



■ EUROPEAN POLICY FRAMEWORK

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■ EUROPEAN AGENDA

■ EUROPEAN POLICY FRAMEWORK

1. BREXIT: Final deal reached between EU and the UK

The 27 EU Heads of State and Government approved on Sunday 25 November in Brussels the final political declaration on the future relationship between the EU and the UK. This statement is 36 pages long, 28 more than the first draft. Trade, security and defense are the main axes of future cooperation. British Prime Minister Theresa May still has to approve the agreement by the two houses of the United Kingdom on December 11. Her very short majority makes the vote uncertain. In the event of legal approval the European Parliament will have to vote in favor or against the withdrawal agreement in the course of March 2019, for an effective exit planned on March 29th.

The planned agreements will have to be negotiated during the transition period i.e. between March 29, 2019 and December 31, 2020.

BREXIT : NEXT STEPS	
Dec. 11, 2018	British Parliament voting on withdrawal agreement
March 2019	European Parliament ratifying vote on withdrawal agreement
Mar. 29, 2019,	The UK officially leaves the EU. It remains however a member of Customs Union and Inner Market. The transition period starts.
Dec. 31, 2020	End of transition period. The UK officially becomes a third State to the EU.

2. EUROPEAN ELECTIONS: Newly nominated leaders for Green and EPP parties

European Parliament political fraction Greens / European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA) chose on 24 November its representatives in the run-up to the presidency of European Commission this Saturday, namely German co-chair of the European Parliament group Ska Keller and Dutch MEP Bas Eickhout.

The Greens have won several elections in various European regions such as Sweden and Bavaria. Both candidates will jointly apply. The election of Jean-Claude Juncker's successor will be held one month after the European elections after an institutional game between the European Parliament and the European Council.

In conservatives of the European People's Party (EPP), the Bavarian Manfred Weber was invested on November 8 in Helsinki leader of the European right. At 46, he won 492 of the 619 votes cast by the European People's Party (EPP) delegates to vote. His opponent, Finland's Alexander Stubb, 50, won 127. The German MP, who heads the EPP group in the European Parliament, presented himself as a moderate able to overcome the divisions of this formation in decline against the rise of extremes against the backdrop of a migratory crisis in the EU.

Note the appointment of Yanis Varoufakis, former Greek finance minister under the banner of the Syriza party, as head of the list for Diem25 in Germany, and Czech Jan Zahradil for European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR).

3. EURO ZONE: Germany and France introduce Euro zone budget project for 2021

The German and French Finance Ministers presented their draft budget for the euro area in 2021. But some countries are struggling to see the added value, like the Netherlands. The draft budget of Olaf Scholz and Bruno Le Maire provides for a limited common amount for the euro area, focused on investment, convergence and more broadly on stabilization. One of the controversial points of this plan, including in Germany, is that it would limit euro area aid to other countries in the event of an economic crisis. As an integral part of the European framework, this budget would be based on the EU's long-term budget - to come into effect in 2021 - and would be subject to the same budgetary rules. Given that it would be part of this seven-year budget, all Member States would have to agree to include it in the legislation, but only 19 in the euro area would be allowed to use it.

4. ITALY: Further negotiations between European Commission and Italian government on budgetary deficit

Representatives of the Italian government Giuseppe Conte, Matteo Salvini and Luigi di Maio, agreed on 26 November a reduction of the budget deficit from 2.4% to 2.2%, according to the recommendations of the European Commission. This gesture by Rome allows Italy to escape economic sanctions and the opening of an excessive debt infringement procedure, requested by a number of member states.

Rome confirmed that the main reforms included in the disputed budget would remain unchanged. According to a spokesman for the Italian government, changes to major reforms such as universal income and the overhaul of the pension system would not be on the agenda. Similarly, Italy agrees with the need to reduce the debt, but in a different way than the Commission.

5. EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS: The European Parliament launches website called "What Europe does for me"

The European Parliament has recently intensified its initiatives to bring the European Union closer to its citizens. While participation in the European elections has been steadily declining for 30 years, a website was launched on 14 November to show the positive impact of the EU on its citizens.

Under the name "What Europe does for me", this site contains 1,800 examples of EU-funded projects and actions that can be searched by location or area of interest. These "fiches" are divided into 3 sections: territories (1 290 localities), social groups (professions, leisure, etc.) and close-ups (detailed information sessions on EU action).

