

**DRAFT AGENDA  
4TH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD**

*Conseil Central de l'Economie (CCE), room 2, Avenue de la Joyeuse Entrée, 17-21  
1040 Brussels  
Friday, 17 January 2020, 09h00-13h00*

Item	Agenda item	Ref no.	Time	Presenting
1.	Draft Agenda, <i>For Adoption</i>	EB 4/1	9.00-9.05	Chair
2.	Draft Minutes of the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Executive Board meeting of 13 September 2019 <i>For Adoption</i>	EB 4/2	9.05-9.15	Chair
3.	Progress Report of the Executive Director, - incl. ad-hoc research proposals, <i>For Information</i>	EB 4/3	9.15-9.45	Executive Director
4.	Recruitment of Executive Director – update by the Commission, <i>For Information</i>	EB 4/4	9.45-10.00	European Commission
5.	Draft Programming Document 2021 – final draft, <i>For Approval</i>	EB 4/5	10.00-10.45	Executive Director
	<i>Break</i>		10.45-11.00	
6.	Ex-ante evaluation of Programming Document 2021-2024 - final report <i>For Discussion</i>	EB 4/6	11.00-11.35	Executive Director
7.	Internal control annual work plan 2020 and follow up of audit and evaluation actions, <i>For Discussion</i>	EB 4/7	11.35-12.15	Coordinator Internal Control
8.	Programming Document 2022 – planning schedule, <i>For Discussion</i>	EB 4/8	12.15-12.25	Deputy Director
9.	Non-substantial amendments to the Work Programme, <i>For Discussion</i>	EB 4/9	12.25-12.35	Executive Director
10.	Cooperation agreements with other EU Agencies, <i>For Information</i>	EB 4/10	12.35-12.55	Deputy Director
11.	AOB		12.55-13.00	

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***Thursday, 16 January 2020, 19:30 hrs, New Year's dinner (venue tbc)***

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Date and venue of **next meeting of the Executive Board:**

**Friday, 3 April 2020 at 9:00 hrs, Eurofound, Dublin**

preceded by Extended Executive Board seminar, 2 April 2020, 2pm-6pm (tbc)

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## FINAL MINUTES

### 4<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

9.00-13.00 Friday, 17 January 2020

<b>Ms Bulgarelli</b>	Chair of the Management Board (Governments)
<b>Ms Kauffmann</b>	Deputy Chair of the Management Board (European Commission)
<b>Mr Gran</b>	Deputy Chair of the Management Board (Workers)
<b>Mr Tagger</b>	Member of the Executive Board (European Commission)
<b>Mr Ciechański</b>	Governments (Coordinator)
<b>Ms Smith</b>	Employers (Coordinator)
<b>Ms Hoffmann</b>	Workers (Deputy Coordinator)
<b>Ms Roelen</b>	European Commission
<b>Mr Menéndez-Valdés</b>	Executive Director
<b>Ms Jepsen</b>	Deputy Director
<b>Mr Grimmeisen</b>	Secretary to the Management Board
<b>Mr Storrie</b>	Eurofound
<b>Mr Blomsma</b>	Eurofound
<b>Mr Baussand</b>	Eurofound

1. **The Chair** welcomed the members and opened the meeting, noting that it would be the last meeting attended by Mr Blomsma and Mr Storrie who were retiring shortly. The Executive Director, on behalf of all the colleagues at Eurofound thanked the two colleagues for their valuable contributions to the work of Eurofound over the years.
2. **Adoption of the minutes of the Executive Board meeting of 17 January 2020**
  - 2.1 Point 3.8 was deleted and 3.9 was amended accordingly.
3. **Progress Report of the Executive Director (EB 4/3)**
  - 3.1 The **Executive Director** highlighted some of the recent events and publications in his progress report and slides and updated the members on the status of the research projects.

He noted that following the recent expert meeting, the pilot on the Industrial Action Monitor (IAM) was almost complete. It was proposed to present the results of the pilot to a larger group as part of the extended Executive Board seminar in Dublin on 2 April.

On the minimum wage, information on minimum wage-setting, adequacy and public debate in three Member States (Cyprus, Austria and Italy) had been submitted to the European Commission to support preparatory work on the minimum wage initiative, and Eurofound had attended meetings with BusinessEurope and the Commission on the topic.

After some delays the European Company Survey dataset had been delivered and a launch event was scheduled for October 2020. Early access to the data had been provided to 20 researchers for contributions towards a conference scheduled to take place in August 2020 along with a special issue of the *IZA Research in Labour Economics* book series.

He informed the Executive Board of the final budget transfers following the 2019 amending budget.

He highlighted a number of recent written procedures and updated the members on Human Resources and legal matters.

#### **Ad hoc information requests in 2020**

- *Distributional aspects of the transition to the low carbon economy* — Contacts had been taken up with the European Environment Agency as it was considered that research in this area should be undertaken in collaboration with them. There would be further changes to the text submitted in the draft proposal on the basis of this cooperation.
- Budget was available for the three ad hoc proposals (the other two being on *European Works Councils* and *Capacity building for effective social dialogue*) but the human resources requirements had still to be looked at carefully.
- An additional request received from the Commission on the transposition of EU labour law Directives through collective agreements required non-significant resources and was therefore implemented directly.

3.2 **The Chair** welcomed the proposal to collaborate with the European Environment Agency on this important area in line with the Green Agenda of the Commission.

She said that Eurofound was already a reference point on the topic of minimum wage and she wondered whether more could be done in this area.

She noticed in the Executive Director's slide on the Activity Based Budgeting that there seemed to be certain areas where delivery was delayed, and she would like more information.

3.3 **Mr Ciechański (Governments)** wondered whether Eurofound's research on upward convergence, which was a very important topic currently, could be brought more into public awareness, potentially with a high-level event in cooperation with Member State governments.

In relation to the ad hoc proposal, the distributional aspects of the transition to the low carbon economy was a highly political topic and an important issue for the future in Europe. It would be good to have an objective presentation of the distributional effects, and the project was therefore a significant one.

3.4 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** said that it was important to be clear at the outset that the research on the carbon transition covered areas of interest to the Workers' Group such as working conditions and the role of trade unions, social policy and collective bargaining. It was a matter of concern that in some ad hoc research, the final research output could be quite different from the initial proposal. The process was not transparent.

This appeared to be the case in the research on the Gender Pay Transparency, and she would welcome some information from the Executive Director on this issue. The project manager had informed her that a working paper had been drafted on how much the gender pay transparency measures cost and what benefits companies saw to their addressing gender pay gaps. But one might ask instead what benefits the workers saw. The objective of the research had changed from what was the cost of the impact assessment to what was the benefit for the companies. As a tripartite institution the interest lay in the benefit for the workers and for public policy. The methodology included interviews with companies, but had the researchers spoken to trade unions who addressed these issues in collective bargaining she wondered. It seemed that the Groups had not received information, but somehow the Commission had seen the draft working paper.

There was a similar problem with the proposal on the European Works Councils, which had been mentioned in the Board meeting in November but had not yet been seen by the Groups.

It would be preferable she thought, to have a separate point on the agenda for discussing the ad hoc proposals.

- 3.5 **Ms Smith (Employers)** agreed that it was useful to look at the transition to the low carbon economy. She said that BusinessEurope would be working with ETUC on a project looking specifically at employment labour market — including health and safety impacts — of the transition to the circular economy and it might be interesting to link the analysis of both research projects. It was important to look at the opportunities too, and to look at the sectoral dimension as well as the regional one.

She said that the Group's proposal on the European Works Councils had been sent to Eurofound on the understanding that it would be circulated to all the Groups, and it seemed it had not. Following that, an updated proposal had been sent to ETUC but not to BusinessEurope which had caused some dismay. The Group's main interest was to look at the issue in Eurofound within the tripartite context; this was the added value of the proposal.

The Group welcomed the ad hoc proposal on capacity building for the Social Partners which they had previously requested but said that it was not clear if the output would be an event or a report. Whilst noting the very good events on capacity building held in Riga and Gdansk she reiterated that the interest of the Group lay in the development of research by Eurofound rather than in organising events.

- 3.6 **Ms Kaufmann (Commission)** thanked the Executive Director and his staff for their welcome during the visit of the Director General of DG Employment in November, noting that Mr Korte had a good impression of the Agency.

In the progress report, the Commission were pleased to see good progress on the Representativeness Studies and that preparations on the European Working Conditions Survey were on track.

The ad hoc proposals did seem to be aligned with current policy initiatives by the Commission but she had some doubts in relation to the proposal on minimum wage at this time when so much work in the area had already been done. Any overlaps with work done by the Commission should be avoided.

**Mr Tagger (Commission)** added that there were a number of requests from the Commission in the pipeline. They would ask Eurofound to look into updating the 2013 figures on the gender employment gap. They would also request that Eurofound look into providing an overview of the agreements and policies addressing the 'right to disconnect'.

Regarding the capacity building proposal, he recommended that Eurofound should look to having more than just seminars, maybe also to interviews and surveys of social partners in order to really identify the needs.

- 3.7 **Ms Smith (Employers)** agreed that it was timely to revisit the statistics on the gender employment gaps and was curious about other future initiatives mentioned by the Commission.

The 'right to disconnect' was a complex issue and the EU Social Dialogue work programme was currently looking at the modalities for connecting and disconnecting, so this should not be interfered with.

- 3.8 **The Executive Director** responded to some of the comments.

The European Parliament had approved, within the EU Budget, a pilot project on the evolution of the minimum wage in relation to the labour guarantee. Eurofound was mentioned in the text and would wait to see if the Commission delegated this to the

Agency. In any case, any research on minimum wage would have to take this pilot project into account.

He supported the suggestion of the Governments to promote Eurofound's research on convergence. So far, the data had been quite technical and had attracted attention at a more political level, but something like a cluster event with a number of Member States would work well he thought. Eurofound was open to hear any suggestions from the Member States.

In relation to the Gender Pay Transparency research, he apologised to the Workers' Group for any lack of information. As he recalled, following the initial research which involved collecting pay transparency measures in the Member States there was a request by the Commission to find what were the administrative and financial costs of the measures, which consisted of the correspondents asking that question on a limited basis. The research was quite limited, with a very small budget and undoubtedly was of a narrower scope than initially envisaged. It did not mean that more could not be done in the area, and indeed the Commission had expressed recently just such an interest.

He invited the Workers' Group to send an email with any particular requests or comments regarding the research on the European Works Councils. The feasibility would then be checked with the researchers in Eurofound.

The transition to the low carbon economy had been approved as a line of research in the Programming Document 2021-2024 and the proposal was to bring forward some exploratory work, to look at who would pay for this transition, where the burden would fall in society, to discuss with experts, and to look at elements in the labour market with a sectoral approach, for example showing sectors that would grow or decline.

**3.8 Mr Gran (Workers) requested clarification of the procedure for approval of ad hoc requests.**

**3.9 The Chair said that it was important that the Commission checked for any synergies or overlaps between Eurofound's research and its own.**

**She encouraged Eurofound to find a way to balance the quadripartite discussion on the ad hoc proposals.**

**The procedures for ad hoc requests should be sent to the Executive Board who could discuss them at a future Executive Board.**

**4. Update on Steering Group on development of Eurofound surveys (EB 4/3)**

**4.1 Ms Jepsen (Deputy Director) reported on the first meeting of the Steering Group which had been held on the previous day.**

It had been a constructive meeting, the purpose of which was to discuss the criteria the contractors would use to propose scenarios for future-proofing the surveys. There was agreement that continuity of comparability over time and countries was extremely important.

The question of overlap with other surveys and between the various Eurofound surveys had been raised, but the contractors would have no time to deal with this. It would therefore be considered internally with the team going back over a number of internal papers that had been written on this issue. It was complicated because it was still necessary to be able to do cross-tabulation and to articulate different issues.

It was agreed that information would be forwarded to members and alternates of the Steering Group, but also to the coordinators in order to be transparent. The Group were also open to any requests for information from the Executive Board.

The scope included the question also of potentially changing the mode of the survey, as it was necessary to think about that, if the face-to-face mode were to become

problematic. It also included consideration of the issue that there were effectively only one or two contractors in Europe who could do the work.

The next meetings of the Steering Group would be on 20 March and 2 April (in Dublin).

- 4.2 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** thanked the Deputy Director for the information and the transparent approach. She was assured that the members of the Steering Group would report back also to their Groups.

Her comments about the ad hoc proposals spoke to the lack of such a transparent procedure. It seemed that the ad hoc proposals existed independently, whereas all the other research proposals were the result of discussions which meant that the Groups could be confident that they were happening within a strategic framework. This was not the case with the ad hoc research proposals it seemed.

#### 5. **Recruitment of Executive Director – update by the Commission (EB 4/4)**

- 5.1 **Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** informed that the notice had been published on 15 November with a closing date for receipt of applications of 13 December 2020.

A pre-selection committee would be chaired by the Director General Mr Korte, two Directors (including herself) and a rapporteur from Human Resources. The Chair, Ms Bulgarelli would be the observer from the Management Board.

It was hoped to have a list of candidates for assessment by the end of February. Following an initial interview the candidate would also be interviewed by Commissioner Schmit.

A list of candidates would then be forwarded to the Management Board.

The Executive Board discussed how it might best be organised that the Management Board could reach a decision on the candidates proposed by the Commission during its meeting in July.

- **All Groups agreed that there should be an opportunity for an exchange of views with the candidates before the Management Board meeting.**
- **A procedure would be proposed by the Executive Director to be agreed at the Executive Board meeting in April.**

#### 6. **Approval of final Draft Programming Document 2021 (EB 4/5)**

- 6.1 The **Executive Director** noted that the final draft also included Eurofound's new vision statement which was 'to be a leading knowledge source for better life and work in Europe'.

- 6.2 **Mr Ciechański (Governments)** said that the text proposed by the Governments' Group in relation to the future of the surveys had not been included in this draft. The Group would insist that the text be amended as follows 'after the outcome of the feasibility study is available, the Management Board will decide whether to test a new survey, with fieldwork planned for 2022-2023, which aims to measure the interconnectedness of living and working conditions in Europe'.

- 6.3 **Ms Smith (Employers)** said that the Group considered that self-employment should not be included in the definition of non-standard employment. Although this was a definition used by the Commission, it was not clear that Eurofound should adhere to that. The issue was quite contentious.

The Group would like capacity building to have been included in the programme, but they were satisfied that the ad hoc proposal would address the issue.

Otherwise it appeared that their comments had been taken on board in the document.

- 6.4 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** said that the majority of the Workers' comments had been addressed and they could approve the programme.

**The Executive Board agreed that the amended Programming Document would be submitted for approval by a written procedure of the Management Board and sent after that to the European Commission by the deadline of 31 January.**

7. **Ex ante evaluation of Programming Document 2021-2024 — final Report (EB 4/6)**

7.1 **The Executive Director** introduced the item noting that the ex-ante evaluation was a process that accompanied the development of the work programme. The internal evaluator made a number of recommendations that were considered in drafting an action plan.

7.2 **Ms de Boer** presented the evaluation report from Eurofound's internal evaluator, Ms Schmidt which aimed to ensure that the new programme was robust enough on the basis of certain criteria.

It considered efficiency, effectiveness, coherence and relevance of the programme. She looked also at whether it was 'good enough', at whether it fulfilled the objective of being a good programme.

The programme fulfilled the needs of the stakeholders as ultimately it had been endorsed by the Management Board, but there were questions as to whether there should have been a broader stakeholder consultation, referencing the situation in the past where NGOs had been explicitly asked for their views. It was noted that the Commission sometimes had a public stakeholder consultation, but Eurofound had not done that.

On whether Eurofound was fulfilling the mandate and requirements of the founding regulations in this programme, the report asked whether the programme was distinct enough when considered in the light of all the other players in the field of looking at improvement of living and working conditions. The unique added value was not always clearly visible. A brief competitor analysis had been carried out and ultimately it was a programme that fulfilled the needs, but in light of the resource challenges she made an important point that Eurofound should make sure to keep its distinctive position and value.

The third element of a good programme was that there should have been options in the evolution of the content, that choices were considered and then made, and here the report pointed to the fact that there had been a development where a more thematic structure had been developed but later rejected for a more traditional model. The evaluator was very positive about keeping the ad hoc capacity for dealing with flexibility and emerging needs.

There was a strong logic and structure to the programme, which would also make it easier to monitor progress. Placing the multiannual perspective with the annual one was regarded as strengthening the logic and justifying the choice of activities in the annual programme.

In relation to the feasibility of the programme, the report found that the ambitions were greater than the resources and there was a new urgent need to look at this, for example in relation to the surveys.

Many of the recommendations of the evaluation would be taken up in an action plan.

The final recommendations related to the programme development process and were based on observing how the different drafts were developed, what was discussed and not discussed.

She asked whether there were areas where the role of the Management Board and Executive Board could be further strengthened in terms of who was responsible for what.

It was likely that an ex post evaluation of the programme would look at the effectiveness and efficiency of the Management Board. Concern was expressed not

so much in relation to the formal governance tasks but whether when it came to the programme, there was enough knowledge and interest in certain elements that made up the programme. A lot of time was spent discussing the content, which was understandable given the background and make-up of the Board but hardly any time was spent discussing the risk register and the monitoring of the objectives and indicators. Was this because it was considered an internal matter or was there a lack of awareness on the issue? Was there enough knowledge about the programming document structure itself?

There were opportunities during the implementation of the programme for strengthening that awareness. Some agencies held specific workshops on elements that were seen as more technical but that were an integral part of the programme. Ms de Boer mentioned that at inter-Agency level there was a review of the structure of the Programming Document and the philosophy behind it and how that was articulated in the template for the document. A new template for the Programming Document would be available soon. DG Budget and DG HR were liaising on this matter with the Agencies, and she suggested that this might be a topic where Eurofound could organise some awareness sessions.

#### **Internal Control Work plan (EB 4/7)**

Ms de Boer summarised the Internal Control activities in the pipeline and outlined in the Annual Work plan.

