

**NEWSLETTER - April 2024**

EMPL Committee website • X@EPSocialAffairs • EP Live multimedia library / Stay updated with the latest news from the Committee by following us on X!



Dear colleagues, Dear readers,

These past five years are filled with priceless memories - late-night meetings, passionate debates, and moments of triumph. Looking back, I am humbled by the multitude of challenges we have faced, from navigating the complexities of the COVID-19 pandemic to confronting the energy crisis spurred by geopolitical tensions. Yet, in the face of these challenges, we have weathered storms that we never could have imagined, united by the same purpose: serving our citizens with integrity and steadfast dedication.

As I go over the list of accomplishments - more than 150 adopted files, numerous trilogue sessions, and the tireless efforts of rapporteurs and shadows - it reminds me of the depth of dedication each of you has shown, of the strength of our bonds and resilience of our spirit. Each amendment and negotiation shaped the policies that impact millions of people's lives throughout Europe.

During this legislature, from the Porto Social Summit to the La Hulpe interinstitutional declaration, the EMPL Committee played a crucial role in shaping the Social European Agenda, in the reframing of the Social convergence Framework within the European Semester process, emphasizing the importance of strengthening social investments and fostering greater equality across member states. Additionally, we have been at the forefront of advancing the European Child Guarantee, ensuring that every child in Europe has access to the support and resources they need to thrive.

As we close this chapter and get ready to start the next part of our journey, let us remember the lessons, the forged alliances, the invaluable camaraderie, and the accomplishments. The true essence of our committee, a beacon of hope in an ever-changing world, is revealed in these times of shared victories and triumph.

I extend my deepest gratitude to all of you, my friends and colleagues, for your devotion, your tireless efforts, and your unwavering dedication. It has been an honour to work alongside such talented and passionate individuals, whose commitment has been an inspiration, every step of the way.

With warm regards,

*Dragoș Pișlaru,*  
Chair of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

## April 2024 Highlights

### La Hulpe Declaration on 15 - 16 April 2024

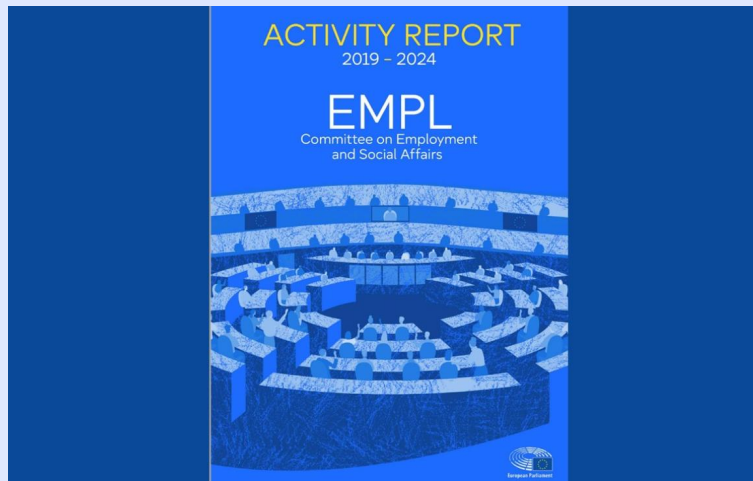
During the La Hulpe Conference on 16 April 2024, the Belgian Presidency aims to sign an Interinstitutional Declaration on the Future Social Agenda, together with the European Parliament, the European Commission, the European Economic and Social Committee, European Social Partners and the Social Platform.

The La Hulpe Declaration is the result of a number of debates, discussions and drafting sessions also involving all Member States, which started already in 2023. Aim was to identify challenges and potential future policy priorities in order to implement the European Pillar of Social Rights.

EMPL Committee had been mandated to prepare the contribution to the draft Declaration on Parliament's behalf and shared the EP's position in form of a letter in February 2024. It stressed that a strong Social Europe is needed, fit to address the social, environmental, economic and political challenges the EU is facing today. Further development of the social union were necessary to ensure a sustainable, fair and inclusive Europe where social rights are fully protected and safeguarded to at least the same level as economic and environmental standards. Taking steps to reinforce the role of the European Pillar of Social Rights and anchor its headline targets in EU legislation is needed. The EMPL committee specifically called on the Belgian Presidency to incorporate 1) Ensuring quality jobs and fair working conditions, 2) Addressing the challenges of digitalisation, 3) Enhancing fair mobility and 4) Equipping workers with future-oriented skills.

The declaration will be signed for the European Parliament by EP President Roberta Metsola and is to be reflected in the April conclusions of the European Council and subsequently in the [EU strategic agenda 2024 - 2029](#).

## EMPL activity report 2019 - 2024 published



During the 9th legislature, the EMPL Committee made a decisive contribution to the employment and social policies of the Union, strengthening the foundations of the European Social Model in a context of multiple and interconnected crises. The report is intended for Members of Parliament, stakeholders and citizens looking for a comprehensive picture of the legislative priorities and actions undertaken by EMPL in EU employment and social affairs.

