

Introductory words by Thomas Händel



In February, EMPL will hold three sessions of meetings, including an Interparliamentary committee meeting with representatives of national parliaments. The annually recurring European Parliamentary Week provides the context for our Interparliamentary committee meeting where participants discuss the topics of the Social Triple A, the European pillar of social rights and

investment policies for job creation.

The first regular committee meeting this month will take place on 17 and 18 February, including a public hearing on the social inclusion and integration of refugees into the labour market, which promises to be a well-timed discussion worthy of the attention of many. At the same meeting the committee will hold a discussion with stakeholders on the implementation of the UNCRPD convention, with a view to the draft report on this, which is in preparation in our committee. The Rapporteur will also present her draft report on the application of the Employment Equality Directive. At this meeting the committee will vote on two reports, the annual report on the European Semester, and the report on the antipoverty target in the light of household costs. This session will be concluded by a workshop on the evolution of collective bargaining in Troika programme and post-programme Member States.

The meeting agenda for 23 February contains a stakeholder discussion on the future report on the potential of SMEs for growth and employment. Iliana Ivanova, Member of the Court of Auditors was invited to our committee, to discuss her special report on Youth Action Teams. We will also welcome the directors of the four agencies operating in EMPL fields for an exchange of views about their annual programme. EMPL will also host Pavel Trantina, President of the Section for Employment, Social Affairs and Citizenship, who will speak about the ongoing work at the EESC.

Besides the above meeting sessions, I would also like to report about the visit of the EMPL Members to CEDEFOP, which took place between 10 and 11 February and where discussions covered topics of current interest, such as skills mismatch and youth unemployment and the key issues for cooperation between our institutions.

Thank you for your continued attention!

Thomas Händel, Chair

POINTS ON THE COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

Public Hearing

[Refugees: Social inclusion and integration into the labour market](#)

Reports

[Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities with special regard to the Concluding Observations of the UN CRPD Committee](#)

[Application of the Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation \("Employment Equality Directive"\)](#)

[How best to harness the job creation potential of small and medium sized enterprises \(SMEs\)?](#)

[European Semester for economic policy coordination: Employment and Social Aspects in the Annual Growth Survey 2016 \(Vote\)](#)

[Meeting the antipoverty target in the light of increasing household costs \(Vote\)](#)

[Report on the application of Council Directive 2010/18/EU of 8 March 2010 implementing the revised Framework Agreement on parental leave concluded by BUSINESSEUROPE, UEAPME, CEEP and ETUC and repealing Directive 96/34/EC](#)

Oral question

[What is Social Triple A? \(Vote\)](#)

Opinions

[The Single Market Strategy](#)

[An EU strategy for the Alpine region](#)

[EGF/2015/007 BE/Hainaut-Namur Glass – Belgium \(Vote\)](#)

[Monitoring the application of Union law. 2014 Annual Report \(Vote\)](#)

[The situation in the Mediterranean and the need for a holistic EU approach to migration \(Vote\)](#)

Policy Department Workshop

[Evolution of collective bargaining in Troika programme and post-programme Member States](#)

Exchange of views

[European Court of Auditors special report on Youth Action Teams](#)

[Pavel Trantina, President of the Section for Employment, Social Affairs and Citizenship of the EESC](#)

[Presentation of the 2016 Work Programme of the Agencies](#)

Meeting dates and venues:

[17.2.2016 9.00-12.30 in Brussels, József Antall \(4Q1\)](#)

[17.2.2016 15.00-18.30 in Brussels, József Antall \(4Q1\)](#)

[18.2.2016 9.00-12.30 in Brussels, József Antall \(4Q1\)](#)



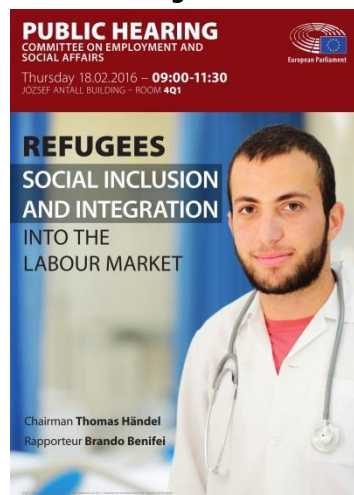
18.2.2016 14.00-17.30 in Brussels, József Antall (4Q1)

23.2.2016 9.00-12.30 in Brussels, József Antall (6Q2)

23.2.2016 15.00-18.30 in Brussels, József Antall (6Q2)

Refugees: Social inclusion and integration into the labour market

Public hearing



On 18 February, EMPL Committee organises a public hearing on Refugees - social inclusion and integration into the labour market. The purpose of the hearing will be to get a better understanding of the necessary conditions to facilitate a successful integration of refugees into our European societies and labour markets. The hearing, with the participation of renowned international experts will

also serve as an input for an own-initiative EMPL report under the same title.