The website will be followed by an application for citizens, with a launch scheduled for the end of November 2018.

■ SOCIAL EUROPE

6. GREENS PARTY : A socially-committed political program

Social justice and a fair transition to a low-carbon economy will be the focus of the next election campaign of the Greens in the EU, according to the group's main newly elected candidates, Ska Keller and Bas Eickhout. The manifesto contains measures such as the development of a greener infrastructure and the joint development of digital and clean technologies. Among other things, it calls for a "decent minimum income" and a European regulation on minimum social rights. While Emmanuel Macron's "La République en Marche" party is expected to join the European Parliament in May, talks have begun to forge new political alliances. But the social, environmental and economic agenda of the European Greens makes it unlikely cooperation with the movement, both *Spitzenkandidaten* expressing their skepticism.

Franziska Brantner, Greens spokesman for European affairs in the Bundestag, is optimistic that even if they do not join a progressive movement, the Greens will give more weight to a progressive majority in Brussels.

7. EU SOCIAL SECURITY COORDINATION: Toward better social security for workers

QUICK REMINDER

On December 13, 2016, the European Commission presented a revision of the EU regulation on the coordination of social security which aims at facilitating labor mobility, equal treatment between workers and taxpayers and better cooperation tools between Member States authorities. The rapporteur of the legislative proposal is French MEP Guillaume Balas, from the Socialists and Democrats group. The inter institutional negotiations, currently under way, should lead to an agreement in February 2019.

The draft report on the coordination of social security systems by Guillaume Balas (S & D, France) was voted in the Employment Committee on 20 November. The committee validated the introduction of new rules allowing the harmonization of social security systems between Member States in order to allow cross-border workers to benefit from more advantageous rules on social security cover, in particular by guaranteeing unemployment benefit coverage, family and long-term care benefits. The aim here is to ensure equitable access to social security for all EU citizens. Until now, each Member State freely organizes its social security model: for each worker, the State thus determines the level of social benefits, the conditions of access to these benefits and the eligibility criteria. These differences in interpretation are subject to fraud and abuse undermining workers' rights.

8. EUROPEAN LABOUR AUTHORITY (ELA): Report was voted in EMPL Committee

QUICK REMINDER

The creation of a European Labor Authority (ELA) was announced by Jean-Claude Juncker in his State of the Union address in September 2017 to provide a regulatory framework for an expanded and increasingly flexible European labor market. As part of the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR) this Authority, endowed with an average €50 million yearly budget will facilitate access to employment and inform workers of their rights according to the legislation in force.

The members of the EMPL Committee voted on Tuesday 20 November on the draft report by Jeroen Lenaers (EPP) on the establishment of a European labor authority.

The new European Labor Authority should focus on compliance with the rules and have a limited number of tasks, agreed MEPs from the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs. The adopted text indicates that the European Labor Authority (ELA) will assist the Member States and the European Commission in applying and complying with EU rules on labor mobility in the context of the free movement of workers and the freedom to provide services on the internal market. Following the adoption of these rules, Parliament is ready to launch negotiations with the Council.

9. EU WORKING CONDITIONS DIRECTIVE: A proposal for a minimal amount of social rights for workers

QUICK REMINDER

The proposal for a directive on transparent and predictable working conditions is in line with the European Social Rights Act (SEDS). It aims to create new rights for all workers, including the lack of protection for workers in precarious jobs, while limiting the burden on employers and maintaining the adaptability of the labor market. .

MEPs agreed to launch negotiations on a proposal that introduces new minimum rights for workers regarding the length of the probationary period, working hours and restrictive contracts. The rules provide that all employees, including those with atypical and non-traditional contracts, receive a comprehensive set of information on their responsibilities and working conditions.

The Commission proposes that all EU workers have the right to more complete information on the essential aspects of work:

1. To introduce a limit on the duration of the probationary period at the beginning of employment,
2. The right to seek additional employment,
3. The right to
4. know within a reasonable time in advance when the work will take place, for workers with widely varying work schedules
5. The right to receive free compulsory training which the employer is required to provide.

