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**HEALTH, CARE AND
PROSPERITY AFTER COVID-19**

FOREWORD

Health, Care and Prosperity in a stronger EU social model

Séamus BOLAND (IE)

President, Civil Society Organisations' Group



Séamus Boland © EESC

Allow me to begin by saying that I was pleased to see the unity displayed by the Members of the Civil Society Organisations' Group in the support of amend-

ments to the EESC opinion on *Strengthening social dialogue* (SOC/764)¹ during the EESC plenary session in April.

Traditionally, our Group has held dear the view that civil society organisations need to be formally involved in dialogue and negotiations designed to improve the reality for people who often don't have a voice in matters such as services and inclusion, that are essential to their lives.

As a Group, we were strongly conscious that the machinery that manages social partnership should be protected and strengthened. However, the case for civil society inclusion in this process has never been stronger. There are growing numbers of members in these organisations dedicated to the provision of necessary assistance to communities in times of crisis as well as ordinary times, where the State is unable to move as quickly. Examples of this were visible during COVID-19 and currently in the Ukraine war. In many ways, civil society organisations act as necessary social cohesion actors, which has the advantage of strengthening the democratic fibre of our society at a time when many experts bemoan the shrinking democratic space. Given that it is estimated that one in five people in the EU volunteer in some way in their own community, this means that there are approximately a hundred million people actively engaged. Clearly, their exclusion in policy-making processes weakens the 'cement' that protects our democratic values.

The last few weeks also saw our Group's conference in Stockholm on 'Health, Care and Prosperity after Covid-19: Swedish and European perspectives'² organised on 25 May in the context of the Swedish Presidency of the Council of the EU. I would like to thank our Swedish colleagues for making our conference in Stockholm such a resounding success.

The theme of health and care, which was thoroughly explored during the event was timely, particularly in terms of the impact of COVID-19. Europe already has a growing population of older residents and people who will need particular care, especially in the area of health. We will need new research as well as new models of living with health issues. People, irrespective of age or health condition, have the right to live their lives in dignity and be afforded a level of care appropriate to their needs.

Finally, I had the pleasure of participating in the Porto Social Forum in Portugal³ on 26 and 27 May. First held two years ago⁴, this important gathering of stakeholders, including social partners, the European Commission and civil society organisations, explores and espouses the European social model, bearing in mind that the foundation of the EU is largely based on principles of equality and social justice, it was gratifying to hear that these principles remain in place. It was also good to hear that many of the speakers continue to recognise that issues of poverty have not, sadly, disappeared, but continue to be ever present in the lives of millions of people.

Séamus Boland

1. EESC opinion SOC/764, <https://europa.eu/JwCmWK>
2. EESC, Civil Society Organisations' Group conference, 25 May 2023, <https://europa.eu/Q9nDnv>
3. Porto Social Forum in Portugal, 26-27 May 2023, <https://www.portugal.gov.pt/en/gc23/communication/news-item?i=porto-social-forum-what-is-at-stake>
4. Porto Social Summit, 7-8 May 2021, <https://www.2021portugal.eu/en/porto-social-summit/>

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HEALTH, CARE AND PROSPERITY AFTER COVID-19

Fixing the cracks exposed by COVID-19: Our healthcare systems must be built on preparedness and solidarity between Member States



Ioannis Vardakastanis © EESC

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The **COVID-19** pandemic had a **significant impact on European health systems**. Hospitals struggled to cope with the influx of patients, leading to a shortage of hospital beds, medical supplies, and staff. This resulted in countless non-COVID-19-related medical procedures being delayed or cancelled. It also exposed cracks in the principle of solidarity between EU Member States², with governments doing all they could to get their hands on equipment needed to save lives and keep people as protected as possible.

The pandemic also unveiled a much uglier truth about our healthcare

systems, namely the **unequal treatment** received by certain parts of the population. Older people and persons with disabilities, who were among the most at risk of death during the pandemic, were too often turned away from hospitals as part of a triage policy³, with priority given to patients deemed to have a longer life expectancy.

COVID-19 brought home one very clear message: **never again do we want to find ourselves in a situation like this!** The message was also that, increasingly, we must be prepared for anything. The EU needs to be able to carefully monitor trends

indicating shortages of medicines or equipment, and to react accordingly. There must also be structures in place to **promote solidarity between Member States**, including assistance to enable Member States to welcome patients from neighbouring countries in cases of urgent need and saturated hospitals. EU funding and technical support would be crucial in making this a reality.

Ultimately, the pandemic has served as a lesson in just how fragile our healthcare systems are and how urgent it is to ensure that they are well funded, properly staffed and accessible to all.



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Ioannis Vardakastanis was the rapporteur for the EESC opinions SOC/665⁴ on Building a European Health Union and SOC/702⁵ on European Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (HERA) amongst others.

1. EESC Section for Economic and Monetary Union and Economic and Social Cohesion, <https://europa.eu/!RD39rY>

2. Euractiv article, Coronavirus puts Europe's solidarity to the test, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/coronavirus/news/coronavirus-puts-europes-solidarity-to-the-test/>

3. European Human Rights Report, 2021, page 52: according to this triage (prioritization) procedure, age and disability were initially thought of as criterion to determine individual vulnerabilities, diagnosis, and/or treatment options. (...) It has certainly disproportionately impacted older persons with disabilities in getting equal access to health care since they combine both criteria, https://mcusercontent.com/865a5bbee1086c57a41cc876d/files/08348aa3-85bc-46e5-aab4-cf8b976ad213/EDF_HR_report_2021_interactive_accessible.pdf

4. EESC opinion SOC/665, <https://europa.eu/!Kr44VF>

5. EESC opinion SOC/720, <https://europa.eu/!M8kpKQ>

The ageing population in Europe: an essential topic for EU policy-making



Miguel Ángel Cabra de Luna
© ONCE Foundation

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According to [recent data](#) and projections, the number of people in Europe aged over 65 is expected to increase by 44.7% between 2019 and 2050¹. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the **strategic challenge** that the **ageing of the population** represents for the EU, as well as the **need to reform and improve long-term care** for older people. So now that the World Health Organisation has declared the end of the COVID-19 emergency, and with the EU in talks on a new strategy on ageing, it is the perfect time to reflect on the effects the pandemic has had on the older population.

Through its opinion [Towards a new care model for older people: learning from COVID-19](#)², for which I had the honour of being rapporteur, the EESC highlighted, already in January 2022, the **urgent need for a paradigm shift**

and a change in the way we invest in care for older people and, to this end, proposed several recommendations. [Another EESC opinion](#)³, which is currently under discussion, also elaborates on these issues and proposals. These include the **need for the EU to adopt a new European strategy on older people**, with the fundamental objectives of protecting the rights of older people, as well as ensuring their full participation in society and the economy; a European agency for older people and ageing; an EESC ad hoc group; a European year of older persons; a UN convention on the rights of older people; and for laws on supporting older people and protecting their autonomy to be updated or established. Furthermore, we highlight the **need for increased funding and universal access to care**, and for development and training in innovative technologies that promote autonomy and care, and measures to ensure **adequate training for carers**.