Rapporteur: [Brando Benifei](#) (S&D, IT)

Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities with special regard to the Concluding Observations of the UN CRPD Committee

Exchange of views

The aim of this discussion on 17 February is that the invited stakeholders present their view on the Concluding observations of the UN CRPD Committee and the Rapporteur presents her [working document](#). The stakeholders represent the UN CRPD Committee, the Agency for Fundamental Rights, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the European Ombudsman and the European Disability Forum. The outcome of the discussion will feed into the prospective report on this issue.

Rapporteur: [Helga Stevens](#) (ECR, BE)

Application of the Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation ("Employment Equality Directive")

Consideration of draft report

In her [draft report](#) the Rapporteur welcomes the fact that almost all Member States have included the general principle of equal treatment on specific grounds of discrimination in their constitutions; she regrets, however, that only a few Member States have systematically ensured that all existing legal texts are in line with the principle of equal treatment.



She assesses the implementation of the Employment Equality Directive, as regards all four grounds of discrimination (age, disability, religion and belief and sexual orientation) and horizontal aspects.

Rapporteur: [Renate Weber](#) (ALDE, RO)

How best to harness the job creation potential of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs)?

Exchange of views

On the initiative of the Rapporteur, the committee invited relevant stakeholders to discuss about the job creation potential of SMEs in the European Union. The discussion will be held on 23 February. The main goal of the draft report will be to identify and discuss specific obstacles and burdens facing SMEs. SMEs play a significant role in development of economic and innovative growth and most importantly job creation. Reducing unemployment, including the youth unemployment, would not be possible without developing and supporting this important economic sector because of the fact that small and medium entrepreneurs provide a large majority of employment opportunities on the market. However, the development and support available for SMEs are not the same throughout the EU in terms of country-market contact, national administration activities, the lack of legal security, and most importantly know how in terms of implementing important health, safety and social legislation.

Rapporteur: [Zdzisław Krasnodębski](#) (ECR, PL)

European Semester for economic policy coordination: Employment and Social Aspects in the Annual Growth Survey 2016

Adoption of draft report

The Rapporteur presented her [draft report](#) on 11 January and on 25 January, EMPL discussed the 430 [amendments](#) tabled. The Rapporteur and the Shadow Rapporteurs negotiated further 66 compromises, which will be voted in EMPL on 17 February.

Rapporteur: [Sofia Ribeiro](#) (EPP, PT)

Meeting the antipoverty target in the light of increasing household costs

Consideration of amendments

The key recommendations of the [draft report](#) to combat energy poverty were presented to the committee in November and the 385 [amendments](#) were discussed in EMPL on 7 December. 44 compromise amendments were negotiated by the Rapporteur and the Shadow Rapporteurs, which will integrate much of the diverse amendments with the aim to ensure a more concise and broadly supported text. The vote on the draft report, the amendments, the compromises and the suggestions from the opinion of the FEMM committee will take place on 17 February.

Rapporteur: [Tamás Meszerics](#) (Greens/EFA, HU)

Application of Council Directive implementing the revised Framework Agreement on parental leave

Consideration of amendments

The [draft report](#) was presented in EMPL on 11 January, when a deadline for tabling amendments was set. Members tabled 201 [amendments](#), which will be discussed at the EMPL meeting on 17 February. The amendments touch upon issues such as the importance of sharing best practice, the transferability and the remuneration of parental leave, the need for flexibility as well as the need to avoid discrimination.

Rapporteur: [Maria Arena](#) (S&D, BE)

What is a Social Triple A?