The proposal has a broad personal scope of application. It aims to ensure that these rights cover all workers in all forms of work, including those in the most flexible non-standard and

new forms of work such as zero-hour contracts, casual work, domestic work, voucher-based work or platform work. It also comes with targeted provisions on enforcement, to make sure that workers in the workplace effectively benefit from these rights.

10. WORK/LIFE BALANCE : Disagreements between Member States over parental leave issue

QUICK REMINDER

1. The "work-life balance" directive proposes that each parent, at the birth of a child, be entitled to four months of paid leave up to the level of sickness benefits. France strongly opposes it.
2. COREPER on 13 June, 2018, bringing together the permanent representatives of the EU, left two political points unresolved:
 - Transferability between the father and mother of parental leave
 - Compensation arrangements and vacation periods
3. At the EPSCO on 21 June, 2018 EU Member States agreed on non-transferable paid parental leave with pay set at an "adequate" level of a month and a half. Unsurprisingly, the Directive has been considerably watered down by the Member States.
4. On July 11, 2018 MEPs from the EMPL Committee voted on David Casa's report with a level of paid paternity leave at 80% of gross salary and 78% for parental and care leave.

The latest inter-institutional meeting on the Directive on work-life balance-private life, held on Monday 19 November, has not really progressed, in particular because of the many obstacles posed by the Member States to the Austrian Presidency of the Council. Admittedly, the Presidency had obtained a limited negotiating mandate from the Permanent Representatives Committee, with a renewed mandate on paternity leave offering remuneration at the same level as maternity leave. The European Parliament represented by Rapporteur David Casa (EPP, Malta) reportedly insisted on having five paid days a year, but agreed that the level of payment should be left to the discretion of the Member States. Problem: Member States would refuse any possibility of fixing a fixed number of days paid. It is the Member States with the most progressive leave systems, such as Germany, which would be most hesitant to introduce such constraints. The EP pointed out that the main objective of the directive is to establish minimum standards, leaving the Member States free to go further. The next inter-institutional meeting will be held on 3 December.

11. SOCIAL PROTECTION: The European Commission publishes 2018 Annual Report of the Social Protection Committee

Based on a set of key indicators and Member States' reporting, the report analyses the progress towards the Europe 2020 target on reducing poverty and social exclusion, together with the latest social trends to watch.

It provides an overview of recent policy developments and lists key structural social challenges currently faced by each Member State.

This years' report has a special focus on health and contains extracts from the country analyses of the SPC Joint Assessment Framework on Health. The report presents the main conclusions of the analyses, from a social protection perspective.

The report is available in its full version under [this link](#).

12. PROFESSIONAL TRAINING: European Vocational Skills Week 2018

Held annually, this European Professional Skills Week helps millions of people discover the benefits of vocational education and training. With 1512 events across Europe, the campaign reached more than 2.2 million people, 1.2 million more than last year. The week was organized with the support of two EU agencies - the European Center for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) and the European Training Foundation (ETF). The closing event included a prize-giving ceremony and a presentation of the Ambassadors of the European Skills Week 2018. The award-winning initiatives and testimonies of the VET ambassadors underline and confirm the crucial role of education and training vocational training to help people to seize the opportunities offered by the new ways of working. The 2018 Professional Excellence Awards, presented by Commissioner Marianne Thyssen at the closing conference, celebrated successful examples of excellence on the ground.

[Link to the website](#)

13. YOUTH EMPLOYMENT: Mutual Learning Seminars highlight challenges of bringing young people into employment, education or training

The Youth Guarantee has reached millions of young Europeans and is helping more and more young people find jobs or train. However, challenges remain and further efforts are needed to help young people furthest from the labor market. The 2018 Mutual Learning Seminars focused on two areas to address this challenge:

1. Raising awareness through monitoring and mapping systems;
2. Engage young people through integrated services.

To reach young people, one must first know who and where they are, contact them and provide them with the appropriate type of support.

Recently, the implementation of the Youth Guarantee has given impetus to the development of new forms of coordination and cooperation, particularly between public employment services and other entities / services. Integrated services can take many forms and various approaches were presented at the Mutual Learning Seminar entitled "Strengthening Youth Support through Integrated Services", organized jointly by the European Commission and the Luxembourg Ministry of Employment and Social and Solidarity Economy.