- 7.3 **The Chair** thanked Ms de Boer for her presentation and said that the Management Board were aware of their managerial and administrative duties. They were satisfied with the information provided to them regularly by Eurofound.

#### **8. Programming Document 2022 – planning schedule (EB 4/8)**

- 8.1 **The Deputy Director** outlined the proposed schedule for developing the 2022 Programming Document which would include a seminar on the afternoon of 2 April prior to the Executive Board, comprising Executive Board members along with members of the Steering Group for the future of surveys.

At that meeting it was proposed also to discuss the results of the pilot for the Industrial Action Monitor.

It was discussed whether Draft 3 of the Programming Document might be available to be presented in the Advisory Committees, who would, in turn, provide feedback in discussions in their own Groups before the September Executive Board. The possibility of re-scheduling the September Advisory Committees should therefore be considered.

#### **9. Decision on non-substantial Amendments to the Work Programme (EB 4/9)**

- 9.1 **Mr Grimmeisen** presented the document, which concerned provisions for the Management Board to delegate the power to make non-substantial amendments to the Work Programme to the Executive Director.

The latest changes were prompted by requests for clarifications during the Executive Board meeting in September.

It was the intention to have rules that were practical and easy to understand. The rules were aligned to those already adopted by Cedefop.

Prior to the meeting, the Commission had requested a change which had now been included on page 1.

While there was general agreement with the revised text, the Worker's group required additional clarifications. It was proposed by Eurofound and the Executive Board agreed, that the text would be reviewed together with the representatives of the Workers' Group and, in case of amendments, circulated to the Executive Board before submitting it to the Management Board for decision by written procedure.



10. **Cooperation agreements with other EU Agencies (EB 4/10)**

10.1 **The Deputy Director** outlined the cooperation agreements with five other EU Agencies, which were concentrated mainly on the survey data that Eurofound was producing. The cooperation concerned how Eurofound could meet their needs or where their expertise could be input, so that Eurofound surveys were better make use of their expertise and be adjusted to their needs. Cooperation with Cedefop was on a more advanced level with the collaboration on the implementation of the European Company Survey.

In the area of digitalisation there was much exchange of studies between the Agencies, ensuring a flow of knowledge and potentially leading to greater collaboration in the area, perhaps in the writing of joint reports.

In the future, it would be important to have a similar approach to cooperation on environmental issues.

The Agencies also exchanged their Programming Documents each year in order to identify areas for exchange and to avoid overlaps.

In response to a question from the Chair on cooperation with the OECD she said that it was proposed to formalise the ongoing exchange. There was cooperation already on the job quality framework where the OECD relied heavily on Eurofound data and there were proposals to look at further collaboration on indicators.

Eurofound was part of an expert Group advising the OECD on how to bring forward the ICTWSS database on industrial relations. The OECD also commented and fed back into Eurofound's work on industrial relations and its monitoring tools.

There was cooperation also on platform work, for example in relation to the methodology of measuring platform work. Further opportunities would be sought for collaboration.

10.2 **Ms Roelen (Commission)** said that the Commission welcomed the detailed Memoranda of Understanding which were in line with the Staff Working Document and the new founding regulation. The Commission also encouraged Eurofound to establish the same practice with the new European Labour Authority.

11. **AOB**

**Mr Blomsma** thanked the Executive Board members for their collaboration over the years in his work both as a Board member and latterly a seconded national expert. He wished the Executive Director and his staff the best of luck in continuing to bridge the world of research and policy. He would bring good memories into his retirement.

12. **The next meeting of the Executive Board would be held on Friday, 3 April 2020 in Dublin**

[A.Bulgarelli]

[J. Menéndez-Valdés]

Chairperson

Executive Director

## **4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Executive Board — Conclusions and Actions**

The Executive Board:

1. Adopted minutes of Executive Board meeting of September 2019.
2. Reviewed ad hoc research proposals.
3. Were updated by the Commission on the schedule for the recruitment of the Executive Director and agreed that a procedure for the appointment by the Management Board would be proposed at the next Executive Board meeting in Dublin in April.
4. Agreed that the final draft PD 2021 with some amendments be sent for approval by a written procedure of the Management Board.
5. Were briefed on the finding of the ex-ante evaluation report of the PD 2021-2024
6. Were briefed on the Internal Control work plan and follow up on audit and evaluation.
7. Discussed the planning schedule for PD 2022 and agreed that an extended Executive Board would meet on 2 April to discuss the PD, as well as the future of surveys and the Industrial Action Monitor pilot project.
8. Agreed that the decision on non-substantial amendments to the work programme would be reviewed together with the representatives of the Workers' Group and, in case of amendments, circulated to the Executive Board before submitting it to the Management Board for decision by written procedure.
9. Were briefed on cooperation agreements with other EU Agencies and the OECD.

**DRAFT AGENDA  
FIFTH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD**

*via web conference*

*Tuesday, 28 April 2020, 09h30-12h30*

Item	Agenda item	Ref.no	Time	Presented by
1.	Welcome and Draft Agenda, <i>For Adoption</i>	EB 5/1	9.30	Chair
2.	Draft Minutes of the 4 <sup>th</sup> Executive Board meeting of 17 January 2020, <i>For Adoption</i>  <i>(document was submitted on 20 March, comments were received and included)</i>	EB 5/2	9.30 - 9.35	Chair
3.	Future of surveys – Update on feasibility study, <i>For Discussion</i>	EB 5/3	9.35 - 10.45	Executive Director / Deputy Director /Contractor
4.	Programming Document 2022 – draft 1, <i>For Discussion</i>	EB 5/4	10.45-11.30	Executive Director
5.	- Update on Covid19 situation <i>For Information</i>  - Progress Report of the Executive Director  <i>(document was submitted on 20 March with possibility to comment and ask questions by 3 April)</i>	EB 5/5	11.30-12.00	Executive Director
6.	Recruitment of Executive Director, <i>For Discussion</i>	EB 5/6	12.00-12.10	European Commission
7.	Consolidated Annual Activity Report (CAAR) 2019, <i>For Discussion</i>	EB 5/7	12.10-12.20	Executive Director
8.	Draft Schedule of Management Board meeting for selection of Executive Director, <i>For Discussion</i>	EB 5/8	12.20-12.30	Executive Director

Date and venue of **next Executive Board meeting:**  
**Friday, 18 September 2020 at 9h00** Brussels, Conseil Central de l'Economie (Eurofound's Brussels Office)

## Minutes of 5th Executive Board meeting held by video conference, Tuesday 28 April 2020 9.30-12.00 (CET)

<b>Ms Bulgarelli</b>	<b>Chair of the Management Board (Governments)</b>
<b>Ms Kauffmann</b>	<b>Deputy Chair of the Management Board (European Commission)</b>
<b>Mr Gran</b>	<b>Deputy Chair of the Management Board (Workers)</b>
<b>Mr Tagger</b>	<b>European Commission</b>
<b>Mr Ciechański</b>	<b>Governments (Coordinator)</b>
<b>Ms Smith</b>	<b>Employers (Coordinator)</b>
<b>Ms Lynch</b>	<b>Workers (Coordinator)</b>
<b>Ms Hoffmann</b>	<b>Workers (Deputy Coordinator)</b>
<b>Ms Roelen</b>	<b>European Commission</b>
<b>Mr Menéndez-Valdés</b>	<b>Executive Director</b>
<b>Ms Jepsen</b>	<b>Deputy Director</b>
<b>Mr Grimmeisen</b>	<b>Secretary to the Management Board</b>
<b>Ms Ahrendt</b>	<b>Eurofound (for item 3 only)</b>
<b>Mr [REDACTED]</b>	<b>Contractor on surveys study (for item 3 only)</b>

*The fifth meeting of the Executive Board — rescheduled from 3 April due to the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions — was held via videoconference.*

1. **The Chair** read out the agenda for the meeting (EB 5/1) which was adopted.  
**Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** said that the circumstances would at least allow to gain some experience in new working methods, with the possibility of more video conferences in the future. She stressed that Eurofound would have a role to play in the significant impact of the pandemic on living and working conditions in the European Union.
2. The draft minutes of the Executive Board meeting of 17 January 2020 (EB 5/2) were adopted.
3. **Future of surveys: update on feasibility study and presentation by the contractors (EB 5/3)**
  - 3.1 **The Deputy Director** outlined the work carried out to date by the contractors and the Steering Group. The Executive Board had been kept informed on the work of the Group to date, but this was a first opportunity to discuss the draft report from the contractors and to provide some input and guidance on what the preferences of the Board were.  

The scope of the work had been broadened slightly at the kick-off meeting and again during the Steering Group meeting of 16 January, from the original one of examining the feasibility of a household survey that combined elements of the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) and the European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS) to looking also at what might be the various options for

implementing such a survey, and exploring other scenarios (besides a single survey instrument) for future-proofing the EWCS and the EQLS.

A meeting of the Steering Group by video conference on 21 April had allowed for a first discussion on the contractors' report, identifying the information that was still missing and what was required in order to take the report to the final stage. One conclusion from this meeting was that Eurofound should provide to the Steering Group a document setting its surveys within the broader European statistical landscape and exploring the factors that were unique to them. The contractors were asked to work some more on modes other than face-to-face collection, and to look at variations of different ways of merging the two surveys or creating a single survey instrument.

Today, the Executive Board were provided with an opportunity to engage directly with the feasibility study and to have an exchange with the contractors in order to understand the various options. The contractors would deliver their final report on 15 May, so deadlines were tight.

- 3.2 **Ms Ahrendt** outlined that in 2017 the Survey Management and Development team in Eurofound had been tasked with developing a long-term perspective for the surveys, in the face of changes in the survey landscape beyond Eurofound (such as falling response rates on face to face surveys, difficulties accessing high quality registers) and against a narrowing field of contractors and reducing budgets. A working paper by the group had looked at a well-planned testing programme for surveys to examine the viability of different data collection modes, looking at the implications on comparability of survey data, particularly in the case of trend data. Short-to-medium-term investment had been requested for testing in order to ensure that in the long term Eurofound would still be able to achieve good quality data.

She reiterated that whatever decision was made on the basis of the feasibility study, the next steps would be taken on a test basis only, and results would be evaluated carefully after that before any decision about a merger, or change to a different collection mode would be taken.

It should be mentioned that it was necessary to look at the way in which the surveys were organised internally, and she noted that already it was the case that surveys were no longer fielded in two consecutive years.

Possibilities for collaboration with other EU Agencies (beyond the already established collaboration with Cedefop) would also be assessed, with a plan to look at tendering options and synergies with other agencies in 2021.

Mr [REDACTED], of the University of Utrecht would present his consortium's report on the feasibility study.

- 3.3. **The Chair** thanked the Deputy Director and Ms Ahrendt for their introduction. She noted that the slides spoke only about a combination of the two surveys, whilst it seemed that the debate had moved beyond that to several scenarios. It was important to maintain an open mind from a methodological point of view.

- 3.4 **Mr [REDACTED]** presented the report titled *A Study to assess the feasibility of combining elements of the EWCS and EQLS into a single survey instrument* (see EB 5/3).

The contractors had considered the option of merging the EWCS and the EQLS and whether some parts of the survey should move online in some countries. A number of scenarios were developed in the report.

- The problems with the status quo scenario had already been highlighted in terms of costs and the tendering procedure. Mentioned by the Steering Group was the fact that the status quo did not allow Eurofound to include new kinds of questions on the survey in order to answer new policy questions.
- A second scenario might be to retain the two surveys as they were currently and include some kind of web interviewing. However, generally cost savings

from this approach were not as large as one would expect them to be. Also, if one started interviewing people with different modes it introduced comparability problems, as the same respondent would sometimes give a different answer in a face-to-face interview and a web one.

- A third scenario of combining the two surveys with face-to-face interviewing, would very quickly encounter the issue of survey length and increased costs, because it would take a lot longer to administer and had inherent risks of drop-off as respondents were not usually willing to take very long surveys.
- In this scenario it would be advised to merge the surveys and reduce the questions, either an EWCS survey with some EQLS questions, or a scenario where an EQLS survey would be a drop off survey, left at the respondent's home afterwards for self-completion. Eurofound had asked for further elaboration of this scenario.
- A fourth scenario whereby the two surveys were merged and web interviewing was used, was based on the idea that you could convince some respondents to do the survey on the web thereby reducing costs, and for the hard to reach respondents you would retain face-to-face interviews, the so-called push-to-web approach. Different scenarios were possible but the proposal was to start from a general population perspective, where if you encountered a worker you administered the working conditions survey and if you encountered a non-worker you administered the EQLS plus the relevant questions from the working conditions survey.
- Another scenario might be to establish a panel, that would enable you to go back to the same respondents after a number of months or years (up to 10 years). The establishment of the infrastructure for a panel would require investment, but after that the costs of maintaining it would be lower than setting up the survey anew each time.

These scenarios had been developed against criteria established in collaboration with the Steering Group at the meeting of 16 January (the criteria for conditions that needed to be met were the method, content, cost and logistics).

He presented a heat map indicating where scenarios were strong (green) or weak (red) on particular criteria. From this, it could be seen that there was no scenario that really ticked all the boxes.

From these indicators, the contractors felt that a future decision on the design of the survey really was a decision that should be taken on the basis of what the Steering Group and the Board thought was really important.

For example, if comparability across the countries and time trends were the most important things, then a choice might be made not to transition to online surveys. However, if the goal was really to minimise risks in tendering then a change to online surveys would be preferable.

The decision was not obvious and required discussion within Eurofound and within the Steering Group.

He outlined in more detail some of the scenarios.

- To maintain the status quo, according to budget figures provided to the contractors, this would result in a very small sample size, with risks that tendering would not be possible in some countries.
- Merging the EWCS and EQLS as a face-to-face survey would be a great risk for the EQLS, with similar risks to tendering in some countries.
- Combining the two surveys and moving to a push-to-web mode would work going forward for a longer time, but this scenario was less favourable to the

EQLS which would be administered as an add-on survey to workers. This scenario was also more cost effective when more cases were pushed to the web, which was a kind of trade off as for quality reasons it might not be desirable to push more cases to the web. More push-to-web however would save costs but would produce more comparability issues.

- Establishing a panel was the most flexible scenario, but in a way the most risky, because it would require a lot of organisational change to make it work. This transition of following people over time would lead Eurofound to a new type of data and was potentially very exciting, but would bring all kinds of changes in terms of documentation, user training etc.

Following discussions in the Steering Group and the comments received, the contractors were finalising the report, expanding on the scenarios of separate but online surveys, a single survey combining elements of EWCS and EQLS that was face-to-face, and on the cost transparencies.

The final report would be delivered to Eurofound on 15 May.

3.5 **The Chair** opened the floor for comments.

3.6 **Mr Ciechański (Governments)** said that the Group to date, were not supportive of a radical reform of the surveys. However, the context was that with a future of financial constraints and budget cuts, reform of some kind was essential.

However, there was little appetite for reform that would eliminate one of the surveys, as Eurofound was tasked with looking at both living and working conditions and preference should not be given therefore to one survey only.

If there were so many challenges for carrying out surveys, why was it that the EU SILC and European Labour Force Survey (LFS) were still face-to-face surveys he wondered.

Had the option to retain the two surveys with a different mode of data collection been set out, he asked.

Further explanation was required on the proposal regarding a panel, which seemed to allow both surveys to be retained and to provide some flexibility. How was the selection of respondents who were supposed to mirror the society being studied put together?

3.7 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** thanked the contractors for the report and noted the positive reports on their work from the Group's representatives on the Steering Group.

A longstanding question had been whether EQLS data would be available from other sources, particularly the EU SILC and LFS, were its collection to be weakened or put on a different footing by for example placing it in a web survey. Looking through the documents and the 2017 mapping exercise the results were not promising. The big question was what data risked being lost. She would be interested to hear from the contractor from which other sources this data might be available, and also whether these other organisations were engaged in similar discussions.

3.8 **Ms Smith (Employers)** said that feedback from the Group's representatives in the Steering Group was also very positive, and comments were few as the work had been done in a very detailed manner.

She echoed the question from colleagues as to whether other organisations were involved in similar discussions at the moment. What were the issues, was it a question of access to data or a question of money, she asked.

She had similar questions on how the panel would be established and asked whether other organisations were currently using such a panel for these kinds of



surveys. In the table, why was it that this option seemed to have the lowest risk factors, was it linked to costs?

In order to further the discussion, it would, she felt, be necessary to reduce the number of scenarios.

In a merged survey, which were the questions and areas that would not be surveyed anymore? Also, would a survey have questions from both the EWCS and the EQLS or would there be new questions that would combine issues, because this was something that had been an interesting prospect in the discussions.

- 3.9 **Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** thanked Eurofound and the contractors for the report which was good work produced in a short timeframe.

There were some issues around the target population for a merged survey. It was not clear who would be interviewed. If the target included people who did not work, this would have an impact on the information.

The Commission had some concerns about the costs and figures which formed the basis for the report. The costs could be dealt with more effectively it was felt, if there was more information from Eurofound to the contractor. In the meeting of the Steering Group it was not clear whether there was a readiness to do so.

Another factor to be considered was the initially high hopes for response rates in a push-to web mode for the European Company Survey, that had to be revised downwards because the method was not so successful. It was good to remember that there were other factors to be taken into account in any decision.

Certain elements might be included in the report already, such as the added value of the particular survey options. It would be interesting to know the cost of one thousand survey observations for example.

The Commission felt that there was still a need for deeper information on the options. The EWCS remained a priority, so the option with an EQLS add-on was the option that was being looked at more particularly, although minds were still open.

- 3.10 **The Chair** said that it seemed that several questions still required further exploration. The main concerns expressed by the members related to the quality of data, which was key in surveys.

Comparability of the data was also a key concern.

At the end it would have to be decided which were the most important criteria for the Management Board and the organisation, in order to decide which scenario best met those criteria.

She invited Mr ██████ to react to some of the comments.

- 3.11 **Mr ██████** noted first that none of the scenarios was perfect, and that whatever choice was made there would be downsides, such as accepting a smaller sample size or the loss of some questions.