Adoption of an oral question

At its previous meeting EMPL committee discussed the draft text of the oral question to the Commission related to the creation of "triple A social Europe", which was raised by [President Juncker](#) earlier last year. The committee will vote on the final text of the question on 23 February, with the aim to place the question on the agenda of a future plenary session.

The Single Market Strategy

Consideration of draft opinion

In her [draft opinion](#), the Rapporteur welcomes the Single Market Strategy (SMS), which will help to inject new life into Europe's economies by opening up borders and removing barriers for goods and service. She notes that the deepening of the single market and the digital single market will bring new opportunities and challenges, such as skills, new forms of employment and financial structures, which will have to be addressed. She also notes the potential of the collaborative economy for job creation and a more inclusive labour market across Member States. The draft opinion calls on the Commission and the Member States to support job creation in the collaborative economy by developing appropriate safeguards, while at the same time providing a platform that will allow entrepreneurs to grow, innovate and create jobs. The draft opinion will be presented in EMPL on 17 February.

Rapporteur: [Ulrike Trebesius](#) (ECR, DE)

An EU strategy for the Alpine region

Consideration of draft opinion

The EMPL [draft opinion](#) to the draft report of the REGI committee addresses the action plan proposed by the Commission, particularly the part on "Fair access to job opportunities, building on the high competitiveness of the Region", which foresees that the adequacy of labour market education and training in strategic sectors should be improved. It is stated that "relative to the rest of Europe, the Alpine Region has a favourable labour market, with high employment rates in many areas. The EMPL draft opinion, which will be presented in the committee on 23 February, formulates suggestions in this regard.

Rapporteur: [Jérôme Lavrilleux](#) (EPP, FR)

European Court of Auditors special report on Youth Action Teams

Presentation of the special report

In 2012, youth action teams composed of experts from the competent national authorities and from the Commission were established for the eight Member States experiencing particularly high levels of youth unemployment. The action teams had the objective of helping these Member States make the best use of EU structural funding by directing

unallocated funds (including European Social Funds of around 10 billion euro) from the 2007–2013 programming period to projects that supported job opportunities for young people and facilitated access to funding by small businesses. Iliana Ivanova, Member of the Court of Auditors will present this [report](#), which assesses the extent of the redirection exercise in relation to the unallocated ESF funding and the contribution made by the youth action teams in this regard in helping national authorities reallocate funds to projects that would make the 'biggest difference in the shortest time'.

Section for Employment, Social Affairs and Citizenship of the EESC

Exchange of views



President Pavel Trantina accepted the invitation to present the work of the [SOC section](#) of the EESC in the fields of employment and social affairs to the Members of EMPL. The SOC Section

prepares [opinions](#) requested by the Commission, European Parliament or Council (including EU Presidencies) as well as own-initiative opinions, with policy analysis and specific proposals. The section regularly organises [public events](#) both in Brussels and in the Member States.

Work Programme 2016 of Cedefop, Eurofound, ETF and EU-OSHA

Exchange of views

The traditional presentation of the annual work programmes of the four agencies in EMPL committee's remit provides an opportunity to the Members of the committee to discuss the priorities to be dealt with by the agencies in the current year. Besides the bi-annual visits this discussion is the most important interaction between EMPL and the agencies in an institutional setting.

Evolution of collective bargaining in Troika programme and post-programme Member States

Workshop

WORKSHOP

POLICY DEPARTMENT
ECONOMIC AND SCIENTIFIC POLICY **A**

Evolution of collective bargaining in Troika programme and post-programme Member States

DATE
18 FEBRUARY 2016

TIME
11:30 - 16:45

ROOM
JÓZSEF ANTALL
401

Committee on the Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL)

The workshop is organised at the request of the EMPL Committee in connection with its ongoing work on monitoring the implementation of labour market and social reforms foreseen by the Memorandum of Understanding with Greece and its interest in following up the findings of the EP resolution of 13 March 2014 on Employment and social aspects of the role and operations of the Troika (European Central Bank, European Commission and International Monetary Fund) with regard to Eurozone

programme countries; it is also connected to the Commission's intention to re-launch social dialogue. The workshop will take place on in the frame of the EMPL hearing on 18 February.

