

[Press release – MEPs call for decisive action to fight inequalities in the EU](#)

While the euro area's unemployment rate hit a record low of 7.4% in August 2019, youth unemployment remains unacceptably high and large socio-economic differences between EU countries persist, according to the Employment Committee's annual report. The 2020 poverty reduction target will not be met, leaving the EU with some 113 million people in the EU at risk of poverty and social exclusion.

In the resolution, adopted by 422 votes against 131 and 101 abstentions, MEPs call for

- legislative proposals setting up an EU minimum wage and a fund to grant loans to national unemployment insurance schemes, to be activated in the event of a major economic shock;
- an EU Child Guarantee to fight child poverty, and for the fight against youth unemployment and long-term unemployment to be prioritised;
- a coordinated EU initiative to strengthen social rights for digital platform workers and put an end to current abuses;
- a directive on pay transparency to help close the 16% gender pay in the EU.

Quote

[Yana Toom \(Renew, EE\)](#) , rapporteur, said: "The country-specific recommendations issued by the Commission since 2012 are not only about economic, but also about the EU's social policies. However, the declining trend in implementing them is unacceptable and must be reversed. The Commission has to convince Member States that the social health of the EU is not less important than defending the single market or any other common policy."

Background

Since 2018, the Employment and Social Affairs Committee has been preparing an annual report on Employment and Social Policies, submitted to plenary vote in advance of the Council adopting euro-area recommendations and conclusions on the annual growth survey. The annual exercise serves as a contribution to the drafting of country specific recommendations (CSRs) in the frame of the European Semester for the following year.