



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 24 April 2015

7991/15

SOC 236
EMPL 142
ECOFIN 249
SAN 108

"I/A" ITEM NOTE

From: Council General Secretariat
To: Permanent Representatives Committee (Part I) / Council

No. prev. doc.: 6079/15 SOC 58 EMPL 24 ECOFIN 85 SAN 42 + ADD 1

Subject: Proposal for a Council Decision establishing the Social Protection Committee and repealing Decision 2004/689/EC

1. On 23 January, the Presidency tabled a draft Council Decision¹ on the above subject to the Social Questions Working Party. The Presidency's initiative finds its origin in the Joint opinion² of the Employment Committee and the Social Protection Committee of October 2014 on the mid-term review of the Europe 2020 Strategy, including the evaluation of the European Semester, stating that both Committees have an essential role to play to support the EPSCO Council throughout all stages of the European Semester. Within their respective areas of competence, they should continue to take the responsibility for all instruments at EPSCO's disposal. In order to effectively deliver on their Treaty mandate and to improve cooperation between them, both Committees would reflect on a revision of their rules of procedure and governance arrangements.
2. A legal assessment of the proposal was carried out against the objectives and the content of the draft. Article 160 TFEU requires simple majority.

¹ 5126/15.
² 13809/14.

3. Reflecting the changes in the implementation of the European Semester since 2010, the draft Decision aims at strengthening the role of the Committee in the Semester Process and at enhancing efficiency. It ensures better coordination of employment and social policies in this context by improving the Committee's cooperation with the Employment Committee, as requested by the European Council in its Conclusions of June 2013³. It also enhances the cooperation with the ECOFIN committees in ensuring consistency in the coordination of economic, employment and social policies as requested by the European Council in its Conclusions of October 2013⁴. The draft Decision furthermore provides the possibility for the chairperson to be re-elected once in order to ensure adequate continuity. It also caters for a series of technical amendments and rewording required after the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty.
4. On 9 March 2015, the EPSCO Council reached a general approach⁵ awaiting the result of the consultation of the European Parliament. The outcome of the vote held by the EP Plenary on 15 April 2015 was considered by the responsible Council working party on 17 April.
5. Against this background, the Permanent Representatives Committee is invited to recommend to the Council:
 - to adopt, as an "A" item at a forthcoming session, the draft Decision as set out in document 7263/15 + COR 1 (lv) + COR 2 (es) + COR 3 (es) + COR 4 (hr) + REV 1 (cs) + REV 2 (de).

³ EUCO 104/2/13.

⁴ EUCO 169/13.

⁵ 6079/15 + ADD 1.