He said that he and the colleagues through their various work experience, had a good overview of the European survey landscape and it was true that there were overlaps between the EWCS and Labour Force Survey and between the EQLS and EU SILC, the European Values Survey and the European Social Survey but that these overlaps were always only partial.

Some individual questions could be found in other surveys, and to rely on these other sources would mean that with only partial questions it would be much harder to investigate relationships between variables, as in a particular survey it might be one question which in combination with another question would give you an interesting picture. Relying on other sources would also mean that you would lose control over what would happen in the future. For example, if EU SILC changed it



would not consult Eurofound about that. He said that an update to the mapping exercise in 2017 had not been within the scope of this contract.

The LFS and EU SILC surveys were conducted mostly face-to-face but not exclusively so, and many countries were experimenting with different modes and some had already switched. As they were conducted by national statistical institutes these often had a lot more information available to them in order to draw good samples, such as access to registers that Eurofound did not currently have, which had a big impact. The second main difference was that the budgets were multiple times greater than Eurofound's. But despite this, both surveys were considering changing because it was more and more difficult to conduct face-to-face surveys. And comparing face-to-face surveys to web surveys, it was also problematic to get good response rates on web surveys, but not with the declining trend that could be seen in relation to face-to-face.

As a contractor he felt that the option of the panel was an exciting one but it also had disadvantages. A positive was that it offered flexibility to keep both surveys. What was proposed was different to a market research opt-in type of panel. What was proposed was that Eurofound would do a normal survey with proper probability sampling, probably doing a face-to-face with respondents. And then in that face-to-face to ask some of the core questions, and somewhere in the interview ask if they would be willing to be interviewed again about the same or different topics, and from that you would build the panel on the back of a normal survey that would be done using the best available methods for doing a random probability survey. Once you had the panel you could ask questions about all kinds of topics, and repeat questions over time. So that for example, in the Covid-19 situation it would be possible to ask questions very quickly.

The panel would need to be refreshed at a frequency to be decided, as different subgroups would need to be added. There was a cost associated with this. He noted that the panel design was not fully costed i.e. for scenarios where more and more questions were taken to the panel, thereby involving more administration. A costing for the initial recruitment and one refreshment of a panel for the EWCS and EQLS only, had been provided in the report.

The biggest risks of the panel were the organisational ones mentioned, including for example a decision after a number of years to stop the panel. The panel became more cost efficient and powerful the longer it was in existence, with most of the costs in the first phase recruitment of the panel. The question was whether Eurofound was willing and eager to do this. There was potential perhaps for collaboration with other EU Agencies in order to share the costs. The panel had potential but it was by no means a given that it would actually work.

EU SILC for example was being run as a panel although it was not a panel that worked in perpetuity, it worked for a certain period of time. At a European level there were currently no panel surveys like the one proposed. At a national level however, a lot of Member States operated these panels. In response to the Employers, the panel would be representative in that it would be recruited in a similar way to a face-to-face survey. There was a problem that over time people dropped out and the representativeness of a panel worsened a little over time, and more in some countries than others, so that it was really necessary to have active maintenance of the panel and to refresh it regularly.

Merging the surveys generally meant taking the questions from both surveys and putting them in the questionnaire. But it would be possible to add new questions with more of a focus on work/life balance as one topic.

In relation to the target population, where the surveys were separate, the working conditions targeted the working population and the living conditions the general one so when combining them it would be necessary to think a bit more carefully about

the target population. Targeting workers, one would screen and interview workers and maybe leave a drop-off questionnaire to the household members of the worker. Obviously screening in the general population meant potentially less workers, and this issue had had been raised in the Steering Group and would be clarified in the different scenarios in the final report.

In relation to the difficulties of push-to-web in the ECS, the experience of a company survey was quite different to that of a general population survey. There were lots of experiments with push-to-web, and it was found that it worked quite well where it was preceded by targeted letters beforehand using a register, where that individual then identified the respondents. However the approach could be quite messy and it would not be the same in all countries, due to the differences in internet penetration, which was why the contractors felt it would not be possible to use push-to-web in all countries, and in the report a number of different variations for this method were set out.

Finally, the issue of costs was a really important one in the whole exercise. The contractors had used costs for the SHARE survey and the Gender and Generations project, but these surveys were quite different to the EWCS. Eurofound had provided a report on the future of surveys that included costs for the two surveys but if a more detailed exercise would be done, more detailed information would be required from Eurofound namely the actual costs for running for example the current EWCS and the previous ones. The contractors did not have those costs at the moment but had asked Eurofound to make them available. If they did get these costs they would be used to do the cost calculations based on Eurofound's actual costings. He did not think it would change the result much though.

- 3.12 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** whilst not suggesting that it was necessary to redo the mapping exercise of 2017 would like to know from the contractors, if Eurofound were to rely on other data sources (surveys) what could Eurofound still look at, and also identify what information would be lost in the scenario of a combined survey.

Had she correctly understood that there was a risk associated with the comparability of data between the panel and the existing surveys done by Eurofound?

- 3.13 **Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** addressing her question to Eurofound asked for more information on the reasoning behind the initial cost reference for combining the surveys of 1.5 which was constraining and seemed to automatically exclude the status quo.

She added that the Commission could help the contractors with any contacts or liaison that might be necessary with Eurostat.

- 3.14 **The Chair** suggested that the contractors answer any questions in writing.

There were questions around the organisational sustainability of the various changes as well as the potential costs of the various proposals. It would be necessary not only to have a larger unit for surveys, but greater coordination between the various research teams as statistical skills were spread across the organisation. A clear analysis of these considerations by Eurofound would be welcome.

- 3.15 **The Deputy Director** thanked the members for their feedback.

The 1.5 cost reference was an anchor to have comparability between the different options. She would come back to the Commission with information about how the figure had been established.

The decision to take should guide the steps that Eurofound could take in the next few years in order to enable Eurofound to make the right transition. The challenges were coming up more and more.

- 3.16 **The Executive Director** speaking about organisational challenges said that there was already a Survey Development team within Eurofound and a coordinated expertise in the surveys area.

He added that the disruption to the fieldwork of the 7EWCS due to the coronavirus pandemic would also have an impact on the study.

- 3.17 **The Chair** thanked the contractor and Eurofound staff for their presentation.
- **The contractor would provide answers to any questions in writing.**
  - **The final report would be circulated to the Steering Group and the Executive Board, and there would most likely be a further meeting of the Steering Group to discuss.**
  - **She agreed that several things would have to be re-evaluated following the disruption to the 7EWCS. It was important however that at some point the Management Board would like to have a group discussion on the overall scenarios, not only on the future of surveys and a decision around that, but also in the context of what was going to happen with the EWCS.**

#### 4. **Programming Document 2022 – Draft 1**

- 4.1 **The Executive Director** noted that the 2022 programme would have to be reviewed, in light of the changing circumstances, notably the suspension of the 7EWCS fieldwork and uncertainty surrounding the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) which would impact on the programmes for 2021 and 2022. Comments had been received already in writing, but further feedback was welcome.

- 4.2 There was agreement in the Executive Board that all programme planning would need to be reviewed in light of the present situation.

The **Commission** felt there was a need to have more coherence in how the topic of capacity building was dealt with in the 2022 programme in relation to the multiannual programme. The Workers asked to be engaged on any discussions in the area.

The **Employers** said that the section on employment and labour markets should be broadened to allow Eurofound to adapt to the challenges coming on stream.

The **Workers** wondered if the description of the different options for the surveys should be included already. With regard to the proposal to repeat the joint European Company Survey with Cedefop in 2023/24 it was necessary to have a discussion on why the collaboration was being repeated and with what focus, and why not for example with another EU Agency.

- 4.3 **The Executive Director** said that much was still uncertain particularly with regard to the surveys, including the timing of the next ECS.

With regard to the activities in the capacity building research, he had indicated before that whilst Eurofound could provide technical support for a proposed residential seminar the resources were not available to fund the seminar, so funding from some other source would be necessary.

#### 5. **Update on Covid-19 situation and progress report of Executive Director (EB 5/5)**

- 5.1 **The Executive Director** updated the meeting on the changes in the 2020 programme and the suggestions for those that would be necessary in 2021.

- An update on the budgetary forecast was being conducted in light of the suspension and interruption of certain activities and a full report would be available to the Executive Board by June. Most importantly the 7EWCS fieldwork had been interrupted by the pandemic.

- On the impact of the virus on the employment area of the programme, a joint project modelling the Labour Force Survey data was being undertaken with the Joint Research Centre. The European Restructuring Monitor had started to provide some data to the European Commission. The results of this research would be available in ad hoc reports this year (in June and October).
- There was a first mapping and overview of policy measures in response to the virus in a new database that would be available shortly on Eurofound's website that contained over 450 measures. In the future a more in-depth analysis on policy measures (their take-up, efficiency, sustainability) would form the basis of a Comparative Analytical Report (CAR) that would be available in October 2020. The database on the website would be searchable by a number of filters including country, target group, actors, Social Partner role and involvement.
- Citizen's views on the Covid-19 crisis were being collected in an online survey, which would be conducted in two waves and a follow-up in April, May and July 2020. First results would be available already in May. To date 58,000 clean responses had been received (the EWCS and EQLS had a response usually of 40,000) with 26,000 respondents agreeing to be re-contacted for follow-up. The country coverage was a little uneven though the minimum target of 200 per country had been reached. An ex post weighting strategy would allow to adjust the results by gender, age, education and place of residence. In terms of quality criteria, the survey was meeting the standards of academically driven surveys such as the #Covid-19study on citizen's perceptions from twelve leading universities including Harvard and Cambridge. Their survey used only snowball sampling whilst Eurofound used snowballing and Facebook ads. Their weighting was by age, gender, education and income, whilst Eurofound's weighting was by age, gender, education and residence.

The immediate results were in line with recent surveys and indicated a big drop in optimism (46% of Europeans optimistic about their own future, down from 64% in the 2016 EQLS) and trust in the EU (most notably in France but also in Spain). 6% of Europeans had lost their jobs due to the crisis, 50% declared their working hours reduced; 45% had commenced teleworking.

- He outlined how ongoing research projects were being adapted to include the impact of COVID-19 where appropriate.
- The ERM would include a COVID-19 tick box/category to filter for relevant cases and support measures.
- The report *NEETS ten years after* had been delayed in order to capture the first impact of the crisis on youth. Online survey data could be used to contextualise young people's living conditions during the crisis.
- All publications on convergence were postponed (one to 2020, the others to 2021) as trends on convergence would be very impacted and it had been decided to wait for a new dataset from Eurostat.
- The web repository on the Platform economy would try to capture some of the impacts too.

Regarding the suspension of the 7EWCS fieldwork and the possible effects on the long-term strategy for surveys, he noted that 10,000 interviews had been done when the fieldwork was suspended, but they were not evenly distributed among the countries.

A number of scenarios had been developed for the next steps.

One option was to retain face-to-face interviews and restart the survey, but it was not realistic that it would be possible to do a 45-minute interview in a household at any time in the near future.

Another option was to change the mode to a telephone only survey, but this would impact on comparability with the previous survey and the trend data. An interview by telephone would have to be shorter, and this was being investigated by the colleagues managing the EWCS. The project would certainly be delayed until 2021, and the budgetary implications of this were currently being explored.

Another option was to abandon the survey until 2022 and to see what might be done with the 10,000 interviews already completed, to recontact those who had provided their details.

More information and a clearer proposal would be available in June, with the revised budgetary forecast.

- 5.2 **The Chair** congratulated Eurofound on being so quickly able to adapt activities to respond to the COVID-19 situation.

The issue of the 7EWCS survey was linked to the earlier discussions on the surveys, and consideration of the ability to interview people quickly, on specific themes and to respond to new policy questions.

She noted that in her own experience a number of national statistical authorities were moving to postpone surveys and to use a force majeure provision for the budgetary arrangements that would be necessary.

- 5.3 **Mr Gran (Workers)** thanked Eurofound for the survey and took note of the high response rate.

Nevertheless, despite the need for quick measures during the crisis it was important that procedures should be adhered to and he strongly recommended to consult the Advisory Committees before undertaking such an activity. Such consultation should be possible even within a short timeframe. As a group, the Workers would have liked to see more questions in the survey on 'work'.

It would be necessary to discuss the options for the 7EWCS survey within the Group but as a first comment it would make sense to postpone the survey until the end of the year or the following year, in consideration also of the impact of the crisis on the data.

- 5.4 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** said that whilst the launching of the online survey was a significant achievement, in the opinion of the Workers' Group it was a missed opportunity as it concerned primarily living conditions, whereas it would have been interesting to have information about the impact of the crisis on working conditions, particularly in light of the measures that Eurofound was collecting and publishing on its website.

It was also a missed opportunity in terms of the current discussions on the future of the surveys. It would have been an opportunity to see whether it was possible to reach those target audiences, how many workers had been reached and whether the questions worked.

It would have been an opportunity to test some of the challenges in relation to reform of the surveys, which had been discussed earlier. If the Advisory Committee had been consulted beforehand, that point would have emerged.

- 5.5 **Mr Ciechański (Governments)** said that the initiatives both in the online survey and the database on public policy measures in response to the crisis were, in his opinion, to be commended.

- 5.6 **Ms Smith (Employers)** congratulated Eurofound on the number of initiatives in response to the crisis but echoed the disappointment of the Workers' Group that



there was a missed opportunity in the online survey to look more deeply at issues of relevance to working conditions, such as teleworking.

She agreed that the measures that were being gathered in the Covid-19 policy measures database were very interesting and she would certainly disseminate that within her own networks.

Regarding the ad hoc proposal on European Works Councils, she countered the view of the Governments that this was not the time to undertake this research, noting that more and more was heard about the role of EWCs during the crisis, with companies discussing measures with their workers. It was the view of the Employers that this should not be delayed for too long, on that basis. Although conducting interviews was difficult during the crisis, these could be done by phone or online.

The focus on teleworking in the research on the right to disconnect was not the right approach, she felt. It concerned working outside normal hours, whilst teleworking concerned normal working hours.

The Social Partners had been working on the issue in the agreement on digitalisation which included the areas of connecting and disconnecting. Eurofound could of course carry out analysis, through the national correspondents finding out what was taking place on the ground, but it should not make policy recommendations in the area particularly as there was a Social Partner agreement already in place.

- 5.7 **Ms Lynch (Workers)** said that the Social Partners' agreement did not include the right to disconnect at the specific request of the Employers.

She agreed that there was no reason for the ad hoc proposal on the EWCs to be deferred.

She was disappointed that sufficient time was not available to discuss issues that were important for the Social Partners (specifically the projects on capacity building and the right to disconnect).

The comments of the Workers' Group would be sent in writing.

- 5.8 **Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** said that the Commission were pleased with Eurofound's response to the crisis, in particular the adjustment to the ERM and the online survey. Regarding the survey she agreed that a prior consultation would have been good, and that it would hopefully be possible before the second wave.

She did not think that the research on convergence should be postponed. Why not look at convergence now and compare it to the situation later after the Covid-19 crisis. It was to have been an input to the German EU Presidency later in the year.

- 5.9 **The Executive Director** responded to some points.

The European Work Councils research was postponed not only because of the difficulties of conducting interviews at this time, but also because the person in charge of the project was busy on other areas.

Research on the right to disconnect would be in the form of a Comparative Analytical Report (CAR), and previous comments by the Employers had been taken into account in its design. It would be a mapping of the situation. As in all reports there would be some policy pointers, but Eurofound was quite clear that it was not a policy actor and would not propose specific initiatives.

- 5.10 **Mr Tagger (Commission)** clarified that the pay transparency request did not overlap with the Commission's own mini-survey on pay-related transparency across companies. The Eurofound study focused on the limited number of Member States who had already introduced any pay transparency measures and tried to assess the cost benefits of such measures.

- 5.11 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** echoed comments by the Employers on the value of the European Works Councils research at a time when they were playing an important role in mitigating the cross-border impact of Covid-19 on work in multinational companies active in Europe. Whilst she could support postponing it if there were resource issues, she supported the Employers advice to start the project as soon as possible, using different techniques, in order to have the information while the memory was still fresh.
- 5.12 **The Executive Director** said that he had been somewhat disappointed by the immediate response of the Executive Board to the online survey, which was not appreciative of the efforts made by staff and the organisation to react and adapt to the emerging situation in a remarkable way.
- However, he accepted that the comments were valid and would be taken on board with a consultation of the Advisory Committee prior to the launch of the next phase of the online survey.
- There would be a second longer survey with modules that would allow questions to be directed to those respondents who were working, and a third one to those providing contact details with more questions on working conditions.
- In relation to the options for the 7EWCS, he said that a full consultation with the Board would not be possible as it would be necessary to adjust the contract for the survey, which was for a large amount and very detailed and decisions need to be made very fast.
- However, he would present Eurofound's proposal to the Executive Board in June.
- 5.13 **The Chair** thanked the Executive Director and complimented his quick decision to move the organisation to telework.
- It was good that there would be an opportunity to take up suggestions in the second wave of the online survey and that the Advisory Committee would be consulted beforehand.
- One interesting proposal in the slides was for a quick survey of the panel from the European Company Survey in order to look at the impact on companies.
- It was important to keep the members informed on all progress, and to come with short proposals for the next steps with the EWCS to be adopted by the Board.
- 6. Update on Recruitment of the Executive Director by the European Commission (EB 5/6)**
- 6.1 **Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** informed that the preselection committee had been at the point of holding interviews for the post when the crisis took hold.
- The present arrangement was that interviews would be held by video conference on 19 May, with a report to the Head of Human Resources at the Commission by end of May, and a report to the Commissioner by mid-June.
- A shortlist of candidates would be made available to the Management Board by the end of July.
- This would therefore not coincide with the plan for a meeting of the Management Board to recruit the Executive Director at the beginning of July. It should be noted that there was a potential for delays in this process also.
- The Executive Board discussed the uncertainty around holding a physical meeting of the Board at this time.
- If there were delays, and it was not possible to recruit the new Executive Director on time, then the Deputy Director would step in ad interim.
- 6.2 **The Governments Group** asked the Commission to clarify whether, in the event that a face-to-face meeting to recruit the new Director could not take place, it might be possible to extend the contract of the current Executive Director.