It gives an overview of the legislative files and initiatives adopted in Committee, and records all the scrutiny, oversight and fact-finding activities (e.g. hearings, missions, inter-parliamentary meetings) which EMPL led and/or participated in. The reader will find EMPL's legacy on EU employment and social affairs, which will help inform future policy-making.

Link to [Activity Report](#)

### EMPL Committee Meeting on 3 April 2024

## Improving the quality of traineeships in the EU - two new Commission proposals

The Commission will present [two new proposals](#) seeking to improve working conditions for trainees, including pay, inclusiveness and quality of traineeships in the EU.



The Commission's initiative consists of:

- a proposal for a Directive on improving and enforcing working conditions for trainees and combatting regular employment relationships disguised as traineeships; and
- a proposal to revise the 2014 Council Recommendation on a Quality Framework for Traineeships to address issues of quality and inclusiveness, such as fair pay and access to social protection.

Traineeships are an important stepping-stone for young people into the labour market. A recent Eurobarometer survey (2023) found that four in five young people (78%) surveyed did at least one traineeship, and for one in five (19%) their first work experience was a traineeship. Nevertheless, there are concerns regarding the quality of traineeships.

In June 2023, the Parliament adopted a resolution calling on the Commission to update the 2014 Quality Framework as well as for better conditions for traineeships to provide young people with useful experience and adequate remuneration, responding to citizens' expectations that young people's jobs and internships adhere to quality standards and to end discriminatory labour law practices.

The Commission's proposals follow up on this resolution, the outcome of the Conference on the Future of Europe, where EU citizens asked the Commission to ensure quality traineeships, as well as the European Year of Youth. It also contributes to implementing the European Year of Skills and complements the reinforced Youth Guarantee and other Commission initiatives supporting youth employment.

- Link to [Commission proposals](#)

Wednesday 3 April | 10h45 - 11h30 | Room: ANTALL 4Q2

## Action plan on skills and labour shortages in the EU



The European Commission will present its action plan to tackle labour and skills shortages, proposing to work together with Member States and social partners to address these issues over the coming months and years. The action plan is part of the EU's strategy to boost its competitiveness and enhance its economic and social resilience.

For almost a decade, labour and skills shortages have been increasing in all Member States. These shortages are driven by demographic shifts, the demand for new skills linked to technological developments and the twin transitions, the drive to develop further our own industrial sectors, defence and security needs, and challenges related to working conditions in some sectors and locations. The Commission has identified 42 'shortage' occupations, with some differences across the Member States.

The action plan is also a key deliverable of the [European Year of Skills](#). It builds on the many policy and funding measures already in place at EU level, such as the [Pact for Skills](#) – which has so far provided training to 3.5 million workers –, the 2030 employment and skills targets endorsed at the Porto Social Summit, and the €65 billion in EU funds available to invest in skills.

- Link to [Commission proposal](#)

Wednesday 3 April | 10h45 - 11h30 | Room: ANTALL 4Q2

## Exchange of views on employment and social affairs in the Republic of Moldova

**EMPL will hold an exchange of views with Alexei Buzu, Minister of Labour and Social Protection, Republic of Moldova, and Marina Morozova, Vice-President of the Parliamentary Commission on Social Protection, Family and Health**

The aim is to discuss labour and social reforms in the Republic of Moldova, as well as progress on EU integration in the employment and social domain. Since the start of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, Moldova has been tackling unprecedented challenges, from large numbers of refugees, to inflation, threats to its energy supplies, violations of its airspace, and hybrid actions. The Republic of Moldova applied for EU membership in March 2022, and was subsequently granted candidate status. In December 2023, EU leaders decided to open accession negotiations. Most recently, the European Council in March invited the Council to swiftly adopt the draft negotiating frameworks for the Republic of Moldova, and to take work forward without delay. As part of accession, Moldova has to adhere to the EU's values and standards, including minimum standards in employment and social policy. In a recent resolution, the European Parliament reaffirmed its commitment to Moldova's future membership of the EU, and stressed the importance of continuing the country's reform process, and in particular to tangibly improve the living standards of the population, especially of the more vulnerable groups, and to provide the younger generations with attractive prospects for life and work in the country.

Wednesday 3 April | 9h30 - 10h45 | Room: ANTALL 4Q2

Link to the [EMPL web streaming session](#):  
3 April 2024 from 9h00 to 11h30

## Votes scheduled on 3 April 2024

**"Amending Directive 2009/38/EC as regards the establishment and functioning of European Works Councils and the effective enforcement of transnational information and consultation rights"**

- Adoption of draft report
- Rapporteur: [Dennis Radtke](#) (EPP, DE)
- Link to [procedure file](#)
- Link to [draft report](#) and [amendments tabled](#)



Voting lists and compromise amendments of the votes are published on the [EMPL e-meeting website](#) ahead of the vote.

