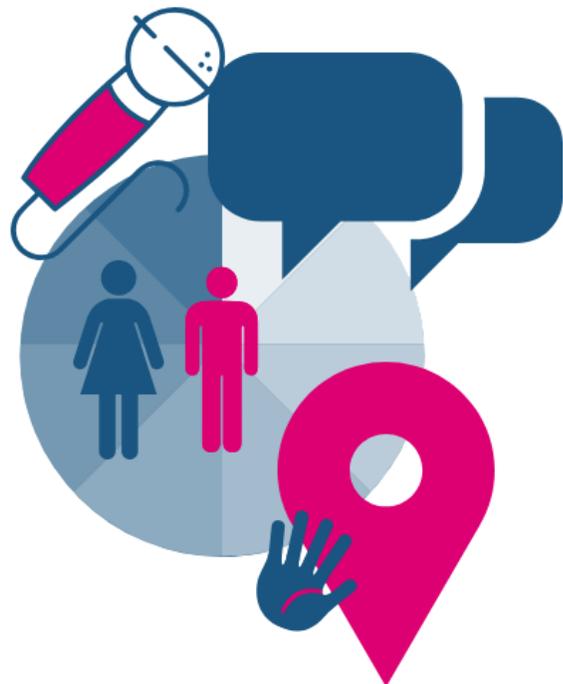




MHE WEBINAR ON THE EUROPEAN SEMESTER

**TUESDAY 16TH APRIL
10:00-12:00 (CET)**





“Welcome and introduction”

MHE Webinar on European Semester

CLAUDIA MARINETTI, Director, Mental Health Europe

WHO WE ARE



We are a **European non-governmental network organisation** committed to:

- the **promotion** of positive mental health,
- the **prevention** of mental distress,
- the **improvement of care**, advocacy for social inclusion and the protection of the rights of (ex)users of mental health services, persons with psychosocial disabilities, their families and carers.

« We advocate for **positive mental health and wellbeing** and for the **rights of people living with mental ill health** and we raise awareness to **end mental health stigma** »



30

years of advocacy



73

member organisations



30

different countries



5

Strategic priorities



Understanding Mental Health



Social Europe



Human Rights



Mental Health & Work



**Recovery Community-based
Services**



Projects & Campaigns

TODAY'S AGENDA

Dr Krzysztof Stefan Iszkowski, Policy Officer, EMPL A1 on Employment and Social Aspects of European Semester, European Commission, **Understanding the European Semester and how it works**

Q&A

Amana Ferro, Senior Policy Officer, European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN), **EAPN's experience in working with the European Semester**

Dorota Sienkiewicz, Policy Coordinator, EuroHealthNet, **Our work on the European Semester**

Q&A

Laura Marchetti, Senior Policy Officer, Mental Health Europe, **How to get involved with the European Semester**

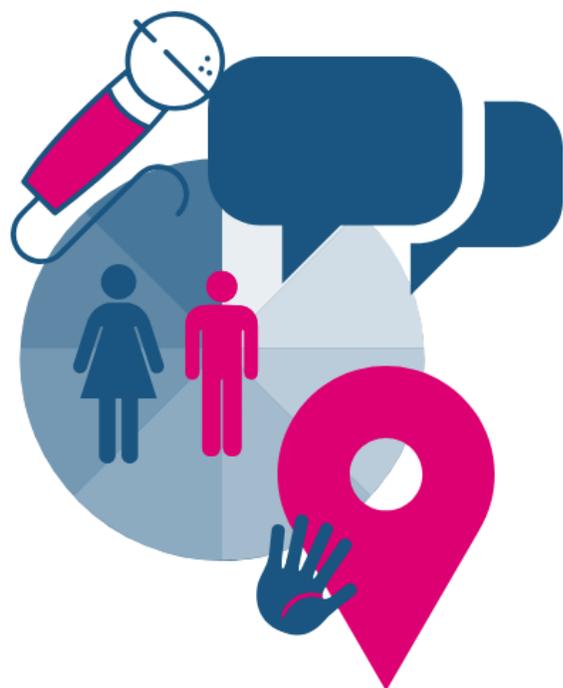
Open discussion

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT? WHY NOW? 1/2

- Initiated in 2010, the European Semester was **initially a cycle of economic and fiscal policy coordination** within the European Union (EU);
- The European Pillar of Social Rights has put **social policies back on the EU agenda** and has led the Semester to include national social reforms in its process;
- Negotiations for the **post-2020 EU budget** foresee a stronger alignment with the Semester: EU funding should be allocated to implementing challenges identified in the European Semester process.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT? WHY NOW? 2/2

- Action on mental health requires an **integrated approach**, across sectors and countries
- The European Semester can be a **slow but steady instrument** to implement reforms – including for instance reforms of mental health systems
- **MHE Members:** your voice can be heard, you can engage with the process and provide your expert input!
- **Other NGOs:** we can mainstream mental health together, finding synergies



“Understanding the European Semester and how it works”

Dr KRZYSZTOF STEFAN ISZKOWSKI, Policy Officer, European Commission



European Semester: tool for coordination of economic policies and for monitoring implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights

Presentation by

Stefan ISZKOWSKI

DG EMPL.A1

(Unit Employment and Social Aspects of European Semester)

At the webinar of Mental Health Europe

Brussels, 16 April 2019

In this presentation

- 1. Origins, logic and process of the European Semester*
- 2. The European Pillar of Social Rights and its inclusion in the Semester*
- 3. The "social" country-specific recommendations and their implementation*
- 4. Delivering Europe 2020*



1

Origins, logic and process of the European Semester



Origins of the European Semester

1. Monitoring instrument for the Europe 2020 strategy
2. The 2008-2012 crisis demonstrated the need for systematic monitoring of MSs' economic policies.
3. Initially, stress put on hard fiscal indicators, but gradually more and more social.
4. Semester is a multilateral process, with various actors involved – and joining.



Actors

The Commission:

- Provides analytical input (ia. 3 economic forecasts, Annual Growth Survey, Joint Employment Report, Country Reports)
- Drafts first proposal of Country-Specific Recommendations

The Council:

- Issues Employment Guidelines, and
- Country-Specific Recommendations

National Governments:

- Feed into analysis through bilateral meetings with the EC
- React to Country Reports with National Reform Programmes
- Present Stability (€) and Convergence (non-€) Programmes

Social Partners:

- Feed into the analytical work of the Commission
- Should be consulted on the National Reform Programmes



Timeline

- Periodic forecasts (autumn, winter, spring) – analytical work ongoing **[EC]**
- EU-wide in-depth analysis (AGS, JER) – start in summer, publication in **autumn** (November) **[EC]**
- Country-specific analysis – start in autumn, publication of Reports in **winter** (February) **[EC]**
- National Reform Programmes – **spring**, between publication of Country Reports and end May **[MS]**
- Negotiating Country-Specific Recommendations – June **[Council]**



Important points

- Semester is an instrument of economic policy monitoring
 - *Investments assessed more on the basis of expected returns, than on that of social impact*
 - *Taxation shifts need to be not growth-distortive*
 - *Cost-effectiveness of public services (e.g. healthcare) matters*
- Streamlining of recommendations is necessary to focus action on the most relevant issues
- The implicit goal, stemming from the Commission's mandate, is to promote and support convergence between Member States – what matters is the relative position/performance.