- 6.3 It was the opinion of the Workers' Group that the Founding Regulation was clear on this point, and that the Deputy Director should act in the absence of the Executive Director.
- Clear information should be available regarding the parameters for any decision by the Management Board on the issue, in the event of a delay in the recruitment of the new Executive Director.
7. As the meeting had run over time, it was decided to conclude the meeting and to continue discussions on the recruitment (with the clarifications sought) and the final items in the agenda at a meeting during the following week.

### **Tuesday, 5 May – second part of 5<sup>th</sup> Executive Board meeting**

8. **Recruitment of the Executive Director – updates from the Commission (EB 5/6) cont.**
- 8.1 **The Chair** said that in the previous meeting it was to be confirmed whether it would be possible to extend the Executive Director's term of office in the event that the recruitment procedure had not been completed by November, and if not, then what the arrangements might be. She noted that in one EU Agency it had been possible to extend the contract of the Executive Director in a specific circumstance.
- 8.2 **Mr Tagger (Commission)** was not familiar with the example described by the Chair but would make further investigations.
- He could confirm however that the term of office of the Executive Director was strictly limited by Article 19 of the Founding Regulation and that there was no possibility to extend it.
- The Deputy Director would assume responsibilities in the case that the new Executive Director was not in post by November.
- In light of the current restrictions on face-to-face interviews, he said that all open posts of Directors in the Commission were being recruited remotely, so that the members could be assured that the procedure would be carried out with due respect to the rules. The procedure remained, that the Chair, Ms Bulgarelli would represent the Management Board in the selection committee.
- Concerning the short list of candidates, the Commission would favour a pre-screening at the level of the Executive Board.
9. **Consolidated Annual Activity Report (CAAR) 2019 (EB 5/7)**
- The Chair** thanked the Executive Director for this report and said that the work of all the staff was much appreciated.
- The Groups expressed their satisfaction with the report in general and with the Board assessment done by the Chair in particular. There were no other comments by the Groups on the activity report which would be submitted for adoption by a written procedure once the final figures were available and sent as usual to the budgetary authorities by the deadline of 1 July.
10. **Draft schedule of Management Board meeting for selection of Executive Director (EB 5/8)**
- It would not be possible to have a meeting in July as previously planned in order to recruit a new Executive Director, so there was a need to decide when the meeting might be held instead.
- The members were asked to consider the structure of the meeting outlined in the draft schedule and in particular the proposed timings with regard to decisions on the selection of the Executive Director.



They should consider whether an informal exchange between the Executive Board with the short-listed candidates on Day 1 was required, and whether the structure of Day 2 of the meeting, with short presentations by the candidates (15 minutes +10 minutes Q&A), followed by breakout sessions in the groups was appropriate.

The Groups agreed to the proposed schedule which reflected their discussions in January.

If in the interim, members wished to have online meetings with their Groups Eurofound would be available to assist with their organisation.

It was decided that an Executive Board meeting should take place in July, instead of the planned Group meetings.

In light of travel restrictions, September was the earliest date that could be considered for a full Board meeting to decide on the recruitment of the Executive Director. If this was not possible, then that decision would be taken at a Board meeting in November, when it would be necessary also to adopt revised 2021 and 2022 work Programmes.

In light of the logistical challenges to organising a meeting in Dublin in the near future, it was suggested that a venue might be found in Brussels where it would be possible to observe the physical distancing measures required by Covid-19 restrictions and to which a greater number of members would be able to travel safely. With proxy voting it should be possible for a quorum to be reached and it would allow for a face-to-face meeting for the recruitment procedure.

**The Chair** asked the Executive Director to prepare a note outlining the various possibilities for Board meetings this year.

The Executive Board would meet again in July to discuss the various possibilities. At that time more information would be available about the selection procedure.

It would be necessary also to discuss the ongoing changes to the 2020 programme, including the important decisions around the working conditions survey.

11. The next meeting of the Executive Board would be on 2 and 3 July by web conference.

[A.Bulgarelli]

[J.Menéndez-Valdés]

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The Chairperson

Executive Director

**DRAFT AGENDA  
SIXTH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**via web conference**

*Thursday, 2 July, 9.30-11:00 CET  
and Friday 3 July 2020, 9.30-11.00 CET*

Item	Agenda item	Ref.no	Time	Presented by
<b>Thursday, 2 July</b>				
1.	Welcome and Draft Agenda, <i>For Adoption</i>	EB 6/1	9.30-9.35	Chair
2.	Draft Minutes of the 5 <sup>th</sup> Executive Board meeting of 28 April and 5 May 2020, <i>For Adoption</i>	EB 6/2	9.35-9.40	Chair
3.	Progress report of Executive Director, <i>For Discussion</i>	EB 6/3	9.40-10.20	Executive Director
	– <i>Progress report Projects, Publications, Events</i>			
	– <i>Updates on Covid-19 and changes to PD 2020</i>			
4.	Update on EWCS and long-term approach to surveys <i>For Discussion</i>	EB 6/4	10.20-11.00	Executive Director / Deputy Director
<b>Friday, 3 July</b>				
5.	Updated on Programming Document 2021 <i>For Discussion</i>	EB 6/5	9.30-10.15	Executive Director / Deputy Director
6.	Recruitment of Executive Director, <i>For Discussion</i>	EB 6/6	10.15-10.30	European Commission
7.	Options for Management Board September 2020, <i>For Discussion</i>	EB 6/7	10.30-11.00	Executive Director

Date and venue of **next Executive Board meeting:**  
**To be decided**

## Final Adopted Minutes of 6th Executive Board meeting (held by video conference)

2 July 9.30-11.30 & 3 July 2020 9.00-11.00 (CET)

Ms Bulgarelli	Chair of the Management Board (Governments)
Ms Kauffmann	Deputy Chair of the Management Board (European Commission)
Mr Gran	Deputy Chair of the Management Board (Workers)
Mr Tagger	European Commission
Mr Ciechański	Governments (Coordinator)
Ms Smith	Employers (Coordinator)
Ms Hoffmann	Workers (Deputy Coordinator)
Ms Roelen	European Commission
Mr Menéndez-Valdés	Executive Director
Ms Jepsen	Deputy Director
Mr Grimmeisen	Secretary to the Management Board
Ms Ahrendt	Eurofound

### 1. Adoption of draft agenda (EB 6/1) and minutes (EB 6/2)

The following amendment was proposed by the Workers' Group.

Insert new point 6.3 'It was the opinion of the Workers' Group that the Founding Regulation was clear on this point, and that the Deputy Director should act in the absence of the Executive Director.'

Clear information should be available regarding the parameters for any decision by the Management Board on the issue, in the event of a delay in the recruitment of the new Executive Director'.

**The agenda and revised minutes were adopted.**

### 2. Progress Report of the Executive Director (EB 6/3)

#### 2.1 The Executive Director informed that staff continued to telework and would do so until the end of August.

Eurofound and EU-OSHA had been invited to present the results of their work on Covid-19 to a meeting of the Employment Committee of the European Parliament. Presentations on Eurofound's research findings were made also to the Employment Committee of the EU (on indicators) and to the OECD (on measurements of trust after Covid-19).

An Ask the expert webinar had been held with Eurofound staff presenting the first findings from the Living, working and Covid-19 online survey.

He highlighted recent publications and progress in the core research areas.

Further to a request received from the European Labour Authority (ELA) Eurofound's Accounting Officer would provide accounting services to the new agency on the basis of an offer in the Agencies Network Shared Services catalogue. This was a milestone in back office cooperation between the DG Employment agencies. It would provide Eurofound with an estimated EUR 20,000 income per annum.

The European Court of Auditors report had provided full assurance on the reliability of the 2019 accounts. Two preliminary observations had been made in relation to

tenders in the facilities management area, both of which Eurofound would be able to address. Further information could be provided if requested.

In relation to the implementation of the work programme, and where previously it had been planned to recontact European Company Survey respondents regarding practices relating to climate change, it had been decided instead to start this year and ask about changes due to the pandemic. This is also considered for questions in the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS).

The Industrial Action Monitor would be discontinued, unless there were requests to the contrary from the Board. It was an interesting project and had received positive feedback in the Advisory Committee for Industrial Relations, but there had not been great support for its potential as a policy instrument at Management Board-level, and it would conclude with a full report on the experience.

There had been much interest in both the microdata from the online survey and the Covid-19 EU PolicyWatch database available on Eurofound's website.

A second wave of the online survey would field a longer questionnaire and would collect more detailed data on the working situation of respondents.

2.2 **The Chair** congratulated the Executive Director and staff on the excellent work in challenging circumstances.

2.3 **Ms Smith (Employers)** supported the changes in the work programme outlined by the Executive Director.

She said that the Group were pleased that the second wave of the survey would look more deeply into working conditions and telework, an area where BusinessEurope were also trying to gather information, so this was very helpful.

2.4 **Mr Ciechański (Governments)** said that Eurofound was to be congratulated for the Covid-19 survey initiative.

He noted that there was a need for more information on telework in the future as governments would see the need to regulate it.

2.5 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** thanked Eurofound for the way in which the work programme had been adapted to address current issues.

The Group would be interested to see an early copy of the report from the ad hoc research on the Transposition of EU labour law directives through collective agreements which would certainly be informative for the work of the trade unions in this area.

As an aside, she noted how difficult it was to follow the status of ad hoc research projects and she had discussed with Eurofound if a way might be found to bring the information together in some way that would provide that overview.

Rather than shutting down the Industrial Action Monitor the Group would favour a strategy to address the gaps it had highlighted. Data on industrial action was quite available in eighteen Member States, but not so in the remaining ones. It would be useful to collate data in those ten member states, albeit noting any methodological issues with the national data.

The Group asked Eurofound to look into the costs of continuing on that basis.

2.6 **Mr Gran (Workers)** asked that in future the stakeholders would be informed in good time of any issues in relation to the discharge procedure in the European Parliament. It had been too late for the ETUC to respond to the unfortunate statement that appeared in the recent resolution in relation to possible mergers of the agencies.

2.7 **Mr Tagger (Commission)** echoed the support for the good results and the broad media coverage achieved with the online survey.

In relation to the comments in the discharge report it was important to be aware that the EU Agencies were under constant scrutiny for any overlap of functions. The news that Accounting Officer services would be provided to the ELA was therefore

welcome. However, where Eurofound was undertaking research on work practices it was important to cooperate closely with EU-OSHA in order to avoid even the perception of overlap.

The Industrial Action Monitor was useful to the work of the Commission in the area of social dialogue, but if those financial and human resources were required elsewhere, they would not object if it were wound down.

2.8 **Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** welcomed the research included in the progress report *NEETS — Ten years after*, as youth was a big theme in the package recently adopted by the European Commission.

2.9 **The Chair** said that cooperation with the ELA in relation to the services of the Accounting Officer was a step forward. Equally, the collaboration with Cedefop on the European Company Survey should be highlighted when the results of the survey were being promoted, as it was a good example of avoiding overlaps.

It would be necessary to have a clear indication from the Executive Director of changes in the 2020 budget in order to be aware of any substantial amendments that would require prior approval by the Management Board.

It was important to respond positively to remarks in reports from the Court of Auditors and she urged Eurofound to do so and to avoid any risk of remarks from the Court in the future.

2.10 **The Executive Director** responded to some of the points.

- Telemwork was certainly a topic that would be of great interest in the coming months and a project was foreseen in the (amended) 2021 programme.
- The report on the transposition of EU labour law directives was currently being edited but he would forward an early version.
- Once agreed, the ad hoc projects entered into the normal reporting cycle. Members received a more detailed description of these projects than was usual in the programme planning. While the PD is adopted at activity level, with limited info at project level, for the ad-hoc the Executive Board receive in advance a specific note. Once approved, projects are included in the normal Advisory Committees information.
- There was no budget in 2021 for continuing the Industrial Action Monitor however he would discuss the proposal from the Workers' Group regarding the gaps with the project manager.
- The comments in the resolution of the European Parliament on a potential merger with Cedefop had come in an unexpected way from a member of one of the larger political groups in the Parliament, who was a member also of the budgetary committee and who entered the resolution there. The only chance to counter it would have been during discussions in the plenary where it was unlikely to have been taken up. He assured that Eurofound was monitoring the process and would communicate with the stakeholders where necessary. He added that the idea of a merger had been considered and ruled out already in the Commission's evaluation of the EU Agencies.
- He forewarned that amendments to the budget would include the reallocation of funds for missions from Title 1 (staff) to Title 3 (operational) that would require the approval of the Management Board.

### 3. **Update on EWCS and long-term approach to surveys (EB 6/4)**

3.1 **The Executive Director** noted how the 7EWCS fieldwork had been brought to a halt by the outbreak of Covid-19, with 10,000 completed interviews in different countries that could not be considered a representative sample.

- A number of possible face-to-face scenarios for restarting the survey had been considered. However, none of these was feasible because of the risk that a further outbreak of the disease would halt the fieldwork once again.
  - On that basis, it was considered that the only feasible option was a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interview) survey and the team had worked out a scenario with the contractors that would be completed between 8 March and 31 May 2021 and within the budgetary constraints (albeit with a limited increase for additional tasks performed after fieldwork interruption and preparation of the new proposal of ca EUR ██████ from the 2020 budget).
  - No analysis of trends over time would be possible as data collection mode and sample size would change. However, it would be possible to provide a comprehensive picture of working conditions and job quality and therefore a high degree of comparability between countries and groups of workers.
  - The contract had already been signed with the contractors, who would now proceed to preparation of a scoping report — detailing the approach to quality assurance, the sampling strategy, contract strategy, translation, piloting etc — due for completion in mid-August.
  - He requested that the Executive Board would endorse the approach. A clause in the contract allow to finish it in case of no endorsement.
- 3.2 **The Chair** noted that the restart of the 7EWCS could be linked to discussions on the future of surveys, in particular around the importance of retaining trend data and comparability between countries. Perhaps a change of mode for the EWCS this year could be considered with a return to the face-to-face mode the next time.
- Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** made the point that the final report and discussions in the steering group had dismissed telephone interviews as a future scenario for the development of surveys and she asked if that might be addressed in the discussion on the final report.
- 3.3 **The Deputy Director** agreed that there were clear links between the discussion on the restart of the 7EWCS and the future of the surveys. But on one point, which kind of mode change was the right one, it had to be said that things were at a point in time where some options proposed in the feasibility study were just not possible. This would be better explained by Ms Ahrendt's presentation.
- The scope of the longer term project was to look at future-proofing the surveys, and the feasibility study was the first activity in that project, looking at what kind of survey could be put forward, mainly considering either a combined survey or a new survey in Eurofound. The scope of the feasibility study had been enlarged somewhat to look at a more fundamental issue such as mode change and contracting. In addition, Eurofound had produced a note on the added value of Eurofound surveys and what was needed to preserve that. It established that one of the main added values of the surveys was the quality of the data.
  - Having completed that assessment, the steering group had met to discuss the report and note, and on the basis of this the contractors had now finalised the report.
  - The next step was to look at what were the recommendations, what strategic steps were required and how to manage a transition which would inevitably take place at some point in the future.
- 3.4 **Ms Ahrendt** presented the findings of the feasibility study.
- The key objective was to ensure that the quality of the surveys was maintained, and it was necessary therefore to consider what factors contributed to that quality. The length of the report and annexes indicated that the answer to that question was not a simple one.



- For the final report the contractors had been asked to further elaborate two scenarios: one where the EWCS and EQLS surveys were retained as separate surveys but gradually moved to the web, and one where the two surveys were merged but the fieldwork was carried out face-to-face.
- The cost transparencies were clearer in this final version of the report so that it was easier to understand what the contractor was trying to do when they were looking at the impact of changing the sample sizes.
- The paper prepared by Eurofound on the added value of the surveys had influenced the ability to discuss and focus on three key dimensions of the survey i.e. coverage and temporality, analytical potential, as well as the ability to capture multi-dimensional concepts such as job quality or quality of life.
- As the Executive Board were aware, an added value of Eurofound surveys was that they covered all EU Member States. Although the Eurostat and Eurobarometer surveys also did that, many of the European social surveys did not, tending instead to cover groups or a selection of European countries.
- Regarding frequency, it was true that Eurobarometer had been in existence for much longer and that Eurostat surveys were done every year whilst Eurofound's surveys were only every five years. However, many surveys were built on core sections and the core sections might be asked every year but not the modules, so in comparison Eurofound surveys performed well.
- It was in the potential for calculating comparable 'point estimates' (single values given as an estimate of a parameter of a population) and in particular the analytical potential of the surveys, that Eurofound surveys provided added value. Thinking about point estimates, if you wanted to look at a single item then because of the larger sample size the Eurostat survey was always more accurate, but in terms of trying to understand interrelationships and complexities, hence analytical potential, both the EWCS and the EQLS were important tools.
- Another important element of the added value of Eurofound surveys was comparability.
- In her presentation, she would expand on three of the scenarios outlined in the study: retaining mainly the EWCS as a face-to-face survey; retaining both surveys as push-to-web; and the establishment of a panel.
- She noted however that there were pros and cons to each of the scenarios. It was clear, however, that the status quo regarding the surveys was becoming unfeasible due to the difficulty in finding contractors willing to do face-to-face in all countries.
- (I) Retaining mainly the EWCS as a face-to-face survey would mean losing all the value of the EQLS and was also not future proof as eventually the problems of conducting face-to-face interviews would be a factor. Additionally, an already long questionnaire would need to be extended in order to investigate other areas, so that possibly areas that had been studied to date would have to be dropped.
- (II) The push-to-web scenario was interesting in that by introducing the use of modularisation the issue of questionnaire duration would be mitigated, calculating the 'point estimates' on sub-sections of a questionnaire. In terms of analytical potential, you lost a bit when using modularisation, but there were methods to cope with that. The issue with this scenario was that in certain countries it was simply not feasible and would not capture all subgroups, for example the elderly who for various reasons might not be digitally skilled. This answered in some way why CATI had been selected for the EWCS restart.