### Eurofound

#### European Working Conditions Survey 2024

Since its launch in 1990, the [European Working Conditions Survey \(EWCS\)](#) provides a comprehensive picture of the everyday reality of men and women in workplaces. Eurofound has launched fieldwork for the next edition of its [EWCS in 2024](#), aiming to interview 50,000 workers in 35 countries covering all EU Member States and 8 other European countries. The fieldwork will run from February to June 2024 and the first results will be made available in 2025. The 2024 edition of the survey will provide data analyses on a broad range of topics, including: the working conditions of employees and self-employed workers across EU Member States, the relationships between different aspects of working conditions, work situations of concern and different groups at risk, as well as indicators on recent trends in working conditions.



### EU-OSHA

#### Worker management through AI - From technology development to the impacts on workers and their safety and health

Artificial intelligence (AI) has the potential to improve workers' safety and health, if adequately designed, implemented, managed and regulated. In order to scope out the potentials and the possible threats that AI presents to workplaces, EU-OSHA has [recently published a paper](#) on the diffusion and application of AI-based technologies designed for managerial functions. By introducing the concept of "AI-based worker management" the paper explores topical questions on and around the actors of AI-based management, the functions played by AI in workers' management, the scope of their diffusion and their effects on the health and safety conditions of the workforce.



### Cedefop

#### Vocational education and training in Belgium

Vocational education and training (VET) is more than a tool for skills acquisition. It is an impetus for personal development and well-being, collective prosperity and competitiveness. Moreover, a strong VET system enables active labour market policies, notably, by bridging gaps between labour market demands and training. In its recent ['short description' report](#) Cedefop looks at the situation of VET systems in Belgium where skills mismatches and shortages coexist with high youth unemployment rates. VET systems in Belgium face numerous challenges, in particular the fact that the importance and actual development of VET systems are not uniformly perceived across its four linguistic regions.



### European Labour Authority

#### Building workers to construct Europe. How to deal with labour shortages?

The European Labour Authority, in its role as the European Coordination Office of EURES (ECO), will organise an [online event on 18 April 2024](#), in The Hague (The Netherlands) to launch the 2023 edition of the 'EURES Report on labour shortages and surpluses'. In a context of growing labour market imbalances, quality jobs are not available in the same proportion in all economic sectors and regions: some sectors and regions encounter labour shortages, other surpluses. One key element to address this challenge is to provide robust information to policy-makers and practitioners on the situations of European labour markets. The new EURES report addresses labour mobility and the construction sector in particular, showing the effects of labour market imbalances on vulnerable groups. The event will gather EU institutions, national governments, social partners, NGOs and practitioners to explore EURES' findings and learn from the measures implemented at national level to tackle labour shortages. The aim will be to explore the root causes of labour shortages and reflect on possible solutions.



### European Training Foundation

#### Learning for careers

The European Training Foundation (ETF) has recently published its [report](#) on the role played by career guidance in youth's transition from education to employment. In a



context of multiple and interwoven crises, the transition from education to job markets presents young job seekers with many challenges, such as accrued competition on labour markets, higher risks of joblessness, the casualisation of labour contracts and a general increase of socio-economic instability. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the ETF have joined forces to better understand young people's needs, sentiments, and experiences with career guidance and counselling for more responsive policies on career guidance systems. This report covers 11 countries in the European and Central Asian region, consulting with over 9,600 adolescents and young people, with a specific focus on the challenges for young Ukrainians' learning and career choices since the start of the war in 2022.

---

## Other event of interest

### **ILO webinar on 23 April 2024 - AI Labour Disclosure Initiative: Recognizing the social cost of human labour behind automation**

ILO Geneva will hold a [webinar on 23 April](#) to reflect on the ways in which labour transparency rules might relate to the development of AI in the workplace. Labour transparency requirements and human capital reporting mechanisms already exist which provide information on the gender composition of workforces, their working conditions and the compliance of companies with laws. The purpose of the webinar will be to advocate for better and more comprehensive ways of reporting on the digitalisation of labour with a view to better informing policy-making, supply chain management, and investment decisions. According to numerous reports, workplaces rely more and more on digital devices and automated operations such as automated filters on social media, devices such as ChatGPT or motion-recognition security cameras, without fully implementing the 'human in control' principle. In the context of the AI Labour Disclosure Initiative (AILDI), ILO will discuss existing legislation regarding due diligence and social responsibility in support of the formalisation of digital labour's role in AI production and explore future ways of integrating socially sustainable machine learning in human capital reporting practices.



---

**Subscription:** write to [empl-secretariat@ep.europa.eu](mailto:empl-secretariat@ep.europa.eu)

**Contact the editor:** European Parliament, Secretariat of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, email: [empl-secretariat@ep.europa.eu](mailto:empl-secretariat@ep.europa.eu)

**Legal disclaimer:** The items contained herein are drafted by the secretariat of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs of the European Parliament and are provided for general information purposes only. The opinions expressed in this document are the sole responsibility of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position of the European Parliament. This document may contain links to websites that are created and maintained by other organisations. The secretariat does not necessarily endorse the view(s) expressed on these websites.

**Images copyright:** the images used in the Chair's note and under "votes" are © European Union. All other images are used under license from Adobe Stock.

---

[EMPL website](#)

[EP Live multimedia library](#)