2

The European Pillar of Social Rights and its inclusion in the Semester



European Pillar of Social Rights: the big step forward

Equal opportunities and access to the labour market

Education, training and life-long learning; Gender equality; Equal opportunities; Active support to employment; Secure and adaptable employment

Fair working conditions

Wages; Information about employment conditions and protection in case of dismissals; Social dialogue and involvement of workers ; Work-life balance; Healthy, safe and well-adapted work environment

Adequate and sustainable social protection

Childcare and support to children; Social Protection; Unemployment benefits; Minimum income; Old age income and pensions; Health care; Inclusion of people with disabilities; Long-term care; Housing and assistance for the homeless; Access to essential services



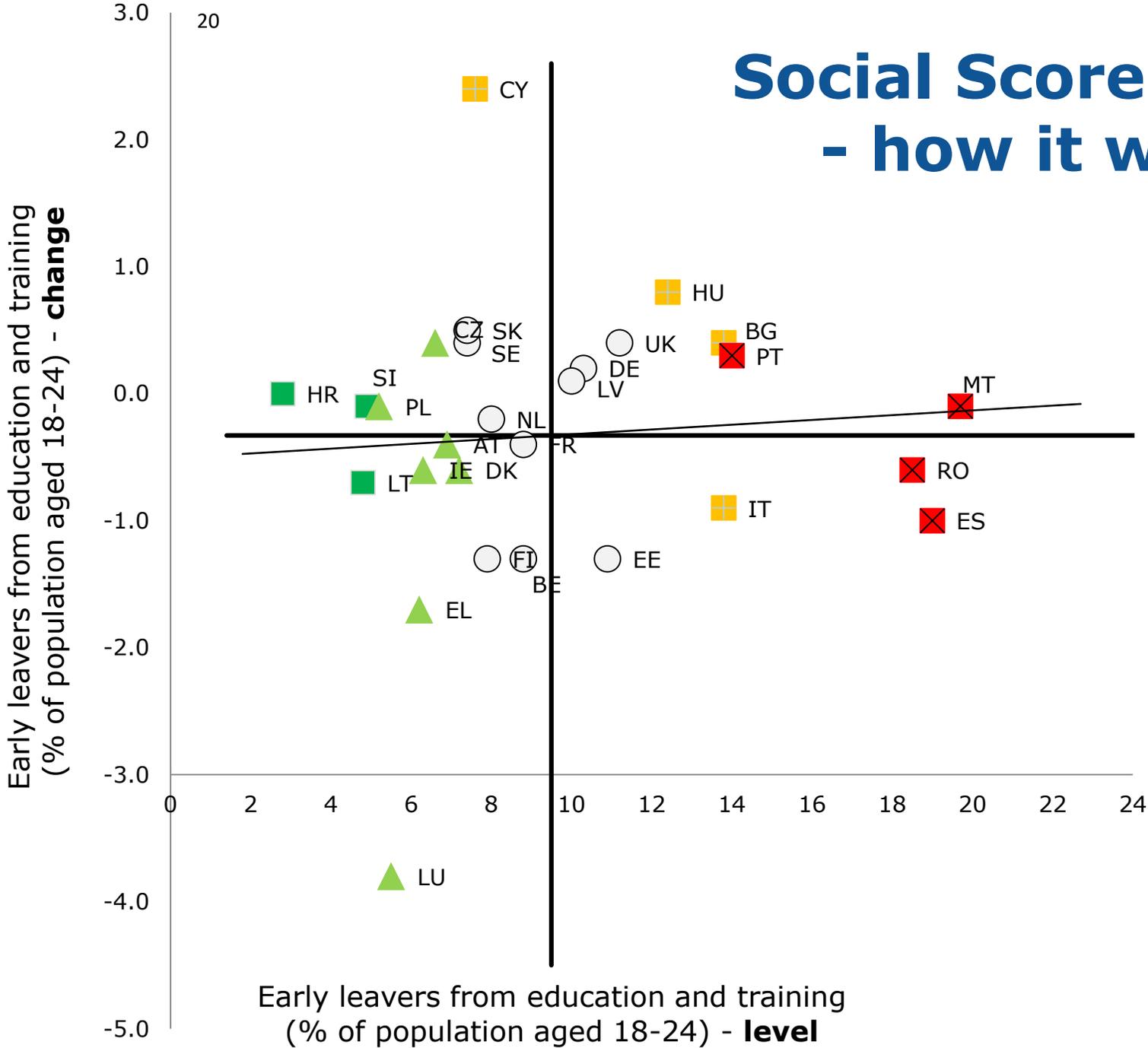
Monitoring the implementation of the Pillar

- Communication of 13th March 2018
- European Semester is an appropriate monitoring tool:
 - In-depth analysis
 - Transparent reporting throughout the year
 - Involvement of social partners and other stakeholders
- Three new elements :
 - Mainstreaming the priorities of the EPSR in the Semester, with focus on annual themes
 - Technical assistance, benchmarking and good practices
 - Social Scoreboard

The Social Scoreboard (part of the Joint Employment Report)

	Equal opportunities and access to the labour market					Dynamic labour markets and fair working conditions			Public support / Social protection and inclusion			
	Early leavers from education and training	Gender employment gap	Income quintile ratio	At risk of poverty or social exclusion rate	Youth NEET rate	Employment rate	Unemployment rate	GDHI per capita growth	Impact of social transfers on poverty reduction	Children aged less than 3 years in formal childcare	Self-reported unmet need for medical care	Individuals' level of digital skills
Year	2016	2016	2016	2016	2016	2016	2016	2015	2016	2015	2015	2017
Best performers	HR, LT, SI	LT, LV, SE	CZ, FI, SI, SK	CZ, DK, FI, NL	DK, LU, NL, SE	DE, DK, NL, SE, UK	CZ, DE	PL, RO	AT, DK, FI, IE	BE, DK, LU, PT, SE		FI, LU, NL, SE
Better than average	AT, CZ, DK, EL, IE, LU, PL	AT, BG, DK, FR, PT, SI	AT, BE, DK, EE, FR, HU, MT, NL, SE	AT, DE, HU, IE, MT, SE, SI, SK	BE, CZ, EE, MT, SI	AT, CZ, EE, HU, LT, MT, SK	DK, HU, LU, MT, NL, PL, RO, SK, UK	BG, DK, EE, LV, LT, SE	BE, CZ, FR, HU, SE, SI, UK	AT, ES, FR, NL	AT, CY, CZ, DE, DK, ES, FR, LU, MT, NL, SE, SI	AT, CZ, DE, MT, UK
On average	BE, DE, EE, FI, FR, LV, NL, SE, SK, UK	DE, EE, ES, HR, IE, LU, NL, UK	CY, DE, HR, IE, PL, UK	BE, EE, PL, PT, UK	FI, FR, HU, IE, PL, PT, SK, UK	CY, FI, FR, IE, LV, PL, PT, SI	BE, BG, FI, FR, IE, LT, LV, SE, SI	BE, CZ, DE, IE, FR, HU, NL, SK, FI, UK	CY, DE, MT	DE, EE, FI, IE, IT, LV, SI, UK	BE, BG, HR, HU, IE, LT, PT, SK, UK	BE, EE, ES, FR, LT, SI, SK
Good but to monitor		FI		FR, LU	AT, DE		AT		NL			DK
Weak but improving			RO	LV	IT	ES	CY, ES, HR		EE, LV	RO	LV	CY
To watch	BG, CY, HU, IT	BE, CY, CZ, HU, PL, SK	LU, LV, PT	CY, ES, HR, IT, LT	ES, LT, LV	BE, BG, LU, RO	EE, IT, PT	ES, IT, AT, PT, SI	ES, HR, LU, PL, PT, SK	BG, CY, EL, HR, HU, LT, MT	FI	EL, HU, IE, LV, PL, PT
Critical situations	ES, MT, PT, RO	EL, IT, MT, RO	BG, EL, ES, IT, LT	BG, EL, RO	BG, CY, EL, HR, RO	EL, HR, IT	EL	EL, CY	BG, EL, IT, LT, RO	CZ, PL, SK	EE, EL, IT, PL, RO	BG, HR, RO