It was important to be reminded that this whole exercise was about a long-term strategy for the surveys, about looking to future options and making sure that

during the next ten years Eurofound would start parallel testing various options and looking at the implications of shifting mode.

- (III) The panel scenario was the most ambitious and would allow Eurofound to retain most if not all of the added value and not to lose information. It would involve re-contacting respondents with parts of the questionnaire. It would start with a face-to-face survey and then mostly follow up with web. It had great potential but also risk, requiring a lot of initial investment in capacity by Eurofound. However, it might also be an opportunity to seek collaboration with other agencies, perhaps to use in-house skills to provide a service to other agencies, who could field their questions on Eurofound's panel.
- It was true that comparability of results over time was jeopardised when changes were made to the survey design, however it was felt that this could be managed. If in parallel with a new mode, questions were being collected in the old mode among a sample of the target respondents, then the trend break would be shortened and very soon new trend data would emerge. The question therefore was how much value was attached to relatively old trend data.
- Should the Management Board decide on one of the scenarios then it was anticipated that the next steps would be testing to ensure that the impact of changes were known and where possible mitigated. The survey questionnaires should be revisited to match the survey design and a change management process should be developed, aligned with Eurofound's quality assurance framework.

It was agreed to take some questions at this point, but to have the main discussion on the following day.

- 3.5 **Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** asked about the re-starting of the 7EWCS. Would it be possible to review the questionnaire already in July and would there be a role for the Executive Board in that process?

Was there a possibility to use data from the completed questionnaires from March?

On the future of surveys, she thanked Eurofound for the paper on the added value of the surveys which would indeed be the key issue were the two surveys to be combined. In such a case the EWCS should have the highest value weighting.

Regarding the panel which seemed to be the most favoured solution, how would the legal challenges of personal data being transferred to Eurofound be dealt with, and what about the extra capacity that would be required to manage the panel, and the impact of that on negative priorities in the work programme? What would be the impact in terms of output and data quality also? If people dropped out of the panel, would the sample size be sufficient?

- 3.6 **Mr Ciechański (Governments)** also had questions about how the panel would function.

In light of the Covid-19 situation it seemed that comparability had already been lost, which might also help in some of the decisions to be taken.

The range of options would have to be narrowed down somewhat in order to allow the Management Board to come to a decision.

- 3.7 **The Chair** agreed that it would be necessary to go to the Management Board possibly with a favoured option and just one other option, as anything more would most probably delay any decision.

- 3.8 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** said that she understood that the Executive Board were preparing discussions for the Management Board and therefore no decision was required at this stage.

- The risk of the panel was that in the end it only spoke to motivated people and would in no way reflect the unmotivated, so questions could be raised about the



potential medium and long-term representativeness of this panel. This should be highlighted as one of the risks of this option.

- The Group had doubts about the appropriateness of CATI for the reuptake of the 7EWCS for all the reasons mentioned in the report, in which it was basically dismissed as an option.
- She agreed that it was useful to be thinking about this as a long-term transition, with parallel data collection modes for a period. In this scenario would it be possible to postpone the EWCS and to carry out a simultaneous face-to-face and web collection in March 2022, so to delay and basically redesign the survey?
- In light of the Covid-19 disruption were there possibilities for flexibility in the financial regulation, she asked.

3.9 **Ms Smith (Employers)** said that the Group did not have strong feelings in any particular direction on the issue and made the following comments.

- Regarding the 7EWCS she did not want to put the agency in any difficulties if the contract had already been signed. She understood that phone interviews were a temporary solution for the problem. She also knew that moving monies from a project was not easily done.
- The most important issue was to understand what would be lost and gained from a changed mode and in this regard it could be said that the Group valued the data from the EWCS more than data from the EQLS, much of which was available elsewhere.
- It was true to say that any survey undertaken during a time of Covid-19 would skew the results in terms of comparability.
- She had similar questions about how the panel might work.
- She agreed that it would be necessary to present clear options to the Management Board for decision.

3.10 **The Chair** added that she would like to know if it would be possible, as suggested, to move the 7EWCS to a CAWI survey in 2022 and if so, what would be the additional costs.

The experience gained from the follow-up questionnaires in the European Company Survey would be of interest for considerations in relation to the option to have a panel survey.

3.11 **The Executive Director** responded that postponing the 7EWCS would have meant not using the money in the contract, but it was not the only reason for making the decision to continue with a CATI survey. CAWI was carefully considered but discarded as would have many more problems in the short term (e.g. sampling frame, length of questionnaire, digital gap...).

The meeting concluded with discussion on the surveys to be resumed on the following day

#### **4. Update on EWCS and long-term approach to surveys (EB 6/4)– continuation of discussions from day 1**

4.1 **The Chair** noted a number of open questions from the previous day's meeting in relation to the restart of the 7EWCS and the future of surveys.

4.2 **The Executive Director** said that Eurofound's staff and contractors were experts in survey methodology and it was important that the members felt that they were provided with the information they needed in order to make a decision.

- In response to the suggestion to interrupt the restart of the 7EWCS he explained that the decision to proceed with a CATI survey in 2021 was the outcome of lengthy discussions with the contractors and consideration of numerous options. It secured the best option in terms of achieving what was arguably the key

deliverable of Eurofound's work programme, and secured the money already invested in the project.

- He clarified that the revisions to the questionnaire were mainly technical ones (e.g. adjusting the questionnaire when it was not possible to use show cards) and would not need to be discussed in the Executive Board, but quick check could be explored.
- With regard to the general opinion of the members that, with regard to the longer term strategy, it would be preferable for one option with perhaps one alternative to be presented for decision in the Management Board, he was happy to state that his own preference lay with the panel option. It was ambitious and it needed to be further elaborated, but the expert advice was that it was feasible while Eurofound would not have all the answers at this stage.
- It was however necessary to prepare the discussion well in order to allow the Management Board to reach a decision.

4.3 **The Chair** thanked the Executive Director for his introduction. She had thought much on the topic, in particular as she was involved in similar discussions in relation to surveys both at the OECD and at national level.

- Regarding the restart of the 7EWCS it was, she said, an opportunity to have a one-off survey with a representative sample. The online Covid-19 survey had been excellent, but it was a non-probability survey, whereas the CATI survey would be a probability survey and would provide data that was comparable across the Member States. Although it was true that the trend data would be lost, it was unavoidable in the circumstance. Therefore, for budgetary and for analytical reasons it could go ahead as proposed.
- As for the future debate, there were three concerns, evident also in the minutes of the steering group, namely the comparability between countries and over time, the quality of the data, and the retention of the added value of the surveys.
- Something of which there had not been much discussion to date, but that was of equal importance for Eurofound, was the need to have a sense of ambition to put the organisation in a place where it could evolve and be creative.

4.4 **Mr Grimmeisen** informed that cancelling the 7EWCS would also impact on Norway and Switzerland who had contributed to the survey and who would also lose the funds they had committed.

4.5 **The Deputy Director** said that the 7EWCS and discussions on the future of the surveys were intimately linked and had therefore been brought together in the agenda.

It was clear that it was necessary to move forward in some way in order to future-proof the surveys. The discussion therefore was around the best way to manage that transition, the changes that would be required and the choices to be made.

The decision on the CATI survey was an immediate one and the decision on the surveys a long-term one.

It was important that some of the questions on technicalities and methodologies raised during the previous meeting would be addressed today.

4.6 **Ms Ahrendt** said that she would try to address some of the questions around the methodological issues.

- Though CATI was not considered the way forward for the surveys, what would be obtained by using it at this point for the 7EWCS was an opportunity to compare modes, as it was planned to revisit the face-to-face interviews (there were approximately 10,000 a proportion of which had consented to be re-contacted). The proposal was to re-contact these persons via the web, thus allowing already

a comparison of the face-to-face and web mode effects, whilst also taking into account CATI not as a way forward, but in order to understand the impact and role of mode effects.

- The core discussion in relation to the feasibility study was that of changing mode, of moving to the web and then of how to design that, i.e. to either keep the surveys separate and transition them to the web separately, or to combine them in a single survey instrument, or to use a panel which would allow Eurofound to use modularisation.
- One impact of Covid-19 that could be imagined was that people would be less willing to let people into their homes for face-to-face surveys. Coupled with the unwillingness of companies to invest in face-to-face interviews because of the costs, it was looking more and more difficult.
- Internet penetration was still not at a sufficient level to allow web mode, and also the sampling frames (the source material from which the sample was drawn) were not adequate in all countries. Ideally you needed a sample frame of individuals or named individuals to whom you could send a letter in advance with a link to a web questionnaire.
- Currently it could only be foreseen to do web interviewing in Estonia, Sweden and Finland. Discussions were in hand within the EU Agencies and the EU ANSA research network to improve the situation on data collection. The approach therefore required some patience and time.
- There was also a risk of bias, where sectors of the population might have less access to the internet, and it was necessary to do split run experiments to see what the mode effects were and to mitigate some of the transition steps in order to maintain comparability.
- Regarding the panel, she noted that she personally felt that this was the way forward for Eurofound and the view was shared by the Surveys Management Development team. It was also possible to learn from the experiences of two longitudinal surveys SHARE (Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe) and Generations and Gender, both surveys that were input harmonised (i.e. strict protocols applied in a multi-national context).
- More knowledge was required in relation to the required sample size. The feasibility study included a mimic in the sense that it estimated that with a given budget it could achieve a sample of twelve hundred respondents. What was useful was that they also showed the degree to which money should go to panel maintenance i.e. to refresh the sample and the cost for follow-up with respondents in subsequent waves. But it was clear that an in-depth feasibility of this option was required.
- The question as to whether it would be an EU panel or a panel of 27 countries would have to be decided after more exploration. Work that would be required in the feasibility study would be to see how to manage the procurement process for the panel (i.e. through national agencies or directly). To establish a panel would first require a probability random sample through face-to-face interviewing. The first contact would be a general population i.e. not only workers, but it should have as many workers as the EWCS currently. The details including the costs would be investigated in a further feasibility study.
- Regarding the timeline, the original EQLS was planned for 2022/23 and in terms of content the panel scenario could be used to cover both EQLS and EWCS questions, testing both areas during this time.
- It should be stated that a merged survey could solve some of the problems by allowing for a study of the two areas of interest in Eurofound's work programme, and she highlighted a point made on page 56 of the feasibility study that this

scenario would probably collect nineteen hundred interviews per country. It was known that especially because of Covid-19 it was just as important to look at quality of life and the implications for people's health and economic situation.

- 4.7 The **Chair** wondered why it was not proposed to test a panel in 2022/23 which would still involve a face-to-face survey initially. She recalled that the idea of a merged survey had not been favoured by any of the Groups.  
She opened the floor for comments.
- 4.8 **Mr Gran (Workers)** asked if it had been confirmed with the Commission that the monies could not be carried over.  
In relation to the panel he said that although the feasibility study stated the opportunities of a panel it also stated very clearly the high risks, especially when it came to budget and staff costs.  
In his opinion it was the option with the greatest risk.
- 4.9 **Mr Grimmeisen** said that to date EUR [REDACTED] had been spent on the 7EWCS survey with a further EUR [REDACTED] in the 2020 budget.  
It had been confirmed that it would not be possible to carry over that money.
- 4.10 **Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** said that the panel scenario was more costly and in the absence of more information about the cost implications and the likely deliverables from a panel survey, the Commission were looking more favourably at the proposal for a merged survey.  
She also said that to drop the survey on living conditions (EQLS) was not in keeping with Eurofound's remit which would favour a merged survey with an emphasis on working conditions.
- 4.11 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** made the following comments.
- It was clear that if the monies were not used now they would be lost, which spoke in favour of a one-off CATI survey. The issue was that the feasibility study ruled out a CATI survey and so Eurofound had made a commitment to a contractor that was not in line with the findings of its own experts. This was how it appeared to the Workers' Group and this was why they had asked the question. The requirement to spend the money this year, and the need therefore to move forward with a CATI survey should have been made clear from the start.
  - Representatives of the Workers' Group in the steering group had not been convinced by the idea of the panel and they felt that their questions and concerns had not been answered satisfactorily. It was the case that even the feasibility study raised concerns about the panel. These were the questions that needed to be followed up.
  - The basic position of the Workers' Group was that they were in favour of scenario 3a (combined, face-to-face survey of working population, EWCS with limited EQLS questions) or 4a (combined, face-to-face, drop off EQLS questionnaire or push to web).
  - However, they saw a very important role for parallel collection and to continue face-to-face for as long as possible, introducing the web-based element over time, and including the most important EQLS questions. This was the baseline from the Workers' perspective as it was felt that it best addressed the questions and the risks for the future. They were not against a transition and echoed the words of the Deputy Director that it was about managing the transition.
  - It was clear that 2022/2023 would be an opportunity to test and manage the transition of the EQLS as part of the EWCS.

- As the Group had suggested, it might also have been an opportunity to rescue the current wave of the EWCS that had already been started.
- 4.12 **Ms Smith (Employers)** said that the Employers, and their members on the steering group did not have strong feelings in relation to the future of the surveys.
- She accepted the reasons provided for moving forward with a CATI survey now and said this was not for further discussion.
  - The Group had always estimated the added value of merging the EWCS and the EQLS to be the ability to ask questions that dealt with quality of life and working conditions together.
  - She was not opposed to the idea of a panel but could see the risks attached to it. However, if the risk could be managed then she was not against an ambitious approach. It did raise questions though, as it seemed to involve a face-to-face approach first followed by a push to web, both of which would incur problems as outlined at length in the report.
  - She needed to comprehend why it was so interesting. This would certainly help the understanding in the Group. She would discuss in more depth with her colleagues in the steering group.
- 4.13 **Mr Ciechański (Governments)** said that it was clear that the CATI survey should now go ahead and as suggested it would be a valuable learning opportunity to test those CATI approaches and to have more information.
- It seemed that a consensus of doubt was developing with regards to the panel approach. Although it had been put to the members as a promising opportunity there were still reasonable doubts.
  - It was not clear in what ways this was actually better and in what ways it would save money and make both surveys future-proof, given all the risks that were involved, such as the question of capacity, and the learning curve for staff. And he echoed the questions raised by Ms Smith as to why it was better when it involved face-to-face interviews, and later on the web. The authors of the report also warned of the dangers of bias of self-selection. And those who managed the panel would develop some kind of link with the members of the panel which would also affect the bias.
  - Governments' Group representatives in the steering group still favoured the retention of both surveys. They felt that the EQLS, as confirmed by Ms Ahrendt, in terms of coverage and comparability was unique, and would be reluctant to see the outcome of this exercise to be that the EQLS would be effectively or actually ended. He had called for exploration of the panel idea on the basis that it would allow the retention of both.
  - Members of the steering group cautioned that Covid-19 might be used as an opportunity to drop face-to-face altogether, whereas it was hoped that there would be an opportunity to return to that in the future.
  - At some point, Eurofound should provide a plan for how they would test the various options.
- 4.14 **The Deputy Director** noted that the EWCS was clearly very important and a key survey for Eurofound but similarly there was little support to drop the EQLS. She was personally excited by the panel option, but she would not ask the team to explore it more deeply if there was no support for the idea and no perceived understanding of a benefit attached to it.
- 4.15 **The Executive Director** made the following comments.
- The EWCS would continue (restart) also because it would be important to have data on job quality in these unprecedented times.



- At some point, the Board would have to come to a decision about whether the EQLS could be dropped or incorporated into the EWCS.
  - If the panel option was chosen, it would be necessary to be ready in 2023 to have a face-to-face survey for an EQLS that would establish a panel also for the EWCS later, therefore requiring more interviews. So why not, in that case, use the opportunity to pilot test a merger of the surveys, perhaps an EQLS with some EWCS questions. If successful, it could be repeated for the EWCS later.
  - A lot of the questions about the panel option would not be answered in a further feasibility study but only in a pilot.
  - It might be necessary to look for partnerships with other agencies such as FRA or EIGE, and he cautioned that the organisation should be ready for that (something that was also a recommendation in the cross-agency evaluation).
- 4.16 **Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** said that it would be better to have answers in writing to the questions raised by the Executive Board members before any further discussions.
- 4.17 **The Chair thanked Ms Ahrendt for her presentation and summarised the next steps.**
- **A further meeting of the Executive Board in August would discuss the surveys and prepare a limited number of options for presentation at a meeting of the Management Board.**
  - **A document detailing the answers to the questions raised by the Executive Board should be circulated beforehand.**
- 5. Updates to 2021 Programming Document (EB 6/5)**
- 5.1 **The Executive Director** introduced the item.
- The draft 2021 Programming Document had been adopted by the Management Board in November 2019 and sent to the Commission in January 2020 with the updated figures.
  - Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it had been necessary to update the programme, with spill-over projects from 2020 as well as new research launched to reflect the situation.
  - In a number of slides, he presented a list of projects that had been reshaped or adapted and some that had been dropped.
  - A new project on telework in Europe would comprise a comparison of developments and approaches in the Member States and would be published in 2022.
  - Preparatory work for the analysis of the 2021 EWCS-CATI to replace the planned overview report EWCS 2020, was also included.
- 5.2 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** asked whether the conference planned in August 2020 as part of the joint project with IZA and Cedefop in relation to the Edited journal on workplace practices in Europe would go ahead.
- The **Deputy Director** confirmed that the publication cycle was delayed, due to changes in the European Company Survey promotion and release schedule, but the conference would go ahead as planned (remotely). Any previous agreements to use the data from the European Company Survey in October would still be honoured.
- 5.3 **Mr Ciechański (Governments)** said that in order to approve the changes the Management Board members would need more explanation on the justification for dropping some projects.
- For example, why was a project on Intergenerational transmission of disadvantage dropped when it seemed that social mobility remained an important issue despite Covid-19?

And what was the justification for the new project on the socioeconomic impact of a transition to a low carbon economy when there was already a report on this area. Was it because it was a joint project with the European Environment Agency?

More information was required, in order to approve the changes.

