



European Economic and Social Committee

SOC/542 European Pillar of Social Rights

Information meeting on EESC debates with organised
civil society in the Member States

14 July 2016

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State of the Union Address 2015 - Commission President Juncker (9.9.2015)



"We have to step up the work for a fair and truly pan-European labour market (...). As part of these efforts, I will want to develop a European Pillar of Social Rights, which takes account of the changing realities of Europe's societies and the world of work. And which can serve as a compass for the renewed convergence within the euro area..."

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Background

- 8 March - European Commission launched public consultation on the EPSR initiative (online)
- EESC referral - Bureau approved EPSR as a priority following joint proposal by the 3 Group Presidents
- 3 Group Presidents are the rapporteurs
- Timetable for adoption – SOC 22 November; Plenary in December
- We want EPSR to be a positive project for Europe

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EESC Contribution

- SOC/542 – 3 Group Presidents are rapporteurs
- Debates with organised civil society in 28 Member States – objective to initiate debate, not mirror Commission consultation
- ‘Trios’ (3 members - 1 per Group) responsible for coordination of the national debates with logistical and administrative support provided by EESC staff
- 6 key questions have been prepared for use in the debates but adaptable to national situations
- Trios to prepare reports on the national debates (with support from EESC staff), which will contribute to Opinion;
- Adoption of Opinion: SOC – 22 November + Plenary – December

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Objectives of EESC debates with organised civil society

- Raise awareness about the initiative
- Initiate debate at national level
- Listen to views of organised civil society: what do participants see as key challenges and opportunities; what should happen at EU level and at national level?
- Identify common trends in 28 Member States: where is there agreement, what are key differences of opinion?
- Results of the debate (poss. recommendations/conclusions) will feed into EESC opinion



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How will EESC debates differ from Commission's consultation events?

- **Commission** organising structured dialogue to gather feedback for consultation: planning consultations at European level as well as events in the member states.
 - **Social partners:** asked to actively contribute (“The social partners are invited to play an active role in shaping the Pillar.”)
 - **Non-governmental organisations:** providers of social services, and researchers have been asked to support the debate.
- **EESC** organising debates with organised civil society in 28 Member states
 - not a formal consultation, want to start debate at national level



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Organisation of EESC debates – practical information

- Trios to agree on (as soon as possible): Date for event, Venue + who will be invited
- Date – the debates should have been held & report completed preferably by mid October at the latest
- Venue – the Commission has agreed to make national Representation Offices available (but the EESC events are independent of the Commission); where not appropriate/practical to use Commission premises, Trio can decide on alternative venue Trio (e.g. Economic and Social Council)
- Invitations – Trios to decide on number of participants + which organisations to invite; each member responsible for their own constituency; invitations can be 'on behalf of EESC President' or directly from Trio members jointly as appropriate.

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Organisation of EESC debates – preparation checklist

- Do you know who the other members of your 'Trio' are?
- Do you know who the EESC staff members supporting you are?
- Have you received the letter from the 3 Group Presidents from 29 June & supporting documents?
- Trio members need to agree + inform your EESC Support Staff:
 - ✓ date + venue
 - ✓ organisations to invite + number of participants
 - ✓ format of invitations (Template which can be adapted)
 - ✓ format of event:
 - It is for the Trio to decide which is the most efficient format and length for the event in the national context;
 - Commission presentation of the EPSR initiative;
 - Who will chair/moderate the debate?
 - Do you want EESC Support Staff to make enquiries on your behalf or not?

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Organisation of EESC debates – preparation checklist (cont.)

Next steps

- Communicate information above as soon as possible to your EESC Support Staff
- Inform other members of your national delegations of the date & venue for the debate?
- Should there be any need for expenditure arise (room hire, refreshments, external participant) – **you need to contact** your EESC Support Staff who will follow the appropriate financial procedures

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Organisation of EESC debates – running the debate checklist (cont.)

- Have you discussed and decided which questions you will ask from the set of suggested questions?
- Do these need to be adapted to the national context?
- Have you decided how you will chair/moderate the event & how time will be allocated?
- Confirm who is responsible for taking notes at the debate? (EESC Support Staff?)

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Organisation of EESC debates – after the debate checklist (cont.)

- Please remember that the report from your national debate (approximately 2 pages) should preferably be ready by mid October at the latest
- Do you have the Reporting Template?
- Agree how to organise preparation of the report (e.g. does a member of the Trio take the lead on the coordination of the report?)
- Agree how the report will be prepared & a deadline (including the need for translation)
- Can you agree on 2-3 recommendations/conclusions?

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Overview of timetable & next steps

- July – end Sept/preferably beginning Oct: EESC debates with organised civil society in 28 MS
- September plenary: Juncker to attend EESC plenary
- Preferably Mid-October: reporting deadline
- 22 November: vote in SOC section
- 27 November (tbc): Commission conference on EPSR initiative
- December plenary: adoption of Opinion
- 31 December: Commission consultation closes
- December/January: EP to adopt EPSR report
- Spring 2017: Commission White Paper on the deepening of the EMU (tbc)

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Your questions!

*Thank you very much for agreeing to take on the role of
Group coordinator for the national debates with
organised civil society & also to the EESC Support Staff.*

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