Social Scoreboard - how it works



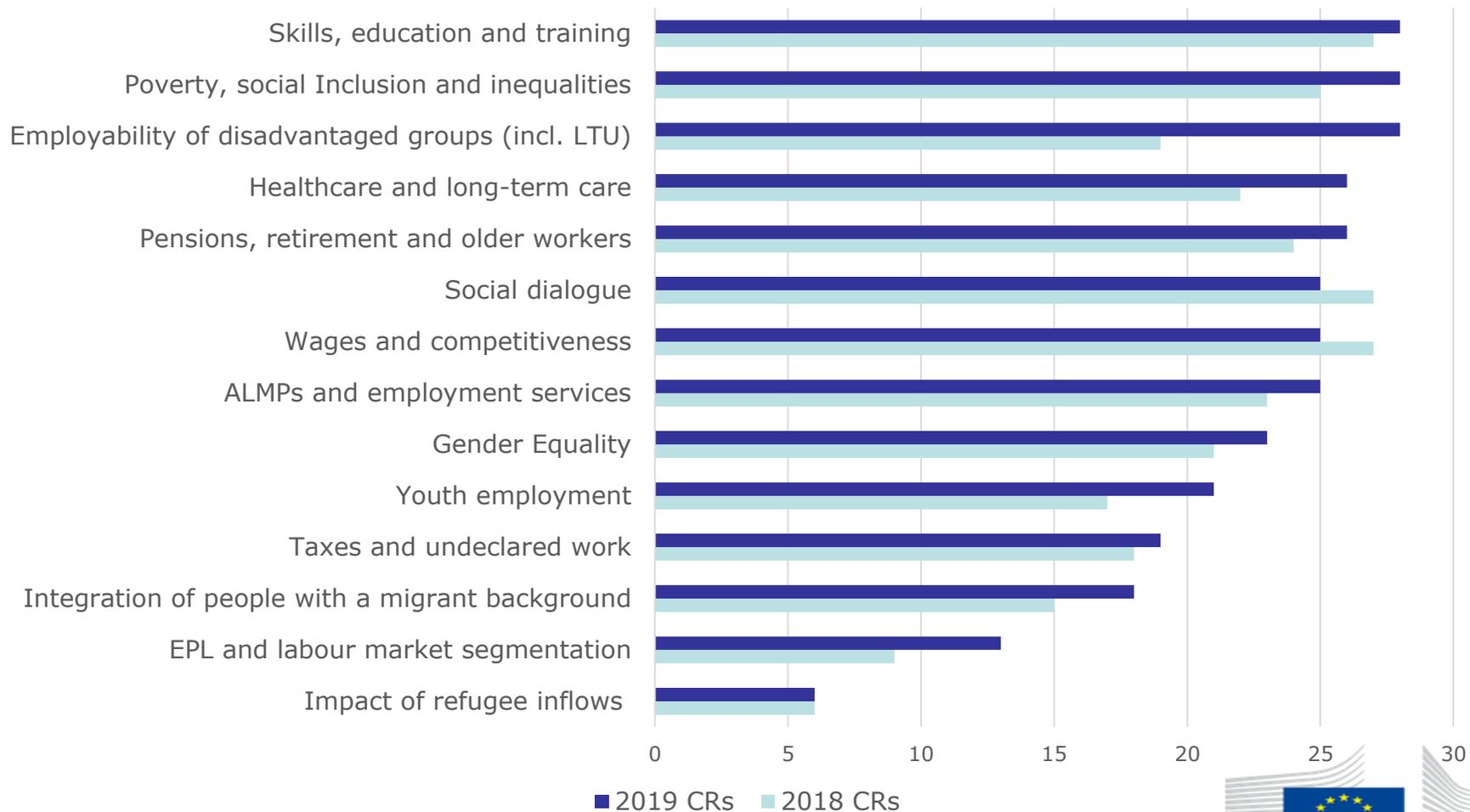
What matters, is both the relative level and direction/size of change

	Change 				
Level ↓	Very favourable	Favourable	Average	Unfavourable	Very unfavourable
Very good					
Good					
Average					
Bad					
Very bad					

Colour coding:

Best performers – Better than average – On average – Good but deteriorating – Weak but improving – To watch – Critical situation

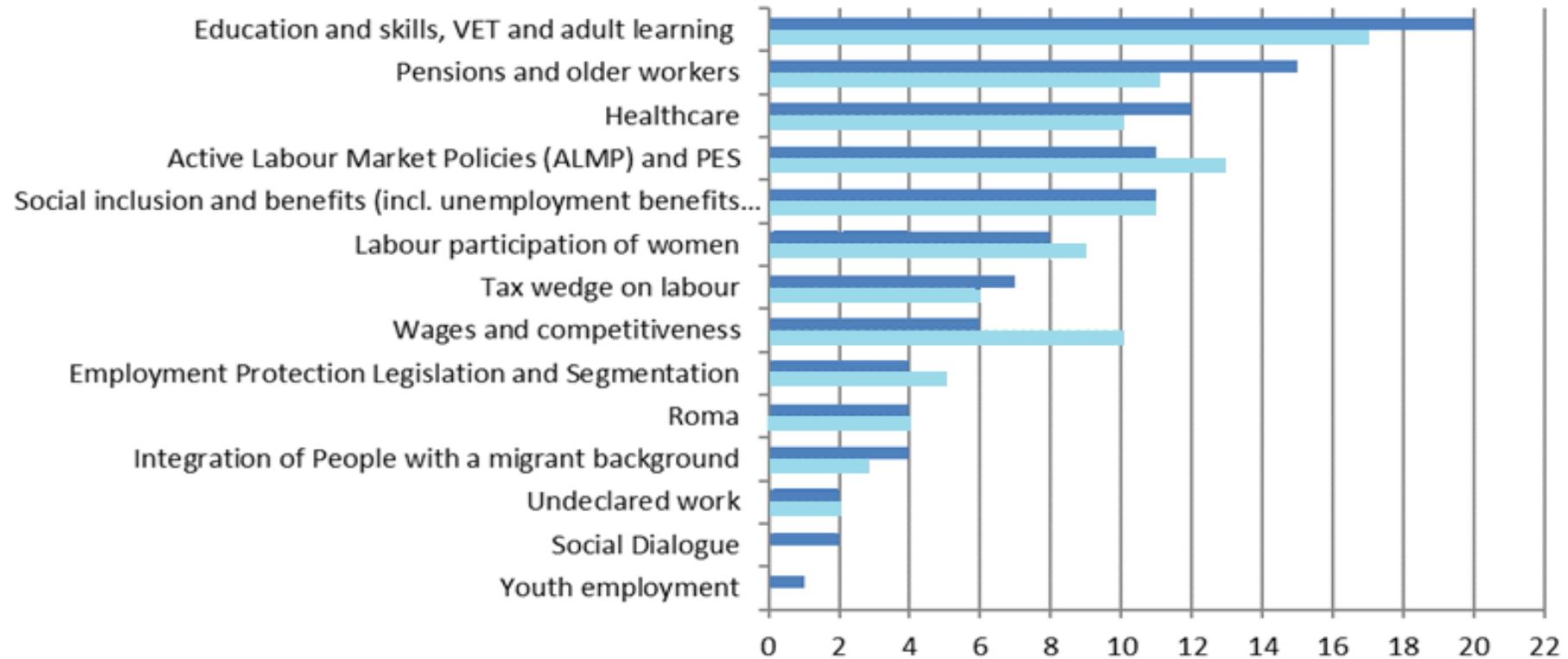
Topics in the country reports (2019 vs 2018)