- 5.4 **Ms Smith (Employers)** noted that the Group would prefer to retain the research on human/machine interaction and working conditions and to drop the research on platform work, which had been widely covered already by Eurofound, and elsewhere by DG Employment and DG Competition.

Perhaps there was a possibility for cooperation with EU-OSHA as a lot of the issues around human machine interaction concerned Health and Safety? It was a pity to drop this research in favour of platform work where the field was a bit saturated at this point.

- 5.5 **Mr Tagger (Commission)** agreed that some of the activities touched on areas of Health and Safety so he encouraged Eurofound to cooperate as much as possible with EU-OSHA. It was important to avoid any overlap in the research programmes of both agencies.

Of great importance to the Commission was the research on preparation of an analysis of self-employment based on EWCS data and policies. It was not clear if this research was to be dropped or postponed.

- 5.6 **The Executive Director** responded to the questions.

- Platform work was retained because it was felt that this would be the area in which there would most likely be debate in the near future. Eurofound was in close contact with the European Commission in order to avoid any overlap with their own work in that field. The research on human/machine interaction could be deferred for future years.
- In response to Mr Ciechański and Mr Tagger, he said that it was felt that many of the postponed projects could be recovered in 2022 (the project on the self-employed would even benefit from the delay in that the CATI survey would have more questions on the self-employed). Where projects were dropped, such as the Global Comparisons report with the ILO, it was because the data would simply not be available (due to the disruptions to the EWCS survey).
- He noted that it was important that the Commission would send their amendments to the draft 2021 programme (sent to them in January) as soon as possible in order to incorporate these changes.
- There would be an opportunity for discussion in the Executive Board in September before approval in November.

- 5.7 **The Deputy Director** encouraged the members to send any requests for changes as soon as possible as the changes would be incorporated in the document in July.

She explained that there were ongoing discussions with the European Environment Agency about possible collaboration, and the social and economic impacts of the transition to a low carbon economy was considered to have potential. It was hoped to have a more concrete proposal in September.

In the ad hoc report Eurofound were investigating what the discussions and policy measures were around the issue. The objective of this project was more concrete and concerned measuring outputs.

- 5.8 **The Chair** once again commended Eurofound for their work and their timely response to the challenges.

- **It was important that the reasons for amendments, or dropping projects was available to Board members who would be adopting the changes.**

- **She asked the Groups to forward their comments to Eurofound as soon as possible so that the changes could be incorporated and circulated to the members in line with the proposed schedule.**
- 6. Recruitment of the Executive Director (EB 6/6)**
- 6.1 **Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** informed that the process was delayed and that it would not now be possible to submit the shortlist to the Board before the end of September, as previously planned.
- 6.2 **The Executive Director** informed that Eurofound had received legal advice from the European Commission and its own legal officer that the informal meeting between the shortlisted candidates and the Executive Board should not take place. He agreed to forward the legal advice to the Executive Board members.
- 6.3 **The Chair summarised the discussions on this item:**
- **She understood that the legal advice was that there might be risks, but still felt that it was important for the Executive Board to have a role there.**
  - **The Executive Board should reflect on the legal advice in order to decide how to proceed with the recruitment procedure.**
  - **It was agreed that the Board meeting would not go ahead in September as planned (as the shortlist of candidates would not be available).**
  - **The Board meeting would take place in November and would include in the order of business the recruitment of the Executive Director, the adoption of the 2021 and 2022 programming documents and a decision on the future of the surveys.**
  - **The Executive Board would meet (remotely) on the date previously reserved for the Management Board meeting on the 18 September.**
  - **They would meet before that (in August) to discuss the future of the surveys.**
  - **The members did not see the need for Group meetings although Eurofound could facilitate such meetings, if requested.**
7. The date of the next meeting of the Executive Board would be Friday, 18 September 2020

[A. Bulgarelli]  
Chairperson

[J. Menéndez-Valdés]  
Executive Director



**DRAFT AGENDA**  
**7<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF EUROFOUND**  
*Online via MS Teams*  
*Friday, 18 September 2020, 9h00-11h30 and 15h00-17h00*

<b>Item</b>	<b>Agenda item</b>	<b>Ref no.</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Presenting</b>
1.	Draft Agenda, <i>For Adoption</i>	<i>EB 7/1</i>	9.00-9.05	<i>Chair</i>
2.	Draft Minutes of the 6 <sup>th</sup> Executive Board Meeting of 2/3 July 2020, <i>For Adoption</i>	<i>EB 7/2</i>	9.05-9.10	<i>Chair</i>
3.	Progress Report of the Director, <i>For Information</i>  - Projects Publications & Events	<i>EB 7/3</i>	9.10-9.40	<i>Executive Director</i>
4.	Preparation for a decision on next steps in relation to surveys <i>For Discussion</i>	<i>EB 7/4</i>	9.40-10.25	<i>Deputy Director</i>
5.	Programming Document 2021– final draft, <i>For Discussion</i>  =====end of part 1=====	<i>EB 7/5</i>	10.25-11.30	<i>Executive. and Deputy Director</i>
6.	Programming Document 2022 Draft 2, <i>For Discussion</i>	<i>EB 7/6</i>	15.00-15.30	<i>Executive. and Deputy Director</i>
7.	Recruitment of the Executive Director (ED), <i>For Information</i>	<i>EB 7/7</i>	15.30-15.40	<i>European Commission</i>
8.	Procedure for selection of Executive Director by Management Board, <i>For Discussion</i>	<i>EB 7/8</i>	15.40-16.00	<i>Secretary to the Board</i>
9.	Update from the Committee on Staff matters, <i>For Information</i>	<i>EB 7/9</i>	16.00-16.10	<i>Chair of Committee</i>
10.	Dates of Board and Executive Board meetings in 2021, <i>For Discussion</i>	<i>EB 7/10</i>	16:10-16:20	<i>Executive Director</i>
11.	Schedule of November Board and Group meetings 5-6 November 2020, <i>For Discussion</i>	<i>EB 7/11</i>	16.20-16.40	<i>Executive Director</i>
12.	AOB		16.40-16.45	

Date and venue of **next Executive Board meeting**:

**15 January 2021**, 9.30-13.00 (tbc); Eurofound’s Brussels Liaison Office, room 6, Conseil Central de l’Économie, 20 avenue d’Auderghem, Brussels (tbc)

**FINAL ADOPTED MINUTES**  
**7<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF EUROFOUND**  
**Friday 18 September 2020, 10.00-12.00/15.00-17.00 CET**  
**(remotely via MS Teams)**

Ms Bulgarelli	Chair of the Management Board (Governments)
Mr Gran	Deputy Chair of the Management Board (Workers)
Ms Kauffmann	Deputy Chair of the Management Board (European Commission)
Mr Ciechański	Coordinator Governments
Ms Smith	Coordinator Employers
Ms Lynch	Coordinator Workers
Ms Hoffmann	Deputy Coordinator Workers
Mr Tagger	European Commission
Ms Roelen	European Commission
Mr Menéndez-Valdés	Executive Director Eurofound
Ms Jepsen	Deputy Director Eurofound
Mr Grimmeisen	Eurofound
Ms Ahrendt	Eurofound
Mr van Houten	Eurofound

**1. Adoption of Draft agenda (EB 7/1 – For decision)**

The draft agenda was adopted.

**2. Minutes of Executive Board meeting 2 and 3 July 2020 (EB 7/2 – For decision)**

The minutes were approved with minor changes from the Chair to her interventions at 3.8 and 4.3.

The Chair noted that she had requested that the minutes of the ad hoc Executive Board meeting on 26 August be made available for this meeting. They would be formally adopted later by a written procedure.

**3. Progress report of the Executive Director (EB 7/3 – For information)**

3.1 The **Executive Director** updated the Executive Board on the latest activities in the agency.

- Eurofound were following the guidelines of the Irish government in relation to the workplace, with the default position that teleworking was still the norm and staff were encouraged to work from home, although it was possible to come to the office and indeed a small number of staff were doing so.
- Events were taking place virtually and Eurofound had hosted a joint event on *Workplace and Management* with Cedefop and IZA on 20 August.
- The updated questionnaire on the CATI *European Working Conditions Survey*, which would take place between March and May 2021, had been provided to the Advisory Committee for a quick consultation.  
Using the OECD framework, the job quality indicators had been retained, but with a reduction in the number of questions per indicator.
- A flagship report on *Working conditions and sustainable work*, a summary of work done over a number of years, would be published in January 2021.

- The *COVID-19 EU policy watch database* with six hundred measures taken by governments since the outbreak, had been updated with information on initiatives by the social partners and collective agreements, and would be online in October.
  - He highlighted a joint publication (a Staff Working Paper) with the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission on 'teleworkability' where estimations had been done on how many jobs in Europe were 'teleworkable'.
  - The overview report of the European Company Survey (ECS) would be launched virtually in October.
  - In collaboration with Cedefop, an online follow-up survey on the impact of COVID-19 on workplace practices would be carried out in November with those ECS respondents that had agreed to be re-contacted. It would provide an opportunity to draw lessons on panel management and data analysis.
  - Delivery of the work programme was on course regardless of the disruption.
  - New staff continued to join the organisation, and despite the restrictions they still wanted to join and meet their colleagues.
- 3.2 **The Chair** thanked the Executive Director and the staff for providing such continuity. She noted that there were still some funds available for ad hoc requests and urged the colleagues to come forward with any proposals.
- 3.3 **Mr Gran (Workers)** said that he had not been able to find the report on the right to disconnect by searching on Eurofound's website. Eurofound should consider how they linked to reports on the website.
- 3.4 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** asked for clarification on the project on the involvement of the social partners in policymaking in the context of COVID-19. She repeated her point from the July meeting that the status of the ad hoc research proposals was not transparent.
- In particular, the Group had recently been alerted that a draft report on the costs of gender pay transparency had been sent to the Advisory Committee without being copied to the coordinators, as was the policy. When she had raised the reason for this omission with the research managers responsible the reply had been that working papers were not subject to a formal evaluation procedure (and hence copied to the coordinators) although in future they could be.
- This raised a similar issue to the one raised previously in relation to the report on minimum wage, namely how the Groups could better see and accompany the ongoing research. It was a topic that would be considered by the Workers' Group during their meeting in November.
- 3.5 **Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** welcomed that the representativeness studies on paper and sea fisheries had been published.
- It was welcome that the updated 7<sup>th</sup> EWCS CATI questionnaire had now been provided to the Advisory Committee, but she regretted that the timing with the Executive Board meeting was too short to allow for proper consultation within the Groups. Whilst the questionnaire had not been made available at the Advisory Committee meeting, it had been provided subsequently which was, she felt, the right way to consult, allowing the members to look at what questions were there now, with a view to perspectives on the survey in the future.
- The follow-up survey in collaboration with Cedefop was also very good, however it was not clear how this was linked to the two waves of the recent e-survey (Living, Working and COVID-19).
- She also had a question in relation to the budget execution in Title 2 (administration) and Title 3 (operational) and to the situation regarding carryovers at the end of the year.

- 3.6 **Ms Lynch (Workers)** asked that in relation to the representativeness studies Eurofound might operationalise the data protection procedures required to pass contact information to the network of Eurofound correspondents who were carrying out the research in order to streamline the procedure.
- 3.7 **The Executive Director** responded to some of the points.
- Following exchanges with the European Commission, Eurofound would be implementing a pilot project on minimum wage which had been requested by the European Parliament. As with the recent FOME (Future of Manufacturing in Europe) project, it would be separate from the main work programme.
  - He confirmed that it was the procedure that documents sent to the Advisory Committees were also sent to the coordinators. The report in question was a working paper that was not subject to evaluation and hence not copied to the coordinators. It was not realistic that all reports would be evaluated in light of the volume that were produced.
  - Any reductions in the EWCS questionnaire had been carefully considered by the researchers, who had decided that the best way to do this was to use the OECD criteria that still allowed for national comparisons. He said that feedback on the questionnaire was possible and welcome, but that it should be provided quickly in order to meet what were tight deadlines.
  - The ECS online survey was not linked in any way with the COVID-19 survey, although the same platform would be used for data collection. The ECS was already a push-to-web survey, so someone would call or email and then send the questionnaire. Those who had agreed to be re-contacted would be contacted now with a question in relation to workplace practices rather than the transition to a low carbon economy, as had originally been planned.
  - He understood that it was sometimes difficult to find publications on the website for example where they were working papers which were not formal publications. The website was large, and efforts were ongoing to improve this.
- 3.8 **The Deputy Director** said that the project on the semester was in two parts, on COVID-19 measures and on national reform plans. Regarding COVID-19, it seemed that the situation was developing so fast that the way the governments were engaging with the social partners was changing over time. In the beginning, when the project first started, consultation was not very good, but it seemed it was improving.
- 3.9 **Mr Grimmeisen** said that the level of carryovers in the budget would necessarily be very high.
- 3.10 **Mr Gran (Workers)** in relation to the difficulties with the website said that what he expected from a research institute was that every document could be found easily, that there would be a good library or document register on the home page where the institute's publications could be found. He urged Eurofound to rethink how documents were placed on the homepage of the website. It should be possible to find a document using a title word search. If it was not possible after a while, a user would simply leave the website.
- 3.10 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** asked the Executive Director to consider how it might be possible for the Groups to register their interest in a project in order to receive all the information that was generated on the topic.
- 3.11 **Ms Lynch (Workers)** added that the Group's concern was due to a recent experience whereby an incorrect statement in relation to a position of the Trade Unions had appeared in a policy brief on minimum wage. This in her opinion was indicative of a system failure and something that should not happen again.

- 3.12 **The Chair** thanked the Executive Director for the information in his progress report. She was pleased that there was agreement that the pilot project on minimum wage would now go ahead.

Although no conclusion would be found today, it was important to reflect on how information could be provided to the Groups on documents that were considered policy relevant. Such reflection might touch also on the role of the Network of Eurofound Correspondents in the generation of research.

#### 4. **Preparation for a decision on next steps in relation to surveys (EB 7/4 – for discussion)**

- 4.1 **The Chair said** that the aim of the discussion was to develop some options to be considered by the Board in November.

- 4.2 **The Deputy Director** said that Eurofound now proposed three mid-term scenarios based on discussions to date in the Executive Board and the Steering Group.

- It was clear that Eurofound was enthusiastic about the panel option which it was believed would solve the bigger problems presented by moving from face-to-face surveys.
- It seemed that there was a common agreement that in the long term a transition to web would be necessary and all the proposals involved such a change.
- The first scenario was to transition the EWCS and EQLS as two separate surveys to web-based surveys, starting with the EQLS in 2023.
- The second scenario included two options that tested the transition to web but simultaneously tested a panel scenario. Scenario 2a focused on managing trend breaks only for the EQLS and scenario 2b on managing them for both EQLS and EWCS. All assumed a budget of ████████ EUR.
- A decision in November was required in order to allow for testing to commence even though the transition might be only in 2028. Along with testing the scenarios, Eurofound would also be testing different ways of procurement, whether for example other EU agencies would be interested in joining forces in some way.
- She reiterated that the Steering Group would follow all the developments.
- She went through a number of slides detailing the various stages of each scenario on a year by year basis up to 2028.

- 4.2 **The Chair said** that she thought that the three proposals could be sent forward to the Board in their current format

It appeared that scenario 2b was the one that most accorded with the wishes expressed by the Groups to retain the EWCS. This solution, with the panel allowed for face-to-face EWCS and EQLS and in the meantime, proper testing of the panel.

- 4.3 **Mr Ciechański (Governments) said** that the Governments felt that the EQLS was important and felt strongly that it should not fall victim to this reform.

An issue for the Group was that the colleagues in the Steering Group were not convinced by the proposals and would prefer the retention of the status quo.

The matter was complex, and the proposals were confusing, with much use of jargon in the documents that would not be understood by most of the Board members.

If, as it seemed, the Commission supported the option to simply push the surveys in their current form online, then why not go for that solution, particularly if it could be validated that not much data would be lost in this approach. It was a simple solution and sometimes the simple solutions were the best.

- 4.4 **Ms Smith (Employers)** thanked Eurofound for the papers provided which had clarified a number of areas, however she agreed with the colleagues that much of

the discussion was unintelligible to non-experts and said that the language used would have to be clearer.

In providing options to the Board members it would be necessary to provide the costs, benefits and disadvantages of the approaches. The implications of each scenario in terms of costs and how it would fit into the overall surveys budget was important information.

The proposals to the Board should be presented openly. She had the feeling that discussions were overly focused and overly positive on the panel. There was too much focus in the scenarios on testing the panel.

The possibility of combining the surveys in such a way as to look at the impact of working conditions on quality of life, a previous suggestion that had been of interest to the Employers' Group, did not seem to emerge from these scenarios.

- 4.5 **Mr Tagger (Commission)** agreed that this was a highly technical and complex matter, but one with a number of consequences. It should be remembered that the expenditure on surveys constituted a sizeable portion of the Title 3 budget and it would therefore be good to narrow down the options.

He agreed with the conclusion of the Chair that all were more or less in accord with the need to move the surveys online, but this should be done with the consideration that certain survey populations should not be lost.

Therefore, the next phase should be a move to a web-based survey with face-to-face as the default. In the medium term the objective should be to switch that to web based as default with face-to-face for those who could not be included in that mode.

The Commission had always been clear that a move to a combined survey on living conditions and working conditions with a focus on the EWCS was in line with the mandate of Eurofound. If the surveys were merged and the population was composed simply of adults then there would have to be a sufficient representation of workers in the sample, which would of course be a technical challenge.

In the opinion of the Commission, cross-sectoral data collection should remain the reference point.

It was clear that there was enthusiasm within Eurofound for a panel, which was understandable from a researcher's point of view, but the Executive Board had to base its decision on the facts that were available and at the moment the facts for the panel were not fully convincing. It was clear that panels existed, such as for example the German socio-economic panel, but it was true that panels worked differently at national level, in particular in having a greater sample size. With only a limited attrition the sample size of 1800 identified by the contractors in the feasibility report was already quite risky. Eurofound had said that a sample of 2300 would be possible, but it was still not clear how this would be established.

