from EMCO and the SPC):
 - [EMCO work programme](#)
 - [SPC work programme](#)
- Need to update Directive 79/7 on the progressive implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in matters of social security (information from Spain)
- A Union of Skills (information from the Commission)
- Pact for European Social Dialogue (information from the Commission)
- Withdrawal of the equal treatment directive (information from France)

Informal lunch debate

Over lunch, an informal debate will take place on the right to disconnect.

Due to technological and digital advances, and particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, remote working has become an increasingly common part of people’s working patterns in the EU. This change has brought benefits such as greater flexibility and easier reconciliation between professional and private life, particularly for people with disabilities or caring responsibilities that make it harder for them to commute regularly to an office. However, in many cases it has also contributed to longer and more unpredictable working hours and increased pressure on employees to always be ‘reachable’. In January 2021, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the right to disconnect, calling on the Commission to establish minimum requirements for remote work across the EU.

During the informal debate, ministers will share their views on the best measures for raising awareness among employers and employees of the risks associated with remote working, and will share examples of a right to disconnect at national level.