3

The “social” country-specific recommendations and their implementation

Overview of CSRs per policy area – 2017 and 2018



2018 CSRs relevant to Equal opportunities and access to the labour market chapter of the Pillar

Principle	CSRs	Recitals
<i>01: Education, training and life-long learning</i>	22 (for 20 MSs)	24
<i>02: Gender equality</i>	8	14
<i>03: Equal opportunities</i>	9	19
<i>04: Active support to employment</i>	10	18

Examples:

BG: *Improve the provision of quality inclusive mainstream education, particularly for Roma and other disadvantaged groups.*

DE: *Improve educational outcomes and skills levels of disadvantaged groups.*

FR: *Foster equal opportunities and access to the labour market, including for people with a migrant background and people living in deprived areas.*

HU: *Improve education outcomes and increase the participation of disadvantaged groups, in particular Roma, in quality and inclusive mainstream education.*

2018 CSRs relevant to Fair working conditions chapter of the Pillar

Principle	CSRs	Recitals
<i>05: Secure and adaptable employment</i>	6	11
<i>06: Wages</i>	6	9
<i>07: Information about employment conditions and protection in case of dismissal</i>	-	-
<i>08: Social dialogue and involvement of workers</i>	2 + 4	12
<i>09: Work-life balance</i>	-	8
<i>10: Healthy, safe and well-adapted work environment and data protection</i>	-	1

Examples:

DE and NL: Create conditions to promote higher wage growth, respecting the role of the social partners.

NL: Reduce the incentives to use temporary contracts and self-employed without employees, while promoting adequate social protection to the self-employed, and tackle bogus self-employment.

EE (recital): Work-life balance is being promoted by the recent changes to the parental leave and benefit system.

2018 CSRs relevant to Social protection and inclusion chapter of the Pillar

Principle	CSRs	Recitals
<i>11: Children and support to children</i>	5	11
<i>12: Social protection</i>	9	15
<i>13: Unemployment benefits</i>	1	5
<i>14: Minimum income</i>	4	9
<i>15: Old age income and pensions</i>	15	20

Examples:

SK: Foster women's employment, especially by extending affordable, quality childcare.

EE: Improve the adequacy of the social safety net, in particular for older people and people with disabilities.

HU: Improve the adequacy and coverage of social assistance and unemployment benefits.

BG: Introduce a regular and transparent revision scheme for the minimum income and improve its coverage and adequacy.

LV: Improve the adequacy of minimum income benefits, minimum old age pensions and income support for people with disabilities.

2018 CSRs relevant to Social protection and inclusion chapter of the Pillar (ctd)

Principle	CSRs	Recitals
<i>16: Health care</i>	12	16
<i>17: Inclusion of people with disabilities</i>	3	8
<i>18: Long-term care</i>	3	4
<i>19: Housing and assistance for the homeless</i>	3	9
<i>20: Access to essential services</i>	3	4

Examples:

LT: *Improve the performance of the healthcare system by a further shift from hospital to outpatient care, strengthening disease prevention measures, including at local level, and increasing the quality and affordability of care.*

RO: *Improve access to healthcare, including through the shift to outpatient care.*

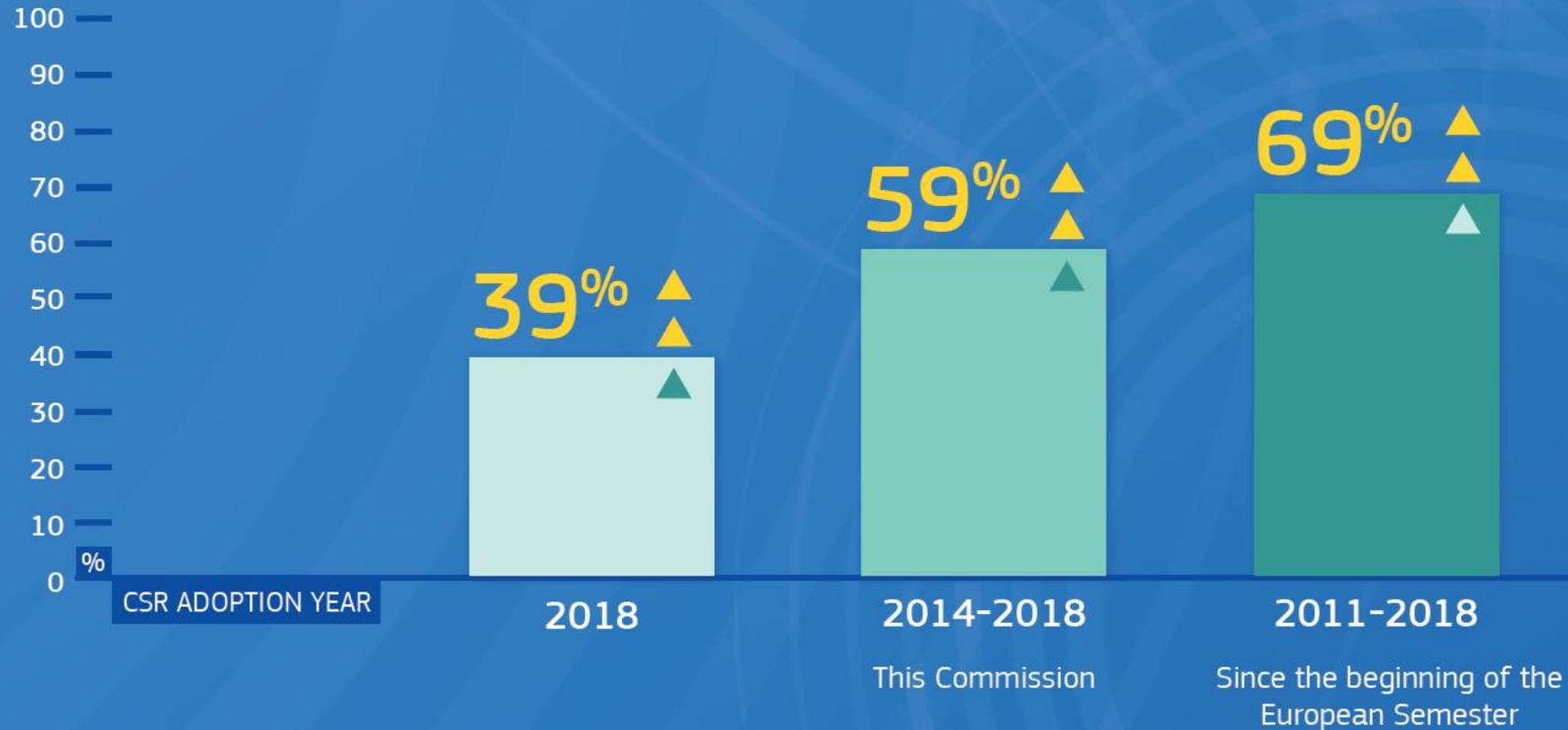
UK: *Boost housing supply, particularly in areas of highest demand, including through additional reforms to the planning system.*