So instead of now prioritising a panel, which would require substantial resources and was the most expensive scenario, the Commission would prefer Eurofound to focus on a push-to-web scenario and a merger of the surveys and to be assured of a good sample size for that merger.

Rather than the options presented, the Commission would suggest using the EQLS which had a target adult population to start introducing the web, with the default face-to-face mode and adding some EWCS questions, and then to evaluate that, still within the Executive Board.

In the next wave in 2027, it could be evaluated whether to roll out the EWCS further to the web and add some EQLS questions and then aim in 2029 for example for a merged survey. Other scenarios were feasible, such as fielding the ECS in 2029 and having the merged survey in 2031 instead.

This roadmap would be of preference to the Commission.

- 4.6 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** agreed with many of the Commission's comments. She did not feel that all the information that was required was as yet available to the Board. There was a certain disjuncture between everything discussed to date and the information provided in the paper today.

She appreciated the honesty on Eurofound's part in relation to their preference for the panel, but the minutes of the meeting on 26 August made it clear and the previous speakers had reinforced this, that all Groups had important reservations about it.

She could state clearly that the panel was not the preferred option of the Workers' Group who were not convinced by the arguments put forward in its support. It was perplexing too that the whole paper was oriented on the idea of a panel despite that the August meeting made it clear that this was not a consensus position.

It was strange also that there was no more discussion of a merger of surveys which is what had started the whole discussion.

Progress had been made to identify the topics that were not covered by other surveys, about thinking how the surveys might be combined and were surprised to see that this was off the table, as the Group still saw some possibilities to combine.

The Group agreed that face-to-face was required for at least two more waves, that push to web was a process. Experience showed that there was considerable difference between face-to-face and push to web data that had to be taken into consideration. The priority was to have high quality, longitudinally comparable data on working conditions.

Current timelines foreseeing the EWCS fieldwork to be completed in 2028 were simply too long between the previous EWCS in 2015.

To put it bluntly, it was time to drop the suggestion of a panel as it was not something that was considered a viable option to even start testing, as too many questions had been raised. There were serious questions and reservations about the ability to maintain a representative panel over the long term that also included vulnerable groups etc.

A 50/50 merger of the EWCS and EQLS would not provide the depth that was required in a survey.

The concrete proposal of the Group therefore was in 2023 to do the EWCS face-to-face with a few additional EQLS questions (10%) in order to capture those issues that were not found elsewhere and then to do parallel web testing for the next two waves.

- 4.7 **The Chair** noted that there was a precise proposal from the Workers and asked the other Groups to reply.

- 4.8 **Mr Ciechański (Governments)** said that it was the position of the Governments that both surveys should be retained. There was no appetite in the Group to discontinue the EQLS.

For that reason, the Group would favour scenario 2b, but he thought that once discussions in the Group began, there would be more sympathy for not insisting on the panel.

It would be preferable however to find a way to retain both surveys.

- 4.9 **Mr Gran (Workers)** said that it was his understanding that any decision now would concern actions in 2023, it was not that a final decision would be taken to merge the surveys or to get rid of the EQLS at this stage.

The proposal from the Workers was feasible he felt and would mean only that the normal sequence of surveys would be delayed a few years and that it would be possible to carry out testing of web-based surveys.

He agreed with the Employers that in the end the cost of the various options was an important factor considering also where the discussion on the surveys had started.

- 4.10 **Ms Smith (Employers)** said that it was hard to make a decision when it was not clear at this point if the questions that might be lost in the various scenarios were the important ones for the Employers.

She agreed with the statements made by the Workers and the Commission and did not think that they were too far apart from each other.

It was still not clear how the panel would guarantee that answers would be had on more topics.

- 4.11 **Mr van Houten** said that the research team were trying to find solutions to the issues raised by the members in order ultimately to provide them with the information they needed within the surveys.

The panel was an innovative approach but as the Executive Director had said it was a higher risk.

It was agreed that it was necessary to come up with an approach to the surveys in 2023 and what was being proposed was different flavours of testing.

It was not that the researchers were trying to push the panel scenario, but rather that it would be worthwhile to test the panel alongside the testing of the push-to-web in order to have more options to choose from in the future. It would provide information about how many people would be lost between waves. It was important to get better information on how that would work for this specific topic area.

The testing would not be costly, being roughly 10-15% higher to include the panel element. Apart from the addition of fielding a number of online panel waves after the test survey was carried out, the testing would be the same, effectively running a cross-sectional survey i.e. contacting people face-to face, and for a sub sample pushing them to web, and then comparing the answers in order to manage the trend. Adding the test of the panel option would increase options in the future without a huge additional cost in the short term. The objective was to see how many people were lost to the panel, when people were contacted four times.

What the cost would be in the long term was not known but it was clear that a panel was expensive and that therefore partners might be required.

If the testing showed that the attrition rate was too high it would mean that the start-up sample would need to be huge which Eurofound might not be able to afford. If, however it turned out that not too many were lost, in the end the price might be lower than for a repeated cross-sectional survey where it was necessary to go out to the field again and again. The cost of contacting people was infinitely higher than the cost of reconnecting people on the panel.

He confirmed that all scenarios included consideration of those people who were not online. Scenario 1 might allow for investing more money in how best to address this offline population.

- 4.12 **Mr Tagger (Commission)** thanked Mr van Houten for his explanations, which accorded with the Commission's understanding of the situation.

He agreed that the decision of the Management Board in November should focus on 2023, in order to start a transition process, to discuss whether questions from another survey should be included, how to introduce the web, to ensure that people were not lost in an online survey.

Regarding the panel, the Commission were not against a panel as such but were not yet convinced that in November they could give it the go-ahead. They were however open to being convinced in the future, in consideration of a period of changes over ten years or so. But there were a number of questions, like for example the data protection issues, that needed to be clarified first.



It should be clear that trade-offs would be required in the future and it was necessary that the Board should discuss these in terms of the priorities.

- 4.13 **Ms Smith (Employers)** thanked Mr van Houten for his explanations which had been very helpful. However, it seemed that scenarios 2a and 2b implied testing of the panel only when what was needed in fact was parallel testing of various scenarios.
- 4.14 **The Deputy Director** clarified that push-to-web was tested in all scenarios, and two of them included the panel. Recruitment of the panel would be face-to-face, so what would be tested would be the retention of the panel.  
It would be necessary to test the panel idea over a long period. Recruitment for a panel would take place in 2023 and again in 2027.
- 4.15 **The Chair asked whether the following proposal would be acceptable.**
- To go the Board with two proposals. One to run the 2023 EWCS with some questions concerning EQLS and at same time to test push-to-web and the panel.
  - To run the EQLS in 2023 with some questions on working conditions and at same time to test push to web and panel.
- 4.16 **Mr Gran (Workers)** said that this was not acceptable as the Workers' Group had not asked to test the panel, their proposal did not include the panel.
- 4.17 **Mr Tagger (Commission)** said that it was the preference of the Commission to have the EQLS in 2023 with testing already of a web-based approach. The Commission was not convinced at this stage to already include a test on the panel although they might be convinced in the longer run.
- 4.18 **The Executive Director** said in the Founding Regulation it was his responsibility to make proposals to the Board. He hoped that a consensus could be reached so that it would not be necessary for a vote to take place.  
There were three decisions to be taken by the Board in November, it seemed. Whether the push to web approach was correct (it seemed there was agreement that it was), whether the preference was for the survey in 2023 to be mainly EQLS or EWCS, and whether the testing modes should include testing of a panel.
- 4.19 **The Chair** agreed that the Executive Director's proposal was a good solution.  
As a survey expert she was convinced by the need to test the panel because of the risk that a push-to-web mode in a simple cross-sectional survey would mean the loss of so much content, with the limitations of a twenty-minute survey.
- 4.20 **Ms Lynch (Workers)** said that it was understood that the problems with panels emerged only over time, so it was important to understand what would be tested in the panel. This information should be available on the day.
- 4.21 **The Chair** thanked the members for their contributions and said that she was sure that a good solution would be found in November.

## 5. Programming Document 2021 – Final Draft (EB 7/5)

- 5.1 The **Executive Director** remarked that Eurofound had not yet received feedback on the draft programme submitted to the Commission in January.  
He outlined a number of changes in the programme that had been necessary due to the pandemic and had been discussed in the Executive Board in July.  
The main changes related to the European Working Conditions Survey, the project on telework (activity 1), and Labour shortages and mismatches (Activity 3). The references to surveys would be adjusted once a decision had been taken by the Management Board on future developments in that regard.

This was the last chance for significant changes in the document which had been circulated to all Board members.

- 5.2 **Ms Smith (Employers)** reiterated that care should be taken not to encroach on the remit of the EU OSHA agency.

The references in the document to the Social Partners Agreement 2019 should be updated.

- 5.3 **Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** said that the interservice consultation on the Programming Document 2021 was concluding, and that the Commission's comments would be available shortly. She welcomed the new proposals which took account of the Covid-19 crisis, in both the general part and the programme activities.

- From an editorial point of view, it would be good to update references in the document as much as possible, for example where information like the unemployment rate was provided.
- Line 956 it would be good to refer to Eurofound's cooperation with the Joint Research Centre on 'teleworkability', and to highlight cooperation with EU OSHA, to address any perceptions of overlap with that agency.
- She would welcome some clarification in relation to the reduction in budget for the surveys, but the increase in fulltime equivalent posts for the surveys (from 4.8 to 7.3)
- She would provide clarifications on the correct references to be used for the Stability and Growth Pact's general escape clause and the consultation of the minimum wage initiative and the social partners.
- There were still some questions as to whether the EQLS or merged survey would be a good instrument to measure in-work poverty or household income in general and was surprised to see in line 1613 that there might be an interview of multiple household members, as in the feasibility study this kind of possibility had been dismissed.

- 5.4 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** congratulated Eurofound on having adapted the programme so well to the challenges.

There were a few statements that required adaptation, but she would now await discussions in the Group meetings, and the opinions of the other members.

- 5.5 **The Executive Director asked for** comments to be sent in writing and copied to all the Executive Board members.

- With regard to potential overlaps the Bilbao agency he referred to the Memorandum of Understanding with EU OSHA and the annual updates to that agreement, which set out cooperation between the two agencies, thus avoiding overlaps.
- Line 795, the term 'appropriate partners' referred to partners who would fund the proposed residential summer camp, an idea which would not be possible in Covid-19 times. They might be the Social Partners or other funding partners.
- The budget for the surveys was lower in 2021 as funds would be carried over, but the time of the colleagues working on the survey would increase and hence the greater number of full-time equivalent posts assigned to it.

## 6. **Programming Document 2022 (EB 7/6)**

- 6.1 **The Deputy Director** explained how changes in the 2021 programme had impacted on the 2022 programme, forcing a number of changes primarily in the timelines. The changes would be fleshed out in the next draft now that the 2021 changes had been approved in principle.

The changes were mainly those forced by the interruption to the 7<sup>th</sup> EWCS in March 2020 and the implications of Covid-19 in areas like teleworking and housing. Most

of the projects were already included in the first draft of the programme, but the research questions had been adapted to changes in the 2021 Programming Document.

The Governments and Employers said that they had not yet had time to consult with their Groups on the document.

- 6.2 **Ms Lynch (Workers)** said that she felt that the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR) was used as an approximation for the European Semester in the document.

She was concerned that the project on the impact of the platform economy had been dropped and noted the increased lobbying of the European Commission that the platforms were not part of the world of work. What was the reason for dropping the project?

- 6.3 **Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** said that the project '*Tripartite social dialogue and policy formation*' looking at 'measures to promote recovery post health and social crisis', should look closely at the involvement of social partners in the European Semester and in the preparation of the recovery and resilience plans of the Member States, especially as there was uncertainty about the involvement of the social partners in the policy actions and reaction to Covid-19. It was not clear what was intended by the term 'tripartite social dialogue' in this context.

Responding to the question raised by Ms Lynch, it was the idea that there would be public consultation on the EPSR action plan (until November) followed after that by implementation of actions that would be naturally embedded in the semester process. References in the document to the European Semester and the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) were sufficient at the moment. The involvement of the social partners in the RRF however, was important and something that should be followed in Eurofound's research.

- 6.4 **The Chair** agreed with this point and said that elements such as the green economy and digitalisation were priorities in the RRF and it was important that they be taken into consideration in Eurofound's programming document.

- 6.5 **The Executive Director** asked Ms Lynch to inform Eurofound of which lines regarding the social pillar were unclear so that this could be addressed in the next draft.

The research on platforms was not dropped but rather had been changed in the 2021 programme and should therefore be seen as a continuation project in 2022. The shift was from an emphasis on areas like employment status, social protection or health and safety to a focus on initiatives to tackle those problems.

The reference to tripartite social dialogue was to social partner involvement in the recovery and resilience plans, but the wording could be reviewed.

- 6.6 **The Deputy Director** said that in response to the crisis it had been decided to continue looking at external platform work, rather than on the impact of internal platform work i.e. within companies. This change would be implemented in the 2021 programme already. But Eurofound would continue to look at the platform economy, and its repository on platform work would continue.

The European Pillar of Social Rights was referred to a lot in the document to ensure that when looking at the various themes and subjects the related principle in the pillar was also considered. The EPSR could be implemented by various instruments, one of which was the European Semester, but this was clearly understood. All instruments, not only the semester, would be looked at in the future.

- 6.7 **Ms Lynch (Workers)** said that one of the real threats of increased teleworking during the crisis was the move to more internal platform working. It was a pity that at a moment when more information would be welcome, it would not be available.

- 6.8 **The Executive Director** said that this could still be investigated in the 2021 programme if requested.
- 6.9 **Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** said that she was not convinced that Eurofound had the priorities right with regard to European Pillar of Social rights. Of importance was the RFF and the involvement of the social partners in significant budget spending in the next two to three years. Monitoring implementation of the pillar of social rights was not a priority. The Commission would provide their comments in writing.
7. **Recruitment of the Executive Director (EB 7/7)**
- 7.1 **Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** reported that the recruitment procedure was ongoing but would not be completed in time for the Management Board meeting in November. In the absence of an Executive Director, the Deputy Director would be responsible in line with her job description. If necessary, this could be recorded in writing, but no formal decision was required.
8. **Procedure for selection of Executive Director by the Management Board (EB 7/8)**
- 8.1 **Mr Grimmeisen** outlined the proposed procedure and asked the members to provide their views. It would be key to ensure that the interview procedure was formalised, and that the two-thirds majority vote could be achieved, probably through the use of proxies. There was a discussion and it was agreed that the questions should be put together just before the interviews and that the questions should be aligned with the job description in the recruitment notice. There should be the possibility to have a secret vote. Proxy voting should also be possible. Eurofound should plan for an online meeting early in 2021.
9. **Update from the chair of the Management Board Committee on Staff Matters**  
**Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** updated on the work of the Committee which had closed one case in the previous year. A new case was being considered and would be discussed at an online meeting in the near future.
10. **Dates of Board and Group meetings in 2021 (EB 7/10)**  
**Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** said that it would be good to have some distance between dates of meetings of the Advisory Committees and the Executive Board. The dates would be proposed to the Board, taking this into consideration.
11. **Agenda for the Third Meeting of the Management Board (EB 7/11)**
- In light of the pandemic it was decided that an online meeting was advisable, especially when recruitment of the Executive Director was not part of the agenda.
  - The usual interpretation policy would not apply i.e. there would not be simultaneous interpretation in English, French and German.
  - The meeting would take place over two half days, with Group meetings hosted (online) by Eurofound where required.
12. For his last Executive Board meeting the **Executive Director** wished to express his gratitude for the support of the members in the previous years. Although formal decisions were taken by the Management Board, the issues were discussed in detail in the Executive Board beforehand.

13. **The Chair** thanked the Executive Director and said that it had always been a pleasure to work with him. The members too expressed their appreciation.
14. The next formal meeting of the Executive Board would take place in January 2021.

[A.Bulgarelli]

Chairperson

[J. Menéndez-Valdés]

Executive Director

## DRAFT AGENDA

### THIRD MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT BOARD OF THE EUROPEAN FOUNDATION FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS

Online via MS Teams, *Friday, 6 November 2020 10.00 - 13.00 CET*

Item	Agenda item	Doc. no.	Time	Presented by
1.	Opening of meeting and examination of Draft Agenda (EN, FR, DE), <i>For Decision</i>	<b>MB 3/1</b>	10:00	Chair
2.	Final minutes of 2nd Meeting of the Governing Board, 8 November 2019 (EN, FR, DE), ( <i>For Information only - approved on 16 June 2020 by a written procedure</i> )	<b>MB 3/2</b>	—	
3.	Progress Report of the Executive Director on the activities of Eurofound, <i>For Information</i>	<b>MB 3/3</b>	10.05	Executive Director
4.	Development of Eurofound surveys, <i>For Discussion – outcome to be included in decision on Programming Documents</i>	<b>MB 3/4</b>	10.30	Deputy Director
	<i>Break (15 minutes)</i>		<i>11.00</i>	
5.	Programming Document 2021, <i>For Decision</i>	<b>MB 3/5</b>	11.15	Deputy Director
6.	Programming Document 2022, <i>For Discussion</i>	<b>MB 3/6</b>	11.40	Deputy Director
	<i>Break (10 minutes)</i>		<i>12.20</i>	
7.	Election of Chair and Deputy Chairs of the Management Board, <i>For Decision</i>	<b>MB 3/7</b>	12.30	Chair
8.	Schedule of Meetings 2021 of the Management Board, Executive Board and Groups, <i>For Decision</i>	<b>MB 3/8</b>	12:35	Chair
9.	Advisory Committees	<b>MB 3/9</b>	12:40	Chair
	– 9.1 Establishment of Advisory Committees, <i>For Decision</i>			
	– 9.2 Composition and meeting dates in 2021, <i>For Information</i>			
10.	Anti-fraud Strategy (EN, FR, DE), <i>For Decision</i>	<b>MB 3/10</b>	12:45	Executive Director
11.	AOB		12:55	

**Final Minutes of 3rd Meeting of the Management Board of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions  
Friday, 6 November 2020 9.00-12.00 local time (online)**

**1 Welcome and adoption of draft agenda (MB 3/1)**

**The Chair** welcomed the members to what would be the first online meeting of the Management Board, due to the pandemic.