Over the course of two days, it has enabled Youth Guarantee Coordinators, national stakeholders and experts from Member States and the EU to discuss and exchange practical experiences on how delivery models are delivered. Better integrated services could help improve the coverage of the Youth Guarantee and improve the quality of support provided. The report, which followed the seminar, identified key success factors and highlighted more key considerations when designing and implementing integrated services.

[Link to the webpage](#)

14. POVERTY: New report released on combating child poverty across the European Union

The purpose of the report is to highlight the implications and the magnitude of child poverty across the EU through data and survey findings. Additionally, the report provides suggestions on the development of policy tools and actions that Member States can implement to move further towards the social inclusion of all children in the EU. The report provides an overview of the current legislative landscape for poverty alleviation, based on desk research and statistical data from Eurostat and the FRA's previous surveys for the 28 Member States.

According to 2016 Eurostat data provided in the report, 25 million children under the age of 18 across the European Union are at risk of poverty, meaning they live in low-wage households with low involvement in the labour market and material hardship. This includes many Roma and migrant and refugee children, who are more likely to be at risk of social exclusion and poverty.

In this regard, the report aligns with the wider initiatives and principles of the United Nations and the European Union, including the European Pillar for Social Rights, and highlights the need for policy makers to address the rights of vulnerable children living in social exclusion in the European Union to break the cycle of poverty.

The European Platform for Investing in Children (EPIC) is a platform which provides resources for Member States to monitor activities triggered by the Recommendation for Investing in Children by sharing the best of policymaking for children and families and fostering cooperation and mutual learning in the field. EPIC has also published a dedicated policy memo on the use of EU funding mechanisms to alleviate child poverty.

[Link to the European Platform for Investing in Children \(EPIC\)](#)

[Political memorandum on how EU funding mechanisms can prevent child poverty](#)

15. PERSONAL CARE SERVICES: European Parliament calls for improved personal care systems

The European Parliament has called again on Nov. 15th for more equity in the labour market so as not to penalise women caring for a third party. This non-legislative resolution was adopted by a large majority of MEPs on Thursday 15 November in the middle of negotiations on work-life balance.

The text, drafted by Sirpa Pietikäinen (EPP, Finland), deplores the fact that 80% of care in the European Union is provided by unpaid informal carers, 75% of whom are women. Aware that this situation primarily penalises women, MEPs call on the Commission to integrate data on care into a set of indicators of social progress, which should be monitored as part of the 'European Semester' budget process.

Against the background of trilogues on the draft proposal for the private/work life directive, MEPs unanimously reiterate their support for the creation of longer and better paid paternity and caregiver leave, non-transferable parental leave, guarantees against dismissal, etc., including for self-employed workers and people who need to take duly paid leave for the care of dependent persons other than children.

Among the concrete measures, MEPs call for the introduction of 'care credits' in labour law, equivalent to periods of work for the purpose of building pension rights, to protect people who stop working to care for a dependent person or family member informally and unpaid, and to recognise the contribution that these carers make to society as a whole. They ask the

Commission to define a legal framework establishing minimum standards for workers in the personal care sector and to launch an initiative on the quality of long-term care.

In a relatively lengthy vote, MEPs refused to call for wage increases in the personal care sector, to increase public sector childcare services or to introduce separate taxation for spouses.

During the debate preceding the vote, the Commissioner for Gender Equality, Věra Jourová, announced that she would launch a public consultation in the coming weeks on the effectiveness of the provisions for equal pay. For the rest, she said that the European Parliament's resolution was "consistent with the work carried out by the Commission so far".

16. EUROPEAN PILLAR OF SOCIAL RIGHTS: Commissioner Marianne Thyssen praises soft law on occasion of first anniversary of European pillar of social rights

On the eve of the first anniversary of the European pillar of social rights, Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs Marianne Thyssen paid tribute to the "soft law" to operate the "convergence machine" of the EU. Thus, for Ms Thyssen and the various speakers, the budget process of the "European Semester" and the "Social Scoreboard" play a vital role in ensuring a form of convergence while respecting the specificities of each Member State.

The European core of social rights has also been followed by legislative action at European level, including the Directive on work-life balance and the Directive on transparent and predictable working conditions. The proposal to create a European labor authority and the recommendations to facilitate access to social security are also linked to the European pillar of social rights, even though they preceded its proclamation.