IE: *Ensure the timely and effective implementation of the National Development Plan, including in terms of clean energy, transport, housing, water services and affordable quality childcare.*



Country-Specific Recommendations **progress**

Percentage of CSRs displaying at least 'some progress'

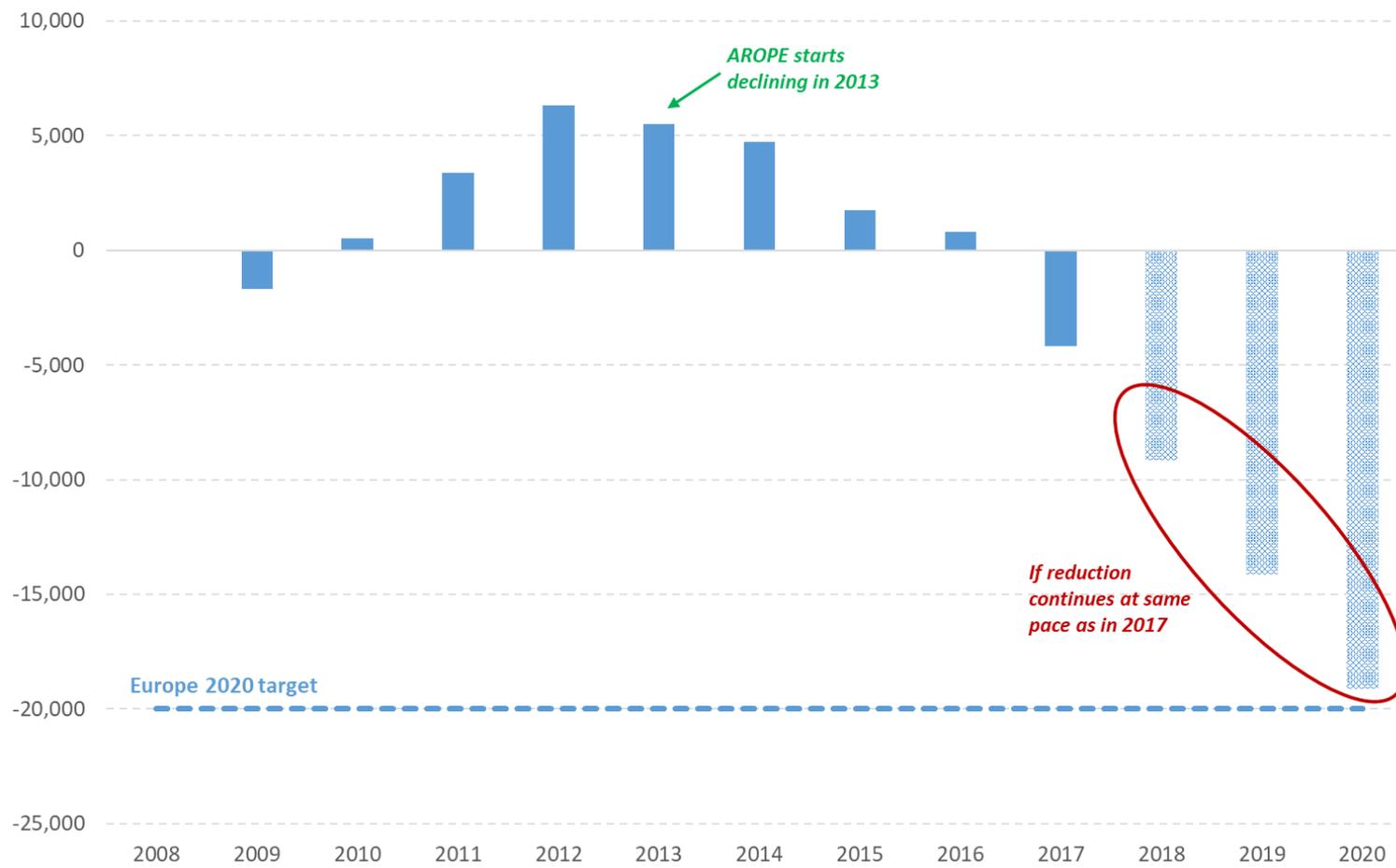




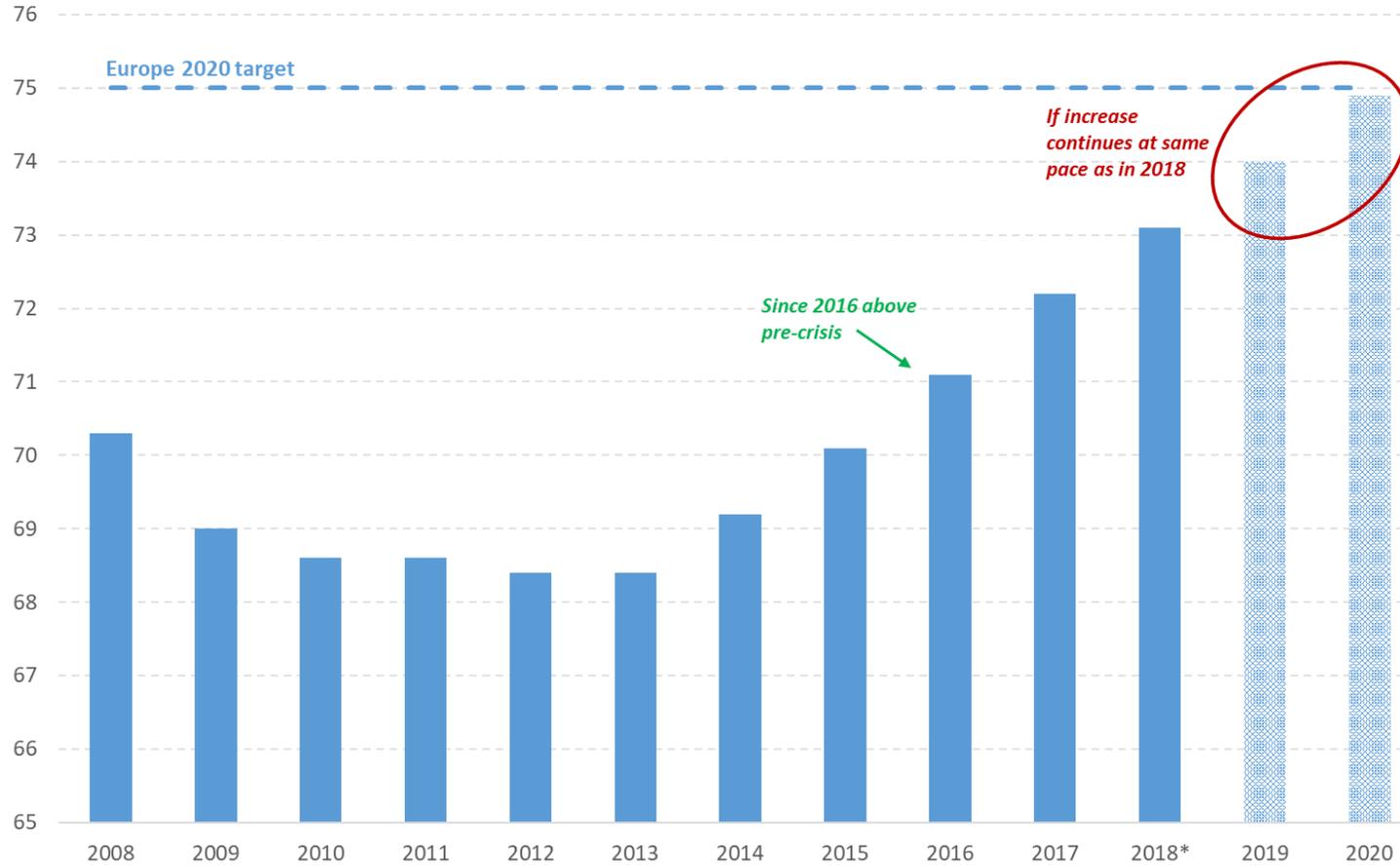
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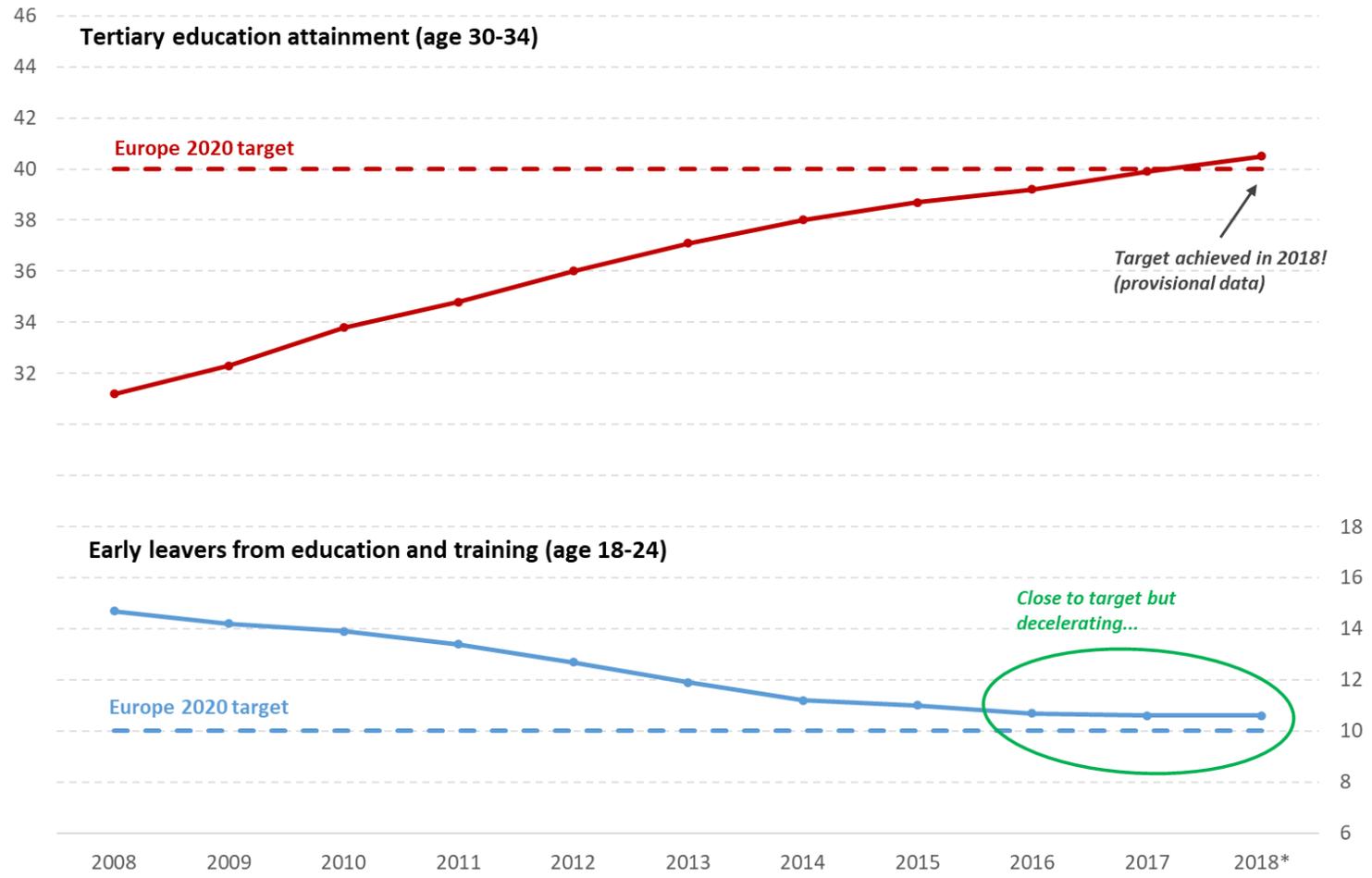
Delivering Europe 2020

People at-risk-of-poverty or social exclusion (thousand)



Employment rate (age 20-64)

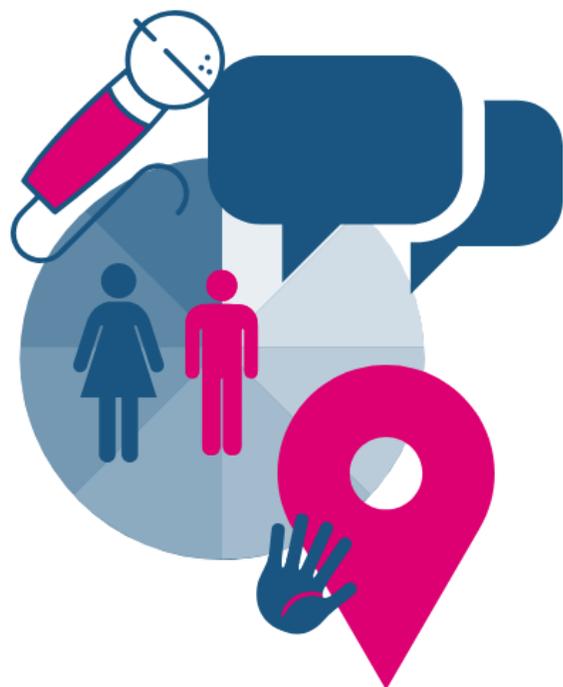






Thank you!

Stefan.Iszkowski@ec.europa.eu



“Our work on the European Semester”

**DOROTA SIENKIEWICZ, Policy Coordinator,
EuroHealthNet**

European Semester, a driver for EU funding opportunities and investment priorities

How can we make it deliver better for health equity?

How can we make it a more participatory and engaged process for our members?

Dorota Sienkiewicz

Policy Coordinator

16 April 2019

Guest speaker to Mental Health Europe's webinar



EuroHealthNet

EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIP FOR IMPROVING HEALTH, EQUITY & WELLBEING

EuroHealthNet

Who are we?

- EuroHealthNet is a not-for-profit partnership of organisations, agencies and statutory bodies working on public health, disease prevention, promoting health, and reducing inequalities.
- EuroHealthNet supports members' work in Europe through policy and project development, knowledge and expertise exchange, research, networking, and communications.
- Our Mission:
 - to improve and sustain health between and within European states through action on the social determinants of health
 - to reduce health inequalities

How do we work?