She welcomed the following new members: (*Governments*) Ms Šlekutė (LT); (*Employers*) Ms Söber (EE), Ms Sladović (HR); (*Workers*) Ms Loven Selden (SV).

Regarding the agenda, a request had been received from the Groups to be allowed to raise a number of questions and to make some proposals with regard to the upcoming pilot project on the minimum wage.

With this proposal the agenda was adopted.

**2. Progress report of the Executive Director (MB 3/3) – for information**

2.1 **The Executive Director** made what would be his final progress report to the Management Board and presented additionally some of the highlights from his ten years at the agency.

- Most significant recently was of course the disruption to the work programme with the outbreak of the pandemic in the early part of the year. First there was the interruption to the fieldwork of the 7th European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) in March, with 10,000 face-to-face interviews already completed. Following discussions and negotiations with the contractors the survey would be restarted in 2021 as a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) mode survey.
- He praised the innovation of Eurofound's researchers who had launched the online *Living, Working and COVID-19* survey very quickly in April, with a further second wave in July. The survey mainly used questions from the EQLS (European Quality of Life Survey) and EWCS — adjusted in some cases — on wellbeing, work and teleworking, living conditions and financial situation. There were over 60,000 respondents to the first wave, and over 25,000 to the second (longer) questionnaire, and over 13,000 who agreed to respond to follow-up questions. It was not a representative random sample, so adjustments were required through an ex-post weighting to replicate population structure, but it was the first pan-European data that was available to researchers on the impact of COVID-19 on living and working conditions with a huge impact and uptake.
- The COVID-19 policy watch database had been originally conceived as an internal tool, but the data was so interesting that it had been decided to publish it as a searchable database on Eurofound's website with different searchable categories of measures such as income support, or employment protection etc.
- The impact of Eurofound's early reactions to the crisis was huge, with very high uptake of its COVID-19 research. It was used in the European Commission's first *Strategic Foresight Report*, was mentioned in analytical documents like the Economic and Social Developments in Europe (ESDE) report, in the *Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience*, in a number of European Parliament briefings (including the Parliament's opinion on



the general budget) as well as the ETUC position on the proposal for revision of Employment Guidelines.

- It also attracted a lot of media attention, with many different angles addressed e.g. impact on youth, the north/south divide, telework, short-time working schemes, the impact on mental wellbeing (which was of particular interest in the period of confinement at the start).
- He mentioned recent publications and touched on some highlights of the previous ten years:
  - in the area of *Working conditions and sustainable work* the publications were mainly focused on the data from the EWCS, for example on sustainable work, the ageing workforce and women in management;
  - in *Industrial relations*, a flagship report would be published in December, the annual review on minimum wages in 2020 was amongst the most downloaded reports on the website. He noted that 55 *Representativeness Studies* had been produced between 2010 and 2020;
  - *Labour Market Change* – the flagship report had been published, over the last ten years the NEETS project had been impactful with a decision to have a *NEETS* indicator in the *Social scoreboard indicators* and in the *Youth guarantee*;
  - and in the area of *Quality of life and Public Services*, along with the online survey in 2020 there had been the ongoing research by Eurofound on quality of life and public services;
  - regarding research on the *Digital age* he highlighted reports on game-changing technologies and platform work;
  - on a new topic *Convergence* he noted the development of a web app and comparative tools on the website, much of which work was conceptual although an ad hoc report had been provided for the recent German EU Presidency and research in the area was being adapted to the current crisis.
  - And finally, in the area of *Surveys management and development* he highlighted the restart of the 2020 EWCS, reflections on the future of the surveys, the online survey and an online follow-up of the *European Company Survey (ECS)* which for the first time had been undertaken jointly with another EU Agency (i.e. Cedefop).
- During the previous ten years the first European Parliament pilot project on the *Future of Manufacturing in Europe (FOME)* had taken place over four years, with a key report on the *Energy scenario: Employment implications of the Paris Climate Agreement* exploring the potential employment and economic impacts of an EU transition to a low-carbon economy. It had been one of the most downloaded reports of 2019.

A new pilot project on minimum wage was planned to start in January 2021 with proposed modules on enforcement and compliance, a database on minimum wage rates applicable to low paid jobs, and minimum tariffs for self-employed.

- Other highlights of his ten years which covered two work programmes, included the 40th anniversary of the agency, the coordination by Eurofound of the Network of European Agencies (EUAN) and the establishment of a principle of shared services, the drawing up of a formal seat agreement with the Irish government, an updated brand logo for the agency and increased cooperation with international organisations like the ILO.
- He was pleased to have been present at the *Social summit for fair jobs and growth* in Gothenburg in 2017 where the European Pillar of Social Rights was proclaimed. The summit came just after the Foundation Forum of that year and informal discussions during the forum had been helpful to the aims of that summit.

- There had been improved cooperation over the years with the European Commission, the Council (with regular collaboration during the EU Presidencies) and the European Parliament.
- It could be said that Eurofound had strengthened its reputation and enhanced the global perspective of its research, with cooperation with the ILO and the OECD.
- Already existing Memoranda of Understanding with five agencies had been enriched and expanded to include agreements with the European Environment Agency and the new European Labour Authority.
- He outlined some of Eurofound's most relevant policy contributions during this time and cited where Eurofound research had been referenced.
- Some of the achievements were improvements to the usefulness of Eurofound's work. The agency had been established for a purpose and today it was meeting that purpose and was more and more effective in its contributions to policymakers. It had re-purposed its capacity to react to requests on demand and had demonstrated that it could be flexible.
- Areas for further development in the research activities were to look at new ways of working in the digital world, the use of big data for example. When presenting its research Eurofound should take note that stakeholders were more interested in data that they could extract and manipulate, than in the standard reports of tradition.
- He thought that the future of Eurofound's surveys was bright, with some work required perhaps on how national data were presented.

Finally, he thanked the members and staff for their collaboration over the years.

- 2.2 **The Chair** thanked the Executive Director for his presentation and on behalf of the Management Board expressed appreciation for all his work in the last ten years. She congratulated him on his continuous excellent leadership and management of the agency.

As indicated in the presentation the future of the agency was clear, and its value as a provider of robust and policy-relevant information to policymakers, as well as in the research arena had been enhanced.

The Executive Director's qualities of vision and expertise in the field had really combined to increase the reputation and effectiveness of the agency. His direct approach and capacity to listen to the stakeholders had been much appreciated in the Executive Board also. She also thanked him for the work that Eurofound was doing with the EU Presidencies, and for the enhanced global perspective for the agency.

In turn, **the Employers, Workers and European Commission representatives** paid tribute to the Executive Director's always collaborative approach, and his achievements in enhancing the work and reputation of the Agency and wished him well.

### 3. **European Parliament pilot project on Minimum wage**

- 3.1 **The Chair** invited the Commission to outline the new pilot project on minimum wage.

**Mr Tagger (Commission)** explained that the procedure for these kinds of pilot projects was that the European Parliament made a request to the Commission on a certain subject area, provides the funding and it was then a decision by the Commission whether to mandate this to one of the Agencies.

The Commission had taken this decision (technically called a financial decision) some time ago and were presently implementing the contractual elements with Eurofound.

The Commission were clear that there would be a tripartite element to the governance structure of the project and discussions were underway as to how to have both expert and tripartite representation, considering for example whether there should be two governance bodies.

- 3.2 Both the **Employers and Workers Groups** welcomed this important project and expressed their conviction that Eurofound was best placed to carry out the work. They also called for the sensitivity of this topic to be taken into account in the work.

The Social Partners wished not only to be informed about the project (as had been the case with the FOME) but to be involved in the project, so the assurances by the Commission were very welcome.

They hoped in some way to be able to provide input into the design and the topics to be investigated.

#### 4. **Conclusions from Discussions on the Development of the surveys (MB 3/4)**

- 4.1 **The Deputy Director** was pleased to say that a compromise had been agreed. She presented two slides with the proposed text on the surveys.

- **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** said that questions on living conditions in the 2023 EWCS should be restricted to the impact of COVID-19, in order to avoid a merger by the back door.
- The **Deputy Director** amended and then read out the proposed text which was as follows:

*“In 2023 Eurofound will carry out the EWCS including some questions on working conditions and living conditions relevant to the aftermath of the COVID-19. Respondents for this survey are recruited face-to-face. The majority of these respondents will also be interviewed face-to-face, to ensure that the findings of the survey can be compared with previous rounds of the EWCS. To prepare the transition of Eurofound surveys to an online mode of data administration, a smaller random sub-sample of respondents would be recruited to complete the interview online. This allows to compare the answers between the two different modes of administration for a selection of questions from the EWCS. It further allows testing the impact of moving to a push-to-web approach on survey efficiency and data quality.*

*As part of this 2023 survey, respondents will be asked to participate in a series of online follow-up questionnaires. These follow-up questionnaires will include questions from the EWCS that were not asked in the initial questionnaire – increasing the selection of variables for which trend breaks can be managed. This element also allows testing the effectiveness of recruiting respondents for follow-up questionnaires as well as the impact of the initial refusals to do participate in such follow-up questionnaires as well as survey attrition at a later stage on the sample composition”.*

- The amended text provided for a face-to-face EWCS in 2023 with some questions on working and living conditions relevant to the aftermath of COVID-19, a European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS) in 2025 (using lessons learnt from 2023) and an additional option (which was part of the compromise) that as part of the survey, respondents would be asked to participate in a series of online follow-up questionnaires, with questions from the EWCS not included in the initial questionnaire, thus increasing the selection of variables for which trend breaks could be established.
- It would allow the testing of the effectiveness of recruiting correspondent for follow-up questionnaires, the impact of the refusals to participate in such follow-up questionnaires, the rate of survey attrition and the sample composition.

- The 2021 and 2022 programming documents would be amended to reflect the decision.
- 4.2 **Mr Gran (Workers)** said that the decision was a good compromise even though the Group had strong reservations about the additional option.  
It was proposed to monitor the progress carefully in the Steering Group.
- 4.3 **Ms Smith (Employers)** said that it had not been an easy discussion in the Employers' Group who wished to have it recorded that this was not the solution favoured by them.  
Their concern was that all focus turned to working conditions whilst it was important to also have information about living conditions. It was felt that it was excessive to have the EWCS again in 2023.  
The Employers did not completely agree with arguments put forward by the other Groups about retaining the comparability of data, as it should be noted that the 2021 CATI survey would not be comparable with the previous EWCS data. She hoped that the Steering Group would consider in their discussions that comparability was always difficult.  
It was important however that a decision had been taken and that it was possible to go forward, but it was not the decision favoured by the Group who would closely monitor progress in the Steering Group.  
The Group also thought that Eurofound should be careful in how it branded the 2021 CATI survey.  
The follow-up research on the European Company Survey should take care to balance the input from both workers and employers as the effects of COVID-19 were severe also for companies.
- 4.4 **Mr Ciechański (Governments)** said that the Governments appreciated that all the Groups had moved their positions somewhat to achieve a compromise.  
The Group were pleased that the EWCS would be fielded in 2023 but also that the EQLS would go ahead in 2025.  
They understood that in the fielding of the survey the panel would also be tested, which would allow for decisions on how the surveys would be fielded in the future.  
They too welcomed that the Steering Group would be retained.
- 4.5 **Mr Tagger (Commission)** said that it was an important decision as the surveys were Eurofound's flagship instruments. It had been a difficult and complex discussion and he welcomed that agreement had been reached.  
They supported the compromise and thought that it was of particular importance to have the EWCS in 2023 with some of the sample questions from the EQLS related to the post-COVID-19 situation. As already stated, this was a very specific situation.  
The Commission also supported the continued involvement of the Steering Group.
- 4.6 **The Chair** thanked the members for having reached agreement and extended that to the Groups and the Steering Group for all their work in the previous year.  
Though no decision had yet been taken on the future of surveys this was a step forward and Eurofound was now in a position to continue to provide high quality data in its surveys and to ensure comparability of that data.
5. **Adoption of Programming Document 2021 (MB 3/5) – for decision**  
**The Executive Director** noted that this draft would be revised to include the decision on the future of surveys, and further minor changes to reflect comments emerging

from the Group meetings (e.g. correction of the impression that self-employment is non-standard employment, the need to refer more proactively to cooperation with EU-OSHA, the use of quotes for the 'right to disconnect' etc) and to update elements such as the contractual arrangements for the pilot project.

- 5.2 **Mr Gran (Workers)** said that the Workers could agree to the changes even though the Group was of the opinion that a self-employed person could also have an employment relationship, something that was emphasised in case law of the European Court of Justice.
- 5.3 **Ms Smith (Employers)** appreciated that the Employers' suggestions in this regard had been taken on board and said that the Group could adopt the programme with the changes.
- 5.4 The **Governments** and **European Commission** representatives said that they could also approve the programme with the changes outlined.

**The Programming Document 2021 was adopted with minor amendments and the proposed text on the surveys.**

## **6. Programming Document 2022 (MB 3/6) – for discussion**

- 6.1 **The Deputy Director** said that the feedback in the informal Executive Board meeting was that the Groups supported the Programming Document.  
The Groups would forward their comments in writing within one week.

- 6.2 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** said that the Group would like to see some expression in the Service Level Agreement with the European Commission on the pilot project, of ways in which Eurofound's research about minimum wages and collective bargaining was linked or aligned with work being done.

There were clear overlaps, and as stated by the Employers and Workers representatives earlier, using the tripartite forms of governance and the expertise of the members would be an important part of that project.

- 6.3 **Mr Ciechański (Governments)** said that the Group would send their comments in writing.

- 6.4 **Ms Smith (Employers)** asked about the work on psychological risk and how the considerable work done by EU-OSHA in this area would be taken into account.

The Group had discussed also how important it would be for Eurofound to look into the possibilities for research offered by administrative data.

Once again, it was important to have a balanced approach when looking at the impact of COVID-19 in the labour market.

- 6.5 **The Executive Director** took note of the comments which would be addressed in the final draft.

He said that there were references to administrative data in the programme.

Any overlaps with research in other agencies was carefully avoided.

The pilot would take place outside the work programme and it would be important to retain that distinction, but he understood that the work should be complementary.

## **7. Election of the Chair and Deputy Chairs (MB 3/7) – for decision**

**Mr Ciechański (Governments)** informed that Mr Gans (Netherlands) would be the new Chair of the Group, in place of Ms Bulgarelli who would leave the Management Board probably in the second quarter 2021, following her retirement.



In line with the accepted practice whereby the chair rotates every two years between the tripartite Groups **the Chair and Vice-Chairs were elected as follows:**

- Mr Gran (Workers) Chair
- Mr Gans (Governments) Vice-Chair
- Ms Rossi (Employers) Vice-Chair
- Ms Kauffmann (European Commission) Vice-Chair

7.2 **The Executive Director** thanked Ms Bulgarelli for her valuable contribution as Chair and Board member in recent years. He wished her all the best in her future plans. All the Groups expressed their appreciation for her calm approach and her ability to attain compromise during her time as Chair.

## 8. **Schedule of meetings 2021(MB 3/8) – for decision**

8.1 **The Chair** said that it was necessary to have some information about the recruitment procedure for the new Executive Director in order to adopt the Schedule.

8.2 **Mr Tagger (Commission)** said that the assessment of candidates was scheduled for 12 November and that a list of candidates should be available within the first two months of 2021.

8.3 **The Chair** noted that an additional Management Board meeting would therefore be required in early 2021.

It transpired that the proposed date for the Board meeting in November fell on a public holiday in a number of Member States, so an alternative date would be sought and agreed by a written procedure later.

The schedule of dates for meetings in 2021 would be adopted later by a written procedure.

## 9. **Establishment of Advisory Committees 2021-2024 (MB 3/9.1) – for decision**

9.1 **The Chair** explained that the Advisory Committees were included in the new founding regulation of the agency and should follow the structure of the work programme.

The proposal was to establish the following Advisory Committees:

- Working Conditions and Sustainable Work
- Industrial relations
- Employment and Anticipating and managing the impact of change
- Living conditions, cohesion and convergence

9.2 **The Executive Director** explained that the remit of the committees was slightly broader than previously, and for that reason if in order to cover transversal areas, the Groups wished to nominate experts or request that their members would participate in the meetings of other committees, then that would be possible and encouraged.

- **The decision was adopted.**
- **The Groups would forward the names of the appointments to the Advisory Committees in writing.**
- **The European Commission asked that Advisory Committees be scheduled in such a way as to allow feedback to the Executive Board (a gap of two weeks was suggested). The dates for meetings in 2021 would be confirmed later.**

## 10. **Adoption of Eurofound's Anti-fraud strategy (MB 3/10) – for decision**

- 10.1 **The Executive Director** explained that the decision was based on a template from OLAF the European Union's Anti-fraud agency and followed consultation with other EU Agencies already implementing their anti-fraud strategies.

It contained a high-level approach, with indicators and actions.

It was complemented by the financial regulation and provisions in the Founding regulations regarding the role of the Executive Director and the Management Board.

There would be regular reporting to the Management Board and Executive Board on the implementation of the strategy.

Comments received from the European Commission on the previous day, had been addressed.

**The Anti-fraud strategy was adopted with minor revisions.**

11. The next meeting of the Management Board would be an extraordinary meeting to recruit the new Executive Director in early 2021 with the date to be confirmed later.

Chairperson

Acting Executive Director

[S.Gran]

[M. Jepsen]



## List of Decisions

	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Reference</b>
1.	Adoption of agenda	(MB 3/1)
2.	<i>Decision No. 29</i> – Adoption of Final Programming Document 2021 with minor changes and inclusion of agreed text on surveys	(MB 3/4)
3.	<i>Decision No. 30</i> – Election of Chair and Vice-chairs	(MB 3/7)
4.	<i>Decision No. 31</i> – Establishment of Advisory