It is important that older people are taken into consideration in European

policies, and to ensure **accessible and quality long-term care** for older people and their families, in order to ensure their autonomy, well-being and dignity. It is also important that the approach to age and older people not be seen as a burden or an expense for society, but rather as a part of the social and economic benefits that will be achieved by ensuring the greater active inclusion of older people.

The EESC will continue to contribute with its ideas and proposals in this regard. Its Members believe that it should be a priority subject in view



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of the [2024 European elections](#)⁴. **The credibility of the European social model is at stake**, particularly in a Europe that is ageing faster than any other region on the planet.

Who cares about informal family carers in the EU?

Kinga JOÓ (HU)



Kinga Joó © EESC

*Vice-President,
National
Association of
Large Families
(NOE)
President, Social
Responsibility*

*Board, National Cooperation Fund
(NEA)*

While drafting the opinion for the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) on the [European Care Strategy](#)⁵, I spent quite some time searching for data and statistics on **informal carers**. While many

recent publications appeared on the economic value of and gender imbalance in unpaid care, there are still **no official statistics on their numbers**. This is mainly due to the lack of a clear definition and the informal nature of this sector.

The opinion includes a number of **recommendations** to complement the [Care Strategy](#)⁶, as presented by the European Commission. We focused many of our comments on the needs of informal carers, as we saw a lot of room for improvement in this regard. The EESC recommends the **identification** of these carers and the

mapping of their needs to effectively target them.

Given that 2023 is the [European Year of Skills](#)⁷, I would also like to highlight our point on **skills validation** to pave the way for the personal and societal recognition of informal carers' crucial role. These skills validation schemes

1. Eurostat, 2020, Ageing Europe – statistics on population developments, <https://europa.eu/ImYCbPY>
2. EESC opinion SOC/687, <https://europa.eu/14kOmHM>
3. EESC opinion SOC/757, <https://europa.eu/1JBmbQw>
4. EU Council, European Parliament elections 2024, <https://europa.eu/1nDVHrx>
5. EESC opinion SOC/741, <https://europa.eu/16hTRYc>
6. European Commission, A European Care Strategy, <https://europa.eu/1xqfWgt>
7. European Union, European Year of Skills, <https://europa.eu/1gXjRGt>

would facilitate carers' access to training, information and advice about care, while they could also help to develop adequate care-life balance measures.

Informal carers require unique and specific consideration given their largely unrecognised and unremunerated roles, along with measures to move in the direction of **formalisation and recognition**, e.g., promoting access to social security

systems, further advancing the prevalence of carers leave and possibilities for career development.

Millions of carers await a positive response from our societies, which they assist to properly function. It is high time to consider an **action plan** for informal and family carers to meet the objectives of the European Care



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Strategy "to ensure that informal care is a choice rather than a necessity"¹.

Investment in the planning, education and training of health professionals is crucial



Danko Relić © EESC

Danko RELIĆ (HR)
Vice-President,
Association
of People's
Health «Andrija
Štampar»

The COVID-19 crisis has had an unprecedented effect on European health systems, highlighting the need for cooperation in the health and care sectors². The pandemic has exposed the vulnerabilities of the health workforce, underscoring the **importance of building resilient and high-quality health and care systems**. The European Union has responded to these challenges by adopting a [new strategy](#)³ for the health and care workforce, recognising

the need to prioritise investments in healthcare systems.

This new EU strategy emphasises the **importance of cooperation and coordination among Member States** in the health and care sectors. The strategy aims to strengthen health workforce capacity, improve working conditions and training and enhance the cross-border mobility of health professionals. The strategy also recognises the importance of ensuring access to high-quality health care for all, especially the most vulnerable groups.

To build resilient and high-quality health and care systems in the EU, it is crucial to **invest in the planning, education and training of health**

professionals, including doctors, nurses and caregivers. This investment should include measures to attract and retain health professionals, especially in rural and remote areas. The EU will also be able to promote research and innovation in health care, improving the availability of new technologies and treatments.

Ensuring the **right to health care** and making it more accessible is also a critical aspect of building resilient and high-quality health and care systems. This means promoting universal health coverage and **addressing the social determinants of health**, such as poverty and social exclusion.

The pandemic has highlighted the importance of **protecting the most vulnerable groups**, including the elderly, those with chronic illnesses and complex patients. The EU will be able to support Member States in developing strategies to address these challenges, such as investing in long-term care services and supporting caregivers.

Civil society organisations have the potential, knowledge, will and desire to play an essential role in all processes mentioned above and should be recognised in a timely manner.



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Danko Relić was the rapporteur for the EESC opinion [SOC/720](#)⁴ on Health Workforce and Care Strategy for the future of Europe.

1. European Commission, A European Care Strategy, <https://europa.eu/!xqfWgt>
2. European Health Union, <https://europa.eu/!7Kb3BR>
3. European Commission, A European Care Strategy, <https://europa.eu/!xqfWgt>
4. EESC opinion SOC/720, <https://europa.eu/!9YgygW>

Investing in capacity building and stronger health systems to tackle cross-border health threats – How is ECDC contributing?



Andrea Ammon © ECDC

Dr Andrea AMMON
Director, ECDC¹

One of the main lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic acknowledges the importance of investing in strong resilient health systems to prevent the spread of infectious diseases and to be able to efficiently respond during health emergencies.

The pandemic also showed us that serious threats to health are inherently cross-border which underlines the importance of cooperation and coordination with partners not only at the regional and national level, but also between countries and indeed globally.

In light of these early lessons learned, and as the first steps towards a European Health Union², the European Commission put forward several legislative proposals presented as a package.

These pieces of new legislation not only called for a new regulation on serious cross-border threats to health³ but also included proposals to strengthen the mandates of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and of the European Medicines Agency (EMA), as well as to establish a Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (HERA)⁴.

With the different building blocks of the European Health Union in force since 25 December 2022, the EU now has the necessary tools to prepare and better respond to future public health emergencies.

The reinforced mandate of ECDC, together with the new regulation on serious cross-border threats to

health, tasks ECDC with further developing its commitment to the prevention and control of infectious diseases in Europe. By expanding the scope of the Agency's work, enhancing its surveillance and response capabilities, increasing support to Member States, improving communication and outreach, and strengthening partnerships, ECDC is working to support building stronger and more resilient public health systems in Europe.