Vote on draft opinions

At its meetings in February EMPL votes on the following opinions:

EGF/2015/007 BE/Hainaut-Namur Glass – Belgium

Lead committee: BUDG

Monitoring the application of Union law. 2014 Annual Report (Vote)

Rapporteur: [Agnieszka Kozłowska-Rajewicz](#) (EPP, PL)

Lead committee: JURI

The situation in the Mediterranean and the need for a holistic EU approach to migration (Vote)

Rapporteur: [Elisabeth Morin-Chartier](#) (EPP, FR)

Lead committee: LIBE

Plenary follow-up of EMPL reports



- Establishing a European Platform to enhance cooperation in the prevention and deterrence of undeclared work – European Parliament [legislative resolution](#) of 2 February 2016

Recent studies, briefing notes

- European Semester Conference - 2015/2016 Cycles – [briefing](#)
- Mainstreaming Employment and Social Indicators into Macroeconomic Surveillance - [study](#)

News from the Agencies

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop)

Fostering partnerships for continuing training – Cedefop workshop – At the Cedefop workshop on 11 and 12 February, over 20 experts from different European countries discussed the role of cooperation between higher education institutions and enterprises for continuous professional development. This field is still rather underplayed. Cooperation is mostly practiced in the area of research, development and innovation, but less in education, especially when it comes to continuing vocational education and training (CVET). The workshop focused on work-based learning (WBL), i.e. linking WBL in the world of work with learning in higher education for continuous professional development. [More](#).

European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound)

Job creation in SMEs: ERM annual report 2015 – The European Restructuring Monitor (ERM) annual report for 2015 explores the issue of job creation in small and medium-sized

enterprises (SMEs). SMEs are increasingly recognised as a job engine for Europe. However, given the heterogeneity of the vast SME population, not all contribute equally to employment growth. This study seeks to identify which SME types are more or less dynamic job creators and to determine their main drivers and barriers for job creation. It also examines recruitment in SMEs, the extent of public debate on job creation in SMEs, and public support instruments available to SMEs that encourage them to create jobs. The study finds that SMEs that tend to create jobs are often young, innovative, internationally active, located in urban areas and run by skilled managers with the capacity to plan and realise active growth and investment strategies. However, a combination of both external and internal company factors, rather than individual characteristics, determines the job creation potential of these companies. [More](#).

European Training Foundation (ETF)

Moving skills forward together: Torino Process 2016 – Vocational education and training specialists from more than 20 ETF countries are joining forces to share project updates and development ideas. The workshop in Turin kick-starts a new level of cooperation in the Torino Process - the vehicle that engages participating countries to improve VET. Now in the fourth round, the Torino Process has developed to a point that there are a substantial number of coordinators in overseeing the process in their countries. It's the first time the Torino Process national coordinators are coming together to share notes, development ideas and priorities for the year ahead. [More](#).

European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA)

Cost-benefit analysis of interventions in small and medium-sized enterprises – An EU-OSHA's summary examines the economic aspects of occupational safety and health (OSH) interventions in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Firstly, case studies in the existing literature were identified and examined. Secondly, 13 new case studies on OSH initiatives in European SMEs were developed, with a business case for each intervention prepared according to a common model. The OSH interventions studied were generally profitable, and these new case studies therefore provide a useful tool to allow owners and managers of SMEs an insight into the potential benefits of improving OSH and the key factors involved in carrying out a cost-benefit analysis. [More](#).

Subscription

If you wish to receive the EMPL Bulletin, please send an email with "subscription to EMPL Bulletin" in the subject to: empl-secretariat@ep.europa.eu

Twitter

You may follow the activities of the EMPL committee on twitter: [@EPSocialAffairs](https://twitter.com/EPSocialAffairs)

Meetings online

Watch the Committee meeting live on the [EP web site](#). Past meetings are available via the [EP Live multimedia library](#) and you can also download the extracts of speakers.

Further information

For any further information, please contact the EMPL secretariat at empl-secretariat@ep.europa.eu or visit the [EMPL Committee website](#).

Contact the editor

European Parliament, Directorate General for Internal Policies of the Union, Secretariat of the Committee on the Employment and Social Affairs.

Tel.: + 32 2 28 42418 – e-mail: empl-secretariat@ep.europa.eu

Legal disclaimer

The items contained herein are drafted by the Secretariat of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs 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. The EMPL Bulletin may contain links to websites that are created and maintained by other organisations. The EMPL Secretariat does not necessarily endorse the views expressed on these websites