These legislative proposals are all on the meeting table on December 6th. Asked about the Austrian Presidency's decision to abolish the Employment and Social Policy Council (EPSCO), the Commissioner replied that she did not control the Council's timetable, but was expecting results at the next EPSCO Council on 6 December.

17. EUROPEAN CITIZENS' INITIATIVE: Expected political deal between European Parliament and Council

QUICK REMINDER

The European Citizens Initiative (ECI) is a form of popular political initiative brought by the Treaty of Lisbon (2007) in the European Union democratic process. It is a mechanism that gives the possibility to an amount of at least 1 million citizens from at least ¼ of EU Member States (now 7 out of 28) to formulate a political proposal to the Commission. If the required amount of signatures has been reached within one year after registration, the Commission has a period of 3 months to decide to legislate over the proposition.

To this day, 4 ECI have succeeded since the implementation of the system in 2012: *Right to clean water (2012)*, *Right to legal protection of the human embryo (2012)*, *Abolition of vivisection (2012)*, and *Abolition of glyphosate (2017)*.

The reform of ECI is currently under inter institutional negotiations.

According to the mandate of the Austrian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the minimum age for participation in an ECI will be the same as the legal age for voting in a Member State. A country wishing to lower the minimum age for participation in a citizens' initiative to 16 years can do so by informing the Commission.

Individual aid collection systems may be maintained until 31 December 2021 at least. This reform corresponds to a specific request from the organizers of ECI. In addition, the start date for the collection of signatures could be six months after the registration of the ECI.

■ EUROPEAN AGENDA

DECEMBER 2018	JANUARY 2019	FEVRIER 2019
<p>■ EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT 10 - 13 – Plenary session in Strasbourg 3 – EMPL committee meeting</p> <p>■ EU COUNCIL 13 - 14 – European Council 6 - 7 – EPSCO Ministers meeting 7 & 8 – European Socialist Party meeting Inauguration of Socialist candidate to the Presidency of European Commission</p>	<p>■ EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT 14 - 17 – Plenary session in Strasbourg 10, 23 & 24, 28 & 29 – EMPL committee meetings</p> <p>■ EU COUNCIL 1st – Beginning of Romanian Presidency of EU Council</p> <p>■ EFFE 9 & 10 – Ad-PHS launching in Brussels 22 – Joint EFFE/FEPEM New Year wishes in Paris 28 & 29 – PRODOME Policy visit in Bologna</p>	<p>■ EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT 11 to 14 – Plenary session in Strasbourg</p> <p>■ EFFE 19 to 22 – PRODOME meeting in Rome 26 – White Paper official introduction in Brussels</p>
MARCH 2019	APRIL 2019	MAY 2019
<p>■ EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT 11 to 14 – Plenary session in Strasbourg, vote on Brexit 25 to 28 – Plenary session in Strasbourg</p> <p>■ EU COUNCIL 21 & 22 – European Council</p> <p>■ EUROPEAN UNION 29 – Official exit of the UK from EU</p>	<p>■ EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT 15 to 18 – Plenary session in Strasbourg 18 – End of 8th legislature working period</p> <p>■ EFFE 4 – General assembly in Brussels</p>	<p>■ EUROPEAN UNION 9 – Europe Day 2019 23 to 26 – European elections 2019</p>

About EFFE

Created in 2012, the European Federation for Family Employment (EFFE) chaired by Marie Béatrice Levaux is based on the principles of: free choice of lifestyle and support of citizens in their homes; respect for the private home; social and citizen responsibility.

The EFFE (www.effe-homecare.eu) promotes and defends home-based employment within the European institutions: it is committed to bringing a model of social innovation to the service of European citizens through the services and jobs of the family at home, relaying the EU 2020 strategy for a "sustainable social market economy". Social inclusion is the keyword and remain at the heart of the sector as a source of economic growth through the creation of mass jobs and the fight against undeclared work.

Marie Béatrice Levaux (FEPEM) - President; **Andrea Zini** (ASSINDATCOLF) - Vice President; **Karmele Acedo** (Grupo SSI) - Secretary General; **Anita Poutard** (IPERIA-The Institute) - Treasurer.

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