

**SOCIAL EUROPE IN THE NEW EU ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK:  
INTEGRATING SOCIAL INVESTMENT & SOCIAL POLICY ACTORS**

Informal Roundtable

21 May 2024, 09:00h-13:00h, FEPS HQ, Av. des Arts 46, 1000 Brussels

**Background:**

The Council of the European Union and Parliament recently agreed on a fundamental reform of the EU Economic Governance framework, which will reshape economic policy coordination in the new legislature after the EP elections in June. However, despite mentioning of European Pillar of Social Rights in the agreed reform, it remains unclear how the social dimension will be integrated into the Stability and Growth Pact and the adapted European Semester and how the EPSCO filière and social partners will be involved in the new framework. Against this background, the Spanish and Belgian EU Presidencies have launched a political discussion, including a joint ECOFIN-EPSCO (‘Jumbo’) Council meeting in March 2024. The next step in this process will be Conclusions to be adopted during the EPSCO June Council meeting.

A central question remains open: how can the Social Dimension be integrated methodologically and politically in the new fiscal framework? A key vehicle to strengthen social issues in the new fiscal rules is the ongoing discussion and future revision of the methodology for the Commission’s Debt Sustainability Analyses (DSAs) held among a new Technical Working Group. There is also a need for a methodology to quantify the impact of reforms and investment on growth so as to assess which investments and reforms are eligible for an extension of the debt-adjustment plans. And beyond this avenue of technically incorporating social issues in fiscal policy coordination, how can the EU’s social dimension be effectively strengthened in the new legislature by empowering social actors like EPSCO, Labour and Social Affairs Ministries and Committees, as well as Social Partners?

To discuss these issues and gather input ahead of the final Council meeting of this legislature, FES, FEPS, and the DGB invite selected experts and stakeholders to an informal Roundtable with key actors from the Commission, the German Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Belgian European Council Presidency, interested Member States and Trade Unions. The meeting will be held under Chatham House rules, with refreshments being served on site.

**Programme:**

09:00h	<i>Arrival and Welcome</i>	David Rinaldi, FEPS; Cédric Koch, FES
09:15h	<b>Session 1:</b> Social investment and reforms in the EU’s new fiscal framework	<b>Inputs:</b> Olivier Bontout (DG EMPL) Lennard Welslau (Bruegel)  <b>Moderator:</b> Dominika Biegón, EU Economic Policy Advisor, DGB
10:45h	<i>Coffee break</i>	
11:15h	<b>Session 2:</b> Strengthening the social dimension in the new economic governance framework	<b>Inputs:</b> Prof. Amandine Crespy (Université Libre de Bruxelles) Prof. Sonja Bekker (Utrecht University) Francesco Corti (Advisor to the Belgian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Social Affairs and Health)  <b>Moderator:</b> Johanna Lehmann, Social Policy Advisor, FES Brussels
12:45h	<i>Summary &amp; Wrap-up</i>	Christiane Kesper, FES EU Office; László Andor, FEPS