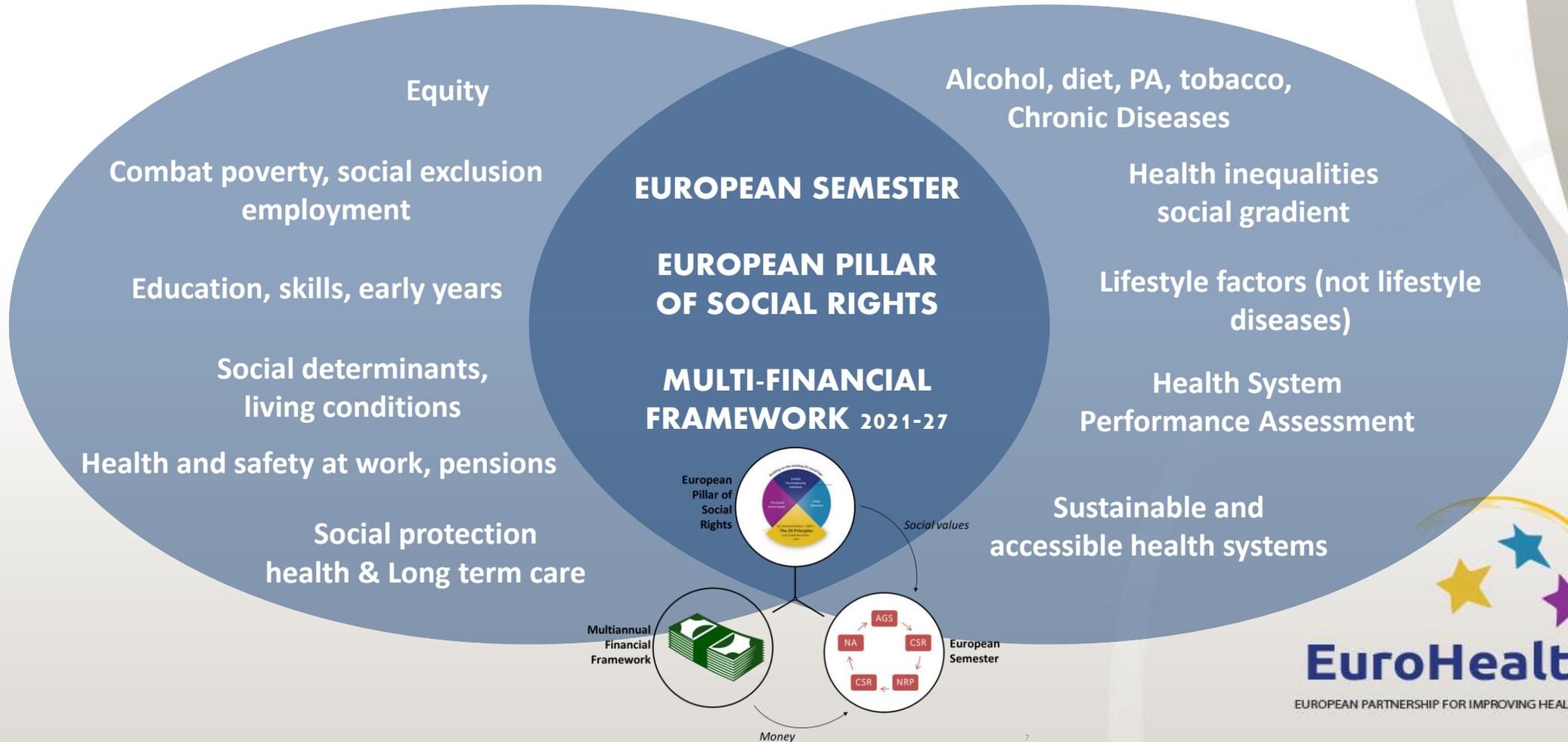
- EuroHealthNet's work is structured around three interlinking platforms which focus on practice, policy, and research, along with additional core member services.



The European Semester is important for us and our members because ...

DG EMPL et al.

DG SANTE



What does EuroHealthNet already do? *annual analysis exercise*

- *Will the 2015 Country Specific Recommendations contribute to **health equity**?* (European Semester 2015 cycle, focus on pensions, children and families, and health systems) ([link](#))
 - *Will the 2016 EU Semester process contribute to improving **health equity**?* (2016 cycle, focus on children and families, and health systems from a health promotion perspective) ([link](#))
 - *The European Semester: a **health equity** perspective.* (2017 cycle, focus on access to healthcare, early childhood education and care, poverty and income inequalities) ([link](#))
 - *The European Semester 2018 from a **health equity** perspective.* (2018 cycle, focus on health and long-term care, early childhood education and care, poverty and income inequalities, skills, education and labour market participation) ([link](#))
-
- Every year, we provide **evidence-based recommendations** based on our in-house/members-checked prior analysis to **support the Commission work in the draft** of the different Semester's packages, and **our members' work on the ground** vis-à-vis their governments (where appropriate).
 - Each year, we try to **diversify** countries we analyse, as well as look into slightly different thematic angle.
 - But always, it is a **health equity** lens we apply.



What does EuroHealthNet already do? *annual analysis exercise with member case studies, collaboration with other stakeholders*

- **Examples of engagement in the European Semester as experienced by members of EuroHealthNet**
 - **National Public Health Institute (NIJZ, Slovenia):** NIJZ follows CSRs regularly to use the potentials opportunities for health promotion arising from the Semester processes. The CSRs were one of the key drivers for the Ministry of Health to make ageing a priority, and for our Slovenian members to strengthen integrated strategies and actions for active and healthy ageing, particularly within the framework of the EU2020 Strategy, the European Semester process, and the Social Investment Package. In October 2018, NIJZ was invited to play an expert role in the European Commission’s seminar reflecting on civil society’s experience with the European Semester. Our member explained that *“health and long-term care have had more prominence in the European Semester more recently, which has allowed [us] (...) to build more forms of cooperation at national level. It is not always easy to influence at national level due to short policy cycles. The Semester process can provide a longer timeframe that national policy development can be hooked onto. Sectors other than health and long-term care are seen to be more sensitive to CSRs as they are linked to funding.”*
 - **Social and Health Association (SOSTE, Finland):** SOSTE is involved in the European Semester process through its collaboration with the EC Representation in Finland (the country desk office). SOSTE produces a shadow report with recommendations based on the Country Report of Finland, and publish it at the same time as the EC’s CSRs. Our expert stressed that *“NGOs have a significant role in service delivery in Finland. One of the CSRs asks Finland to ensure the adoption and implementation of a big reform on health and social policy. Many academics, service users and municipalities in Finland strongly oppose the proposed reform, believing it will not lead to more cost effective and integrated services. Whilst a reform of the present model is needed, there are big differences on what the new model should be. SOSTE is very involved with the Semester delegation from the European Commission. In general, the Semester process is not known by the general public: media coverage focusses mostly on economic issues.”*

What does EuroHealthNet already do? *annual analysis exercise with member case studies, collaboration with other stakeholders*

- Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR, Sweden)
- Mental Health Care Association (GGZ Nederland, the Netherlands)

Through the **EU Alliance for Mental Health**, GGZ Nederland (the Dutch Association for Mental Health and Addition Care) is following the European Semester. For some years, long-term care and health were addressed in the Netherlands' County Specific Recommendations. GGZ Nederland made use of the EU's recommendations, alongside other major reports (e.g. OECD and WHO), in their own strategy to advise the Dutch government. The recommendations strengthen their voice in promoting mental health care. GGZ Nederland has noticed less of a focus on health and long-term care in recent years, but also acknowledges that the situation in the Netherlands has progressed following reforms.

- **Collaboration with the EU Alliance for Mental Health: Work&Employment**



Mental health and employment-related issues to feature in the European Semester process

Recommendations from European Mental Health Alliance – Employment & Work

July 2018

This document presents suggestions for further reflection by the European Commission to look in more detail **whether and how mental health dimension of employment, equal opportunities on the labour market and work-life balance** provisions in the EU Member States are considered **throughout the European Semester process**.