The reinforced mandate of ECDC, including the new regulation on serious cross-border threats to health, are significant steps towards a safer, better prepared and more resilient Europe.

I look forward to strengthening cooperation and actions with the EU Institutions and Agencies, including with the European Economic and Social Committee, as well as with national authorities in the Member



Conference on Health, Care and Prosperity after COVID19 © EESC

In order to succeed, ECDC will re-shape the way our agency has been interacting with the EU and EEA⁵ Member States and will provide targeted country support on surveillance and preparedness with the aim of providing countries with the tools necessary to tackle emerging health threats.

With more timely, complete and comparable data within the EU, analysis and concrete proposals on public health actions to be taken, we aim to support the Member States in creating the conditions for a new European Health Union that is fit to better anticipate, react and respond to health threats in a coordinated way, both at the EU- and national level.

States. ECDC will also further enhance its collaboration with international partners so that we collectively can better respond to threats posed by infectious diseases and ensure that we continue improving the lives of people in Europe and globally.

1. European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) is an EU agency tasked with identifying assessing and communicating threats to human health posed by infectious diseases. <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en>
2. European Health Union, <https://europa.eu/!7Kb3BR>
3. EUR-Lex, Regulation (EU) 2022/2371 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 November 2022 on serious cross-border threats to health, <https://europa.eu/!Q8vtRy>
4. European Commission, HERA, <https://europa.eu/!HpYCJm>
5. European Economic Area, abbreviated as EEA, consists of the Member States of the European Union (EU) and three countries of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway).

What does the post-pandemic future bring for young people in health systems?



Andrej Martin Vujkovic
© YHO

**Andrej Martin
VUJKOVAC**

*President,
International
Youth Health
Organization
(YHO)¹*

The pandemic has impacted every aspect of life, but young people were especially hard hit as the safety nets for them were stretched thinner than ever before, especially in the field of mental health. In March 2020 everyone's everyday lives suddenly came to a stop. This included practically all preventive programmes, sports activities and in-person social events. The effects of this are still visible and it will take a long time

cases the epidemiological picture was similar.

All across Europe healthcare students were at first barred from entering healthcare institutions, but quickly started to play a vital role in keeping healthcare systems running. Sadly, they faced many obstacles due to a lack of guidelines on how to integrate them into work during crisis events such as the pandemic. The YHO was also involved: we were a part of the WHO EPIWIN Youth Network², we started the *Curse of Urgency* webinar series that continues as our podcast³, and we worked to bring attention to health issues that were pushed into the background.

comprehensive plans for care of children and young people in times of crisis, not just from the health perspective, but also from the social and educational perspectives. We need **youth voices** to be represented in settings where these decisions and strategies are formulated, for them to be a part of the process from start to finish to adequately address the intergenerational dimension of much needed dialogue.

If we want to build resilient and high-quality health and care systems, we need to work together and make sure that existing good practices and solutions from all over the EU are shared with countries that could benefit from using the same approaches. But most importantly the health and care systems need to be strictly patient-centred.

The YHO is sure the future of these systems will bring new opportunities for youth, not only healthcare students, but every young person, as the difficult lessons on the impact of the pandemic on young people's health will lay the foundation for strength and resilience in the form of better preventative programmes, improved health literacy and healthy behaviours of future generations.

Health is indeed a political choice and lessons learned during the COVID-19 crisis must not be forgotten.



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until they are completely gone. They might leave an ever-lasting impact on young people's lives.

The pandemic has stretched EU health systems to their limits. It laid bare how fragile our plans and chains of action were. At points during 2020 and 2021 we saw a chaotic patchwork of differing rules and regulations, even if in some

These experiences have to lead to subsequent improvements – to deepen European cooperation in health and care sectors to make them more interconnected between countries. It is also of utmost importance that plans are drawn up for future integration of healthcare students into the response to extraordinary events and provision of adequate support. We need

1. International Youth Health Organization, <https://yho.network/>
2. WHO EPIWIN Youth Network, <https://www.who.int/teams/epi-win>
3. Spotify, The Curse of Urgency Podcast, <https://open.spotify.com/show/0xDtS7gnCpcD00rERUKA9w>

WHAT IS EESC OPINION SOC/729 ALL ABOUT?

An interview with Alain Coheur, rapporteur for EESC opinion SOC/729 on Ensuring strong European solidarity for rare disease patients¹



Alain Coheur © AIM

Alain COHEUR (BE)

Director, European and International Affairs, National Union of Socialist Mutual Health Funds (UNMS)

What are the three main findings of this opinion?

- The opinion continues to re-affirm common presumptions: the rarity – more than 6 000 rare diseases affecting fewer than one in 2 000, the diagnostic odyssey – an average of up to 4.5 years to diagnose, the higher care consumption and healthcare costs. These findings express the inequity faced by patients and families.
- The number of ambitious European initiatives that all aim to benefit patients, sometimes specifically rare disease patients, that might benefit from better coordination.
- The political will supporting the plight of the rare disease community to address their challenges and unmet needs.

The most hopeful finding of this opinion is that rare disease patients

and families are not alone. The 36 million European rare disease patients have found more than 300 advocates in the EESC members that adopted this opinion. The members were enthusiastic to work on the subject of rare disease policy because this concerns people/patients, and look for structural European solutions to address to inequity.

How could these issues be addressed? What are the three main recommendations or proposals of the opinion?

The EESC recommends a European action plan with SMART goals to shorten the diagnostic process to a year.

The EESC recommends piloting a

European authority for non-communicable diseases that would foster the coordination of policy initiatives and follow-up of the action plan, and mainstream attention for and solidarity with the patients.

European solidarity is also to be explored on a financial level, guaranteeing financial protection for patients and families by exploring mechanisms such as a [European Solidarity Fund](#)².

After the adoption of this opinion, what have you done/will you do to promote it?

The primary focus is building a coalition with health stakeholders to capture the momentum and plead for an action plan. I am very happy with the immediate support from *Eurordis*³. At this stage, I am raising awareness among organisations such as the *AIM*⁴ but also the Belgian government and the European Commission. In the autumn I will present the opinion during a Spanish

Presidency event on rare diseases and at the OFBS Forum Santé Transfrontalier⁵.

Raising awareness and dialoguing with experts, patients and policy makers will allow us to finetune the recommendations and put the priorities on the European political agenda in 2024 for the next European Commission and Parliament. Beyond

crisis-preparedness, it is now the time to formulate an ambitious European public health strategy focusing on the resilience of healthcare systems, accessibility and affordability. Addressing the needs and situation of rare disease patients with a coordinated European strategy would be a good stepping stone towards this patient-centred [European Health Union](#)⁶.

Read the EESC opinion on Ensuring strong European solidarity for rare disease patients at: <https://europa.eu/!GWJDFV>

The opinion was presented and adopted at the October plenary session in 2022.

1. EESC opinion SOC/729, <https://europa.eu/!GWJDFV>

2. European Commission, EU solidarity fund, <https://europa.eu/!367qmb>

3. Eurodis, Rare Diseases Europe, <https://www.eurordis.org/>

4. International association of mutual benefit societies, <https://www.aim-mutual.org/>

5. OFBS Forum Santé Transfrontalier, <https://www.ofbs.org/evenements/forum-sante-transfrontalier-2022/>

6. European Commission, European Health Union, <https://europa.eu/!7Kb3BR>

REFLECTIONS

European Year of Skills: Let us highlight the development of new skills through social engagement

A comment by Enrico Kreft, Board Member, Europa-Union Deutschland e. V.¹



Enrico Kreft © Enrico Kreft

Enrico KREFT
Board Member,
Europa-Union
Deutschland e. V.

The European Year of Skills (EYS²) is a very important initiative because it not only highlights the **need for new types of qualifications** that are crucial to catching up with the digital and societal transformation, but also **raises awareness** of the importance of formal and non-formal education in a changing world.



The EYS should in particular be used to support and expand **informal and non-formal education**. I am convinced that this must also include promoting inclusive education to show the importance of work and education in the context of disabilities and participation in society.

The EU needs citizens who take a clear stance on the European values of democracy, peace and freedom and who in addition to their studies, job or family commitments are civically engaged. **Active citizens** support and empower each other in these uncertain times. In the course of **volunteering** people acquire moreover valuable **skills and experiences**. These achievements should be recognised more both by

society and by employers – even though these skills are usually not reflected in credit points or certificates.

Apart from disseminating information about the EYS in their networks, **organised civil society can contribute to the success of the EYS** by highlighting the skills their volunteers develop for the benefit of their social engagement. Taking on

information to get through these multiple crises together. We want to encourage both our activists and citizens to continue to work for the common good and exercise their democratic rights. Therefore, in the context of the EYS, we will put a **special focus on civic education** in view of the European Elections 2024³, particularly as in Germany the voting age has been lowered to 16.



European Youth Project with Europa-Union © Enrico Kreft

responsibility in an association today means contributing technical, subject-specific, didactic, digital or social competences. In the end, it is probably quite simple to promote the goals of the European Year of Skills: talk more about the strengths and existing skills in one's own organisation.

As an organisation that is rooted in many networks, in diverse thematic fields of European politics and is engaged at several levels of European civil society, we see that the digital, social and ecological **transformation of our society**, fuelled by the pandemic, climate change and war, **challenges and also overwhelms many people**. Therefore, through its **activities**, Europa-Union Deutschland tries to give citizens a value-based orientation, but also reliable

We will offer training opportunities to prepare our local members for their volunteer work and to provide support in the rapidly accelerating digital transformation for all age groups. We will use the EYS to continue our online and local citizen dialogues, but also to intensify our work in the networks with education actors to raise awareness for the recognition and value of formal and non-formal education and to focus on inclusive education work. Furthermore, the EYS will play a significant role in our communication strategy.

1. Europa-Union Deutschland e.V. is the German section of the Union of European Federalists (UEF), <https://www.europa-union.de/>
2. European Union, European Year of Skills, <https://europea.eu/!gXjRGt>
3. EU Council, European Parliament elections 2024, <https://europa.eu/!nDVHrx>

NEWS FROM THE GROUP

How to build resilient and sustainable European health and care systems: learning from the experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic



Lena Hallengren, Séamus Boland and Miriam Söderström (from left to right) © EESC

Healthcare must be people-centred and valued as a social investment, not a 'cost', concluded a [conference](#)¹ organised by the Civil Society Organisations' Group of the EESC at the House of Europe in Stockholm on 25 May 2023. For this to happen it is **necessary to change mindsets socially, economically and politically**. Building on cooperation during the COVID-19 pandemic, EU Member States need to **join forces** to build resilient and sustainable health and care systems that leave no one behind and value the work of care workers, civil society organisations and volunteers.

The conference was attended by some 90 civil society and institutional representatives from the national and the European level.

Opening the conference, **Séamus Boland**, president of the Civil Society Organisations' Group, recalled that access to affordable and quality healthcare is a right for EU citizens. "It was agreed upon by all EU Member States with the adoption of the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#)² in 2017," stated Mr Boland and added that "it was reiterated by citizens in 2021, when they called for the 'Right to Health' in the [Conference on the Future of Europe](#)³". Mr Boland also stressed that in order to provide qualitative healthcare for the most vulnerable - be it the elderly, the young,

(2019-2022), reflected in her speech on the **measures taken by the Swedish government** in response to the pandemic. She said: "Regarding our chosen measures, Sweden was often described in the international media as odd. But we saw that the measures we took had a sufficient effect when people kept distance and refrained from visiting public places. And when other countries closed their schools, ours were open. Because we knew how important **school** is for children and young people in their upbringing, especially for those coming from the smallest means".

The State Secretary to the Swedish Minister for Health Care, **Miriam Söderström**, spoke about the **conditions** for resilient and sustainable health care systems: "Skills supply is key to achieving equality and accessibility in health care. **Health care professionals** are our greatest resource and we must promote skills enhancement and strengthen primary health care".

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on European health systems was addressed by **Dr Andrea Ammon**, Director of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), who highlighted the importance of **cooperation and coordination** with partners at the local, regional and national levels, but also between EU Member States

or persons with a disability – it was necessary to build resilient and qualitative health and care systems.

Lena Hallengren, Member of Parliament and former Swedish Minister for Health and Social Policy

and globally. "The pandemic showed us that serious threats to health are inherently cross-border," she said and stressed that "with the different building blocks of the new [European Health Union](#)⁴ in force since December 2022, the EU now has the necessary tools to prepare and better respond to future public health emergencies".

Participants underlined the need to **improve emergency preparedness**, as the pandemic exposed existing inadequacies of national health and



© EESC

care systems, which were often already over-stretched by years of under-investment and an ageing population. The need to **invest in research, data and social innovation** and reaping the opportunities provided by **digital technologies** were mentioned, also with a view to improving Europe's competitiveness.

1. EESC, Civil Society Organisations' Group conference, 25 May 2023, <https://europa.eu/!Q9nDnv>
2. European Commission, European Pillar of Social Rights, <https://europa.eu/!XRkm6k>
3. European Union, Conference on the Future of Europe, <https://futureu.europa.eu/en/>
4. European Commission, European Health Union, <https://europa.eu/!7Kb3BR>

In the different panels, participants discussed current challenges to the health and care systems, the [European Health Care Strategy](#)¹, [Europe's Beating Cancer Plan](#)² and the role of social enterprises. They also addressed the questions of how to overcome **gender inequalities** in the workforce and how to guarantee an **educated, skilled and motivated workforce**. Training, recognition of the key role of informal carers and adequate remuneration were considered key elements.

The topic of **mental health** was addressed by **Noura Berrouba**,

president of the Swedish Council of National Youth Organisations (LSU). "Mental health issues among young people are on the rise," she warned and stressed that "the risk for young LGBTIQ people is twice as high as for their peers". In order to effectively manage mental health among young people, Ms Berrouba recommended improving their livelihoods and enhancing social contacts, decreasing uncertainty and stigma, preventive treatment and early intervention.

In the course of the conference, other speakers also called for health and

care policies to be made in partnership with civil society organisations, rather than for them. It is crucial to take the different needs of all parts of society into account and to pay attention to gender and age differences. This involves many interrelated policy areas which should work in coordination and complementarity. Families caring for persons with disabilities and the elderly need to receive support in order to reduce the risk of poverty and social exclusion. Resilient and sustainable health and care systems must be based on solidarity and equity and leave no one behind.

Day of the Liberal Professions 2023 - Fostering skills and delivering the Green Deal

On 2 May, the [Liberal Professions Category](#)³ organised the 7th edition of the Day of the Liberal Professions, which was entitled [Fostering skills and delivering the Green Deal](#)⁴. The event was opened by a video statement by **Marina Elvira Calderone**, Italian Minister of Labour and Social Policies (and former EESC Member and co-spokesperson of the Liberal Professions Category), who noted that professions can help to manage the turbulent period of change that we are witnessing today. **Othmar Karas**, First Vice-President of the *European Parliament*, echoed these words by stating that in these challenging times, the liberal professions are a vital anchor stabilising our economy.

The keynote speech was delivered by **Prof Ralf Niebergall**, vice-president of the *Federal Chamber of German Architects*. Prof Niebergall spoke about the ways in which liberal professions can help tackle the climate challenge.

The rest of the day was divided into four fascinating panel discussions. In the first one dedicated to [Fit for 55 package](#) of legislation⁵, EESC Member **Milena Angelova** presented the outcomes of opinion [INT/979](#)⁶ on 'How to make SMEs, social economy enterprises, crafts and liberal professions Fit for 55'. **Ber Oomen**, CEO of the *European Specialist Nurses*

Organisation, spoke about how Fit for 55 is pushing the health sector to innovate for the sake of our well-being.

The second panel focused on the [New European Bauhaus](#)⁷. **Daniel Fügenschuh**, president of the *Austrian Chamber of Architects and Engineers*, set out how the New European Bauhaus is a creative and interdisciplinary initiative that connects the [European Green Deal](#)⁸ to our living spaces and experiences. **Ruth Schagemann**, president of the *Architects Council of Europe*, set out the architects' perspective on this new concept. And **Susanne Rudenstam**, Managing Director at *Swedish Wood*, outlined Sweden's leading role in innovative wooden building techniques.

A third panel focused on the [European Year of Skills](#)⁹. **Friedemann Schmidt**, president of the *German Association of Liberal Professions*, spoke about how training and lifelong learning secure a skilled workforce. **Gaetano Stella**, president of *CEPLIS*, addressed the challenges that the constantly changing working environment brings to the workforce. **Sarah Sherlock**, vice-president of the *Council of European Geodetic Surveyors (CLGE)*, presented the [CLGE's First Step Programme](#)¹⁰, which is a concrete

example of how organisations can help the work force to upgrade their skills throughout their career.

The final panel focused on transition tools. **Martin Špolc** from the *European Commission's Directorate-General FISMA*¹¹ set out the [EU Taxonomy Compass](#)¹². Finally, **Ilkka Penttinen Fouto**, Project and Policy Officer at *Eurocadres*, focused on training as a tool for transition. He made the important case that everyone has the right to lifelong learning in order to maintain and acquire skills that enable them to participate fully in society.

A fascinating event that provided all participants with some useful food for thought on the digital and green transitions.

1. European Commission, European Care Strategy, <https://europa.eu/ixqfWgt>
2. European Commission, A cancer plan for Europe, <https://europa.eu/!GNmRRV>
3. EESC Liberal Professions Category, <https://europa.eu/!MJ76wG>
4. EESC Liberal Professions Day 2023, <https://europa.eu/!xWMgc3>
5. European Commission, Fit for 55, <https://europa.eu/!DWckrW>
6. EESC opinion INT/979, <https://europa.eu/!bfn73B>
7. European Union, New European Bauhaus, https://new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/index_en
8. European Commission, European Green Deal, <https://europa.eu/!8bB4bR>
9. European Union, European Year of Skills, <https://europa.eu/!gXjRGt>
10. CLGE, First Step Programme, <https://www.clge.eu/wp-content/uploads/2009/09/CLGE-FirstSTEP.pdf>
11. Directorate-General for Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union.
12. European Commission EU Taxonomy Compass, <https://europa.eu/!nGvw7P>

EESC mid-term renewal: Members of the Civil Society Organisations' Group take up new positions



Members in leadership positions – term 2023-2025 © EESC

During the inaugural session of the second half of the EESC's 2020-2025 term of office on 25 and 26 April, the EESC plenary appointed Members of the Civil Society Organisations' Group to several leadership positions. **Krzysztof Pater** is the new [Vice-President in charge of Budget](#)¹ at the European Economic and Social Committee. **Ioannis Vardakastanis** takes over the presidency of the Section for Economic and Monetary Union and Economic and Social Cohesion ([ECO](#)²), while **Baiba Miltoviča** and **Panagiotis Gkofas** both remain in their positions as president of the Section for Transport, Energy, Infrastructure and the Information Society ([TEN](#)³) and

one of the Committee's Quaestors respectively.

Elena-Alexandra Calistru was appointed vice-president of the Section for Economic and Monetary Union and Economic and Social Cohesion (ECO) for the first time. **Alain Coheur** will take over the vice-presidency of the Section for the Single Market, Production and Consumption ([INT](#)⁴) and **John Comer** will again be vice-president of the Section for Transport, Energy, Infrastructure and the Information Society (TEN). **Ariane Rodert** will serve as vice-president of the Section for Employment, Social Affairs and Citizenship ([SOC](#)⁵) for another two

and half years. **Cillian Lohan** will take up the position of vice-president of the Section for Agriculture, Rural Development and the Environment ([NAT](#)⁶), while **Ionuț Sibian** remains the vice-president of the Section for External Relations ([REX](#)⁷). **Giuseppe Guerini** continues to be a Member of the bureau of the Committee's Consultative Commission on Industrial Change (known by its French acronym [CCMI](#)⁸, Commission consultative des mutations industrielles).

Unlike EESC Members, who are elected for a five-year term of office, the presidencies of the EESC, its Sections and other permanent and temporary bodies are elected for a period of two and a half years, in rotation between the three Groups which make up the EESC. New presidencies usually start with the EESC renewal and at the mid-term renewal. The second half of the EESC's 2020-2025 term of office started on 26 April 2023. The new presidencies will consequently last until October 2025.

For further information on positions held by Members of the Civil Society Organisations' Group during the 2023-2025 term visit our website at: <https://europa.eu/iqYBbcY>

Luca Jahier is the new President of the EESC European Semester Group



Luca Jahier © EESC

Luca JAHIER (IT)
*President,
EESC European
Semester Group⁹
Former EESC
President
Journalist,
political analyst, expert in the field of
associations, social advancement and
the third sector – international relations
department of the Christian Associations
of Italian Workers (ACLI)*

I'm a journalist, an expert in international politics and economics,

and have been active for a large part of my life in **third sector**, humanitarian NGOs mainly engaged in Africa, volunteering and the social economy sector. For the last 15 years I have mainly been involved in EU matters, with several official roles.

The **design of the EU economic governance** has been central to my EU roles for many years. During my term of office as EESC President we played a very crucial role in the call for the emergency response to COVID-19 and later in designing the more innovative

[NextGenerationEU](#)¹⁰, which has now become the main reference for the expected reform of the [EU Growth and Stability Pact](#)¹¹ and, of course, of

1. EESC Vice-President in charge of Budget, <https://europa.eu/iuR99KR>
2. EESC ECO Section, <https://europa.eu/IRD39rY>
3. EESC TEN Section, <https://europa.eu/lkn94kX>
4. EESC INT Section, <https://europa.eu/lpK46ky>
5. EESC SOC Section, <https://europa.eu/lxW46cK>
6. EESC NAT Section, <https://europa.eu/lyq33Bv>
7. EESC REX Section, <https://europa.eu/ljX84ND>
8. EESC CCMI, <https://europa.eu/lfu46bN>
9. EESC European Semester Group, <https://europa.eu/lBq97bt>
10. European Commission, NextGenerationEU, https://next-generation-eu.europa.eu/index_en
11. European Commission, EU Growth and Stability Pact, <https://europa.eu/lkvj7CN>

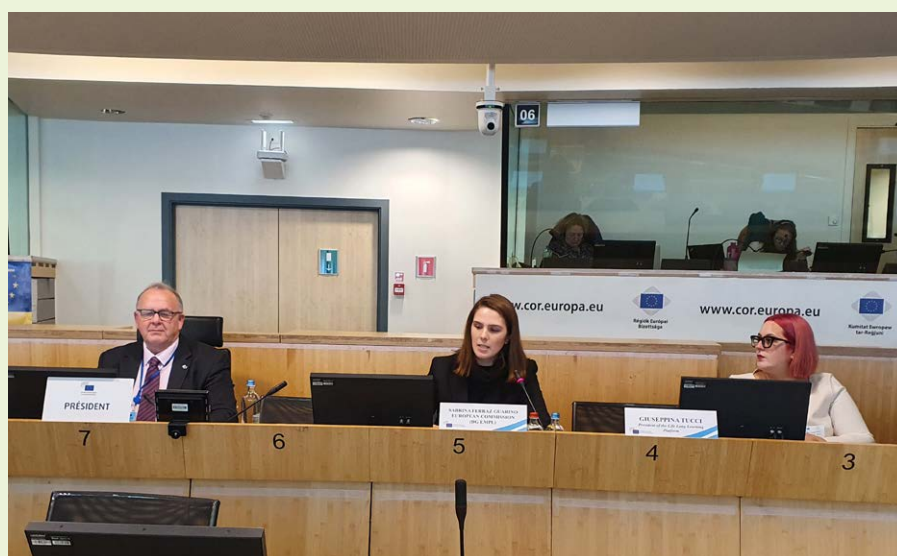
the [European Semester](#)¹. So, I think I can provide competent leadership on such a crucial dossier for our common EU future.

In line with the EESC's institutional role – the voice of organised civil society in the EU legislative process – I think that the expected **reform of the European Semester**, which we want to be solid and effective, has to really improve the national ownership.

And that means that we need concrete, structured and permanent mechanisms of involvement of civil society and social partners at the national level as well as at the EU level. We need to use EU regulation to bind **Member States to systematically involve social partners, civil society and other relevant stakeholders in a timely and meaningful manner at all stages of the European Semester** and policymaking cycle, as this is key

for successfully coordinating and implementing economic, employment and social policy. It is the core proposal of our [last opinion](#)² adopted by EESC plenary and we will advocate for it during the negotiation and later in the monitoring as we continue to monitor the implementation of the [NPRRs](#)³ in coordination with national Economic and Social Councils and other relevant bodies.

Civil Society and Inclusion: Key Considerations for the European Year of Skills



Séamus Boland, Sabrina Ferraz Guarino and Giuseppina Tucci (from left to right) © EESC

During the Civil Society Organisations' Group meeting on 25 April 2023, a thematic debate was held on the [European Year of Skills](#)⁴, with contributions from **Giuseppina Tucci**, president of the *Lifelong Learning Platform*, and **Sabrina Ferraz Guarino**, Policy Assistant at the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (DG EMPL) of the *European Commission*.

Ms Ferraz Guarino provided an overview of the upcoming European Year of Skills, that was officially launched on 9 May, and its awareness-raising goals regarding the current labour shortages in European labour markets. She said that "the year will focus on promoting – all over Europe and across the working age

populations – a mentality of up and reskilling". She highlighted the various EU networks and mutual learning platforms involved in the year, along with the funding instruments available to support skills policy, such as the [European Social Fund](#)⁵ and [Erasmus](#)⁶.

Ms Tucci warned that the Year of Skills would have a narrow focus on labour market skills, and would not pay sufficient attention to soft, informal and intergenerational skills. She called for greater emphasis on civil society participation and on all forms of lifelong learning, starting with early childhood education. Ms Tucci emphasised the need for learning spaces that prioritize lifelong learning and civil society. She said,

"the biggest challenge we see with the year is it ending in soft policies and inspiring practices, but not enough involvement from civil society"; civil society involvement, she explained, is necessary to ensure long-term systematic developments in both hard and soft skills.

A number of Civil Society Organisations' Group Members participated in the debate: **Andris Gobiņš, Ileana Izverniceanu de la Iglesia, Dominique Gillot, Andreas Kruse, Kinga Joó, Benjamin Rizzo, Chiara Corazza, Ody Neisingh, and Jaume Bernis Castells**. Although Members welcomed Europe's focus on skills, they highlighted the importance of inclusion. Comments were raised on the population covered by the campaign, the threat artificial intelligence poses on the labour market, the need to recognise informal skills and informal care work mainly done by women, the inclusion of persons with disabilities, and the importance of early years education.

1. European Commission, European Semester, <https://europa.eu/bVprR>
2. EESC opinion ECO/600, <https://europa.eu/ljpRjrb>
3. European Commission, National Resilience and Recovery Plans, <https://europa.eu/!7kKRw7>
4. European Union, European Year of Skills, <https://europa.eu/lgXjRGt>
5. European Commission, European Social Fund+, <https://europa.eu/!tk7N6d>
6. European Commission, Erasmus+, <https://europa.eu/!P8q8cr>

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LAST PLENARY SESSION

European civil society ties with civil society in the EU candidate countries

A roundtable discussion on *Strengthening democracy and European values together with civil society in the EU candidate countries*, chaired by the newly elected EESC Vice-President in charge of Budget, **Krzysztof Pater** took place during the inaugural plenary session in April. The discussion addressed the importance of civil society partnerships with [EU candidate countries](#)¹, the need for stronger cooperation, and how the EESC can better involve civil society across Europe while using the existing institutional frameworks.

Present at the roundtable were **Besart Kadia**, Deputy Minister, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of Albania, **Olha Stefanishyna**, Deputy Prime Minister of Ukraine, responsible for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, **Siegfried Mureşan**, MEP and Chair of the European Parliament's Delegation to the EU-Moldova

Parliamentary Association Committee, **Zulfi Ismaili**, Ambassador and Head of Mission of North Macedonia to the EU, **Saška Radujkov**, President of the Youth Movement for Change and Ambassador of the European Democracy Youth Network, and newly-elected President of the EESC, **Oliver Röpkke**.

The panellists addressed several important topics, including the ongoing reconstruction efforts in Ukraine, the establishment of a EU-Albania joint consultative committee, and the promotion of EU support within eastern neighbouring countries. The situation in Belarus was also discussed, as were efforts to integrate Western Balkan countries into the European community prior to full membership, and support for Serbian civil society through sharing good practices.

Civil Society Organisations' Group Members **Cristian Pîrvulescu**, **Lidija Pavić-Rogošić** and **Ody Neisingh** participated in the discussion. **Mr Pîrvulescu** emphasised Moldova's pro-European government, which has close ties to the EU, stressing the need for "real EU support, especially when it comes to civil society because this is where most attacks against democracy take place." Vice-president **Ms Pavić-Rogošić** stressed that "a strong civil society plays a key role in making sure that European values are respected in practice." **Ms Neisingh** said, "For equality, it is important that civil society organisations, such as gender equality or LGBTQI organisations, are actively involved in the decision-making process."

Overall, the roundtable provided insights into and perspectives on how to better involve civil society across Europe's neighbouring countries.

EESC debates future of EU with high-level guest speakers

The second roundtable at the inaugural plenary session in April concerned *The future of the EU: Bringing together the social, economic and environmental dimensions*, chaired by the newly-elected EESC Vice-President in charge of Communication for the term 2023-2025, **Aurel Laurenţiu Plosceanu**, and attended by **Oliver Röpkke**, President of the EESC. It was also attended by **Nicolas Schmit**, European Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights, **Markus Beyrer**, Director-General of *BusinessEurope*, **Séan Healy**, Director of *Social Justice Ireland*, **Ana Mendes Godinho**, Minister for Labour, Solidarity and Social Security of the Government of Portugal, **Esther Lynch**, General Secretary of the *ETUC*, and **Diandra Ni Bhuachalla**, EESC Youth delegate to the COP Delegation.

The roundtable commenced with a query for **Mr Schmit** regarding the most pressing challenge facing the future of the EU, and the EESC's role in tackling it. The link between democracy and a stronger EU future was emphasised, and the ensuing roundtable delved into the challenges of the green transition and the importance of supporting it with social, economic and environmental policies. The discussion covered critical points such as social policy development, youth involvement, competitiveness, poverty reduction, the importance of upskilling and reskilling, and civil society organisations' voice in social dialogue.

Three Members of the Civil Society Organisations' Group took part in the discussion. "The challenge of youth poverty can only be tackled with a

coordinated European policy to break the vicious circle, and to support both children and their families," said **Kinga Joó**, shedding light on the high levels of poverty among vulnerable groups. Vice-president **Rudolf Kolbe** followed this up by stating, "Our Group's goal of poverty reduction cannot succeed without the right economic policy. The EU's mission should be one of reducing poverty by striving for stronger equality." Vice-president **Jan Dirk** said, "If something is not ecologically sustainable it has no future, either economically or socially, because life is determined by ecological preconditions", underscoring the crucial importance of sustainability being a priority in the EESC's work.

1. European Union, EU candidate countries, https://european-union.europa.eu/principles-countries-history/joining-eu_en

EESC calls for EU rules to reinforce health and democracy at work, as well as social convergence

On 27 April, the European Economic and Social Committee welcomed the Secretary of State for Employment and Social Economy of Spain, **Joaquín Pérez Rey**, for a debate on three of the five exploratory opinions requested of the EESC by the upcoming Spanish Presidency of the Council of the EU: SOC/745¹ [Precarious work and mental health](#), SOC/746² [Democracy at work](#) and SOC/748³ [Social Imbalances Procedure](#).

Mr Pérez Rey also took the opportunity to present the priorities of the Spanish Presidency, which will focus on reducing social inequality in the EU and democratising labour markets. He started by pointing out that Europe has to work to the benefit of citizens and workers, and

that it is characterised by solidarity, not austerity, which has failed at key moments of our history. Democracy at work is therefore a crucial issue, and it is clear that the labour market cannot be managed without the full participation of the social partners.

Krzysztof Balon, co-rapporteur of the opinion SOC/746, also stressed that democracy at work is changing, as is the social dialogue: nowadays about 13.6 million people in the EU are employed in social economy entities, characterised by democratic and participatory management, and this should be an example for other companies to follow in the future, as an evolution, where workers are an integral part of the system of management.

Justyna Kalina Ochędzan, rapporteur of the opinion SOC/748, stated that more than 60% of Europeans believe that social spending should be increased, which clearly indicates the way forward. In the EESC's view, fiscal, macroeconomic and environmental governance are more developed and better coordinated in the EU than social governance. But social governance is as important as economic governance, therefore the EU should develop tools for both of them to enhance the welfare of European societies, she concluded.

Giuseppe Guerini, Jan Andersson, Pietro Vittorio Barbieri and Andreas Kruse from the Civil Society Organisations' Group also contributed to the debate.

Broad consultation of organised civil society highlights need for solid reform of European Semester

In April, EESC Members held a debate linked to the adoption of opinion [ECO/600](#)⁴ on the EESC's recommendations for a solid reform of the European Semester⁵. **Dragos Pîslaru**, Chair of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs of the European Parliament, and **Estrella Durá Ferrandis**, member of the same parliamentary committee, joined the debate.

The EESC opinion, which draws on a recent consultation in 23 Member States, renews the Committee's request for reform of the [European Semester](#)⁶.

Ms Durá Ferrandis supported the Committee's call for reform in the plenary debate: "We must rethink a Semester that is now obsolete. We need new governance and investment instruments based on justice and solidarity".

"Decisions, awareness and results in policy-making are better when the social partners are consulted,"

stressed **Mr Pîslaru**. "Now we must work together to make sure that the Commission's latest package includes proper representation of civil society".

Luca Jahier, Member of the EESC's Civil Society Organisations' Group (CSO Group) and one of the rapporteurs for the opinion said it was high time to move from a political call to a legally binding EU framework. He explained: "A crucial element in such a reform is the proposal for the adoption of an EU regulation that would establish the principles and general characteristics of a structured and permanent involvement of organised civil society, while respecting that it is up to national legislation".

In the debate, other Members of the CSO Group took the floor. **Elena Calistru** called for the allocation of resources to build the capacity of civil society organisations with a view to their involvement in the process.

Jan Andersson said that civil society needed to become involved at national

level, if the European Semester was to be a successful process.

"There is no democracy without economic equity and social justice," said **Giuseppe Guerini**, who continued: "Inclusive economic governance is a necessary condition to strengthen prosperity and for a lasting substantial democracy in Europe".

Ionuț Sibian called for minimum standards for civil society involvement.

Finally, **Zsolt Kükedi** said that existing national economic and social councils and other legally empowered bodies could play a role in this involvement.

1. EESC opinion SOC/745, <https://europa.eu/!M77GyT>

2. EESC opinion SOC/746, <https://europa.eu/!wYKcdX>

3. EESC opinion SOC/748, <https://europa.eu/!gTfGqK>

4. EESC opinion ECO/600, <https://europa.eu/!jpRjrb>

5. The European Semester is the annual six-month cycle of economic, social and fiscal policy coordination between the Member States. Following the COVID-19 crisis and the adoption of NextGenerationEU, Europe's largest ever stimulus package, it now also monitors the national recovery and resilience plans (RRPs).

6. European Commission, European Semester, <https://europa.eu/!bVprrr>

OVERVIEW OF RECENT WORK

The last EESC plenary session took place on 25, 26 and 27 April 2023. The EESC plenary adopted 25 opinions of which 14 were drafted by Members of the Civil Society Organisations' Group. A list of the recent work can be found below.

Alessandro MOSTACCIO (IT), co-rapporteur, [NAT/886](#)¹ Policy framework for bio-based, biodegradable and compostable plastics

Giuseppe GUERINI (IT), rapporteur, [INT/1016](#)² State subsidy rules for health and social services / SGEI

Ioannis VARDAKASTANIS (EL), rapporteur, [SOC/765](#)³ European Disability Card

John COMER (IE), rapporteur, [NAT/876](#)⁴ Revision of the classification, labelling and packaging of chemicals regulation

Justyna Kalina OCHĘDZAN (PL), rapporteur, [SOC/748](#)⁵ Social Imbalances Procedure

Justyna Kalina OCHĘDZAN (PL), co-rapporteur, [SOC/755](#)⁶ Competence and skill development in a context of the green and digital transition

Klaas Johan OSINGA (NL), rapporteur, [REX/575](#)⁷ Specific rules relating to the entry into Northern Ireland from other parts of the United Kingdom of certain consignments of goods

Krzysztof Stanisław BALON (PL), co-rapporteur, [SOC/746](#)⁸ Democracy at work

Luca JAHIER (IT), rapporteur, [ECO/600](#)⁹ The EESC's recommendations for a solid reform of the European Semester

Martin BÖHME (DE), rapporteur, [CCMI/206](#)¹⁰ Initiative on virtual worlds, such as the metaverse

Panagiotis GKOFAS (EL), co-rapporteur, [NAT/854](#)¹¹ Revision of Directive 94/62/EC on Packaging and Packaging Waste

Pietro Vittorio BARBIERI (IT), co-rapporteur, [SOC/752](#)¹² Anti-trafficking directive

Tymoteusz Adam ZYCH (PL), rapporteur, [SOC/751](#)¹³ Advance Passenger Information

Zsolt KÜKEDI (HU), rapporteur, [NAT/882](#)¹⁴ EU algae initiative

The **complete texts** of all EESC opinions are available in various language versions on the Committee's [website](#)¹⁵.

The **next EESC plenary session** will take place on **12 and 13 July 2023**. For more information on the upcoming plenary session please visit our [website](#)¹⁶.

A list including all **new work appointments** of Civil Society Organisations' Group Members is available on the Committee's [website](#)¹⁷.

UPCOMING EVENTS

21/06/2023 – Meeting of the EESC's Farmers' Category

04/07/2023 – Youth under pressure - Safeguarding youth civil society, hybrid seminar in partnership with Young European Federalists, more information: <https://europa.eu/g8kjtC>

1. EESC opinion NAT/886, <https://europa.eu/!7JHCgt>
2. EESC opinion INT/1016, <https://europa.eu/!JtCf4>
3. EESC opinion SOC/675, <https://europa.eu/!qcBcPR>
4. EESC opinion NAT/876, <https://europa.eu/!qg8WCv>
5. EESC opinion SOC/748, <https://europa.eu/!gTfGqK>
6. EESC opinion SOC/755, <https://europa.eu/!9KrgBM>
7. EESC opinion REX/575, <https://europa.eu/!xkWDRd>
8. EESC opinion SOC/746, <https://europa.eu/!wYKcdX>
9. EESC opinion ECO/600, <https://europa.eu/!jpRjrb>
10. EESC opinion CCMI/206, <https://europa.eu/!tVNrv9>

11. EESC opinion NAT/854, <https://europa.eu/!xkTVFB>
12. EESC opinion SOC/752, <https://europa.eu/!QmyMqQ>
13. EESC opinion SOC/751, <https://europa.eu/!NFFcRq>
14. EESC opinion NAT/882, <https://europa.eu/!hHBG4V>
15. EESC opinions, <https://europa.eu/!wF86wY>
16. EESC plenary sessions, <https://europa.eu/!TKCHb8>
17. EESC, New work appointments, <https://europa.eu/!TKCHb8>

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