In summary, we recommend the European Commission to consider in the preparation of the European Semester:

- Mental health dimension systematically included in national, regional and local strategies on active support to employment, including employability and job retention;
- Recognise in the Country Reports and Country-Specific Recommendations the positive impact of adequate work-life balance arrangements on mental health outcomes, society and economy at large;
- Mental health dimension systematically included in national, regional and local strategies on secure and adaptable employment, including linked to mental health burden of informal care, precarious and non-standard labour contracts;
- Mental health integrated in healthy, safe and well-adapted work environment, across life course (youth, working-age, older workers) and transition periods.

Why (evidence-based) advocating around the European Semester matters

- **Support and guide the work of our members at national, regional and local levels** in regard to reforms of health and social protection systems, and other key determinants of health.
- Implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights and **prioritisation of health/social investments in the next EU budget** (present already in 2019 cycle).
- European Semester 2019 includes an annex on (cohesion policy) investment priorities, which indicates **where the funding will go to and what the language of potential projects** may be.

*“The analysis in the 2019 country reports will **look at investment needs in each country**, including sectoral and regional dimensions (...) Based on this analysis, a new annex to the **country report will identify those investment needs that are relevant for the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus and the Cohesion Fund during the 2021-2027 period**”*

Annual Growth Survey 2019

What does EuroHealthNet already do? – *engagement*

EUROPEAN LEVEL

Meetings with key Units across the European Commission to bring members' view



NATIONAL LEVEL

*Members attended meetings on European Semester 2019 Country Reports and launch events for Cohesion Policy investment programming 2021-2027 (Mar-Apr 2019)
Plans for fact-finding missions cycle 2020 (Aug-Oct 2019)*



What lessons so far from the Winter Package 2019?

- **Needs to be better understood by and connected to local realities**, needs and communities. It still lacks explicit relevance for non-economic actors responsible for implementing measures on the ground to permanently and systematically engage in dialogues around health and social inclusion throughout the year (not only at key stages).
- More effective investments in public health and social equity offer significant gains towards implementation of actions outlined by the European Semester and global Sustainable Development Goals, as well as for democratic and institutional sustainability.
- Value of key stakeholders including responsible authorities, sub national bodies and civil society shows they indeed play important roles to ensure any reforms put forward are informed, designed and implemented effectively. Putting the **expertise of public health professionals and authorities central** should be key to the Semester process.
- Improvements have been observed regarding health system reforms in terms of **better effectiveness, accessibility and resilience**. However, it still highlights **persisting inequalities both in health opportunities and outcomes**. As multiple sources of data show, life expectancy gains have slowed down, progress on healthy life expectancy has not caught up, unmet need for medical care remains up to five times higher for people living below the poverty line (this includes children) as well as the ability to pay for such treatment and care.
- Despite decline, the share of people at risk of poverty and social exclusion is still unacceptably high, particularly among vulnerable population groups. Worryingly, in-work poverty has been rising.
- This is particularly of concern for those employed in the so-called 'gig or platform economy', paired with the increasing digitalisation of society and the future of work.

What lessons so far from the Winter Package 2019?

- **All EU Member States were identified with investment needs in the area of “a more Social Europe”** (annex D), and a vast majority of countries were urged to invest in enhancing the equal and timely access to quality, sustainable and affordable services, including access to healthcare (primary care); promoting social integration of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion, including the most deprived and children; inclusive, accessible and quality education and training, including early childhood education and care; fostering active inclusion of migrants and marginalised communities.
- Prioritisation and direct funding for health promotion, disease prevention, and actions dedicated to achieving health equity remain stubbornly insufficient to make the sustainable impacts. While average annual total budgets for health promotion across Europe have plateaued at 2.5% of total health spending, 70-80% of health-related costs are caused by largely preventable chronic diseases (our concl.).
- The strengthened **Structural Reform Support Programme** (SRSP) can help implement sustainable transformations and reorientation which bring multiple co-benefits to States. The support measures provided for health systems aim to improve countries' **ability to translate health policies into a more effective delivery** of health prevention and care services, as well as to support fiscally sustainable and comprehensive access to quality healthcare.
- Sustainability dimension?
- Social investments, ESIF+, innovative funding for health (e.g. social impact/outcome bonds)?

Thank you.

Questions?

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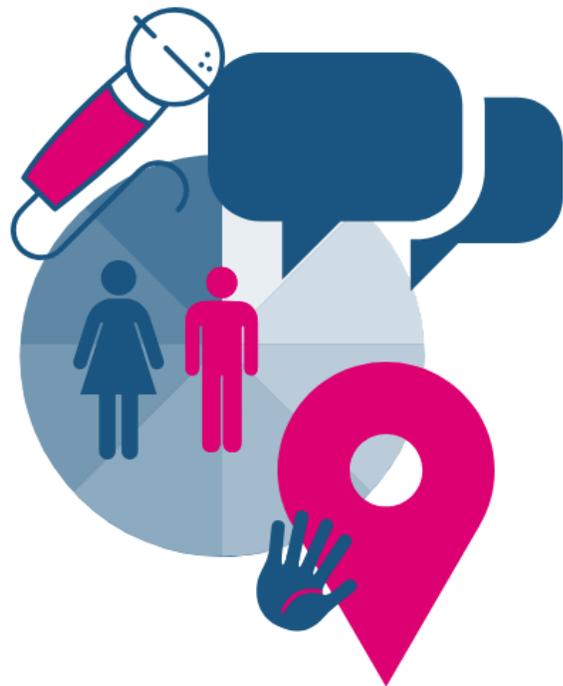
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EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIP FOR IMPROVING HEALTH, EQUITY & WELLBEING



“How to get involved with the European Semester”

**LAURA MARCHETTI, Senior Policy Officer,
Mental Health Europe**

GET INVOLVED!
It's easier than you think

HOW TO GET INVOLVED? 1/4

- **Know** the process: **prepare** ahead and timely **react**
- **Read and analyse** key documents
 - Key documents are available in national languages
- **Identify** who is responsible for the European Semester in your country
 - In your country: European Semester Officer(s) and people in relevant Ministries
 - In Brussels: Country Desk Officer(s)

HOW TO GET INVOLVED? 2/4



HOW TO GET INVOLVED? 3/4

- Remember: **you have information too!**
- **Prepare material:** analysis and assessments, info sheets, fiches on a specific topic, etc...
- **Share your messages** with key stakeholders and the broader public
- **Invite key actors** to your events as speakers or participants

HOW TO GET INVOLVED? 4/4

- Participate in **stakeholder engagement** and meetings
 - E.g.: before and after the publication of Country Reports
- Organise **bilateral meetings** with key players
- There is strength in numbers: use your **network** and create **alliances**

2019 SEMESTER: ANNEX D 1/2

- **Annex D** in the [2019 Country Reports](#): Investment guidance on Cohesion Policy funding 2021-2027
- It presents the preliminary Commission services views on **priority investment areas and framework conditions** for effective delivery for the 2021-2027 Cohesion Policy
- 5 policy objectives:
 - Innovative and smart industrial transformation;
 - A low carbon and greener Europe;
 - Mobility and regional ICT connectivity;
 - **Implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights;**
 - **Fostering the sustainable and integrated development.**

2019 SEMESTER: ANNEX D 2/2

- The support to **deinstitutionalisation** and the development of **community-based care** are in the priority investment areas of several Member States:

Belgium

Czech Republic

Finland

Latvia

Malta

Portugal

Slovenia

Bulgaria

Estonia

Hungary

Lithuania

Poland

Romania

Slovakia



Thank you for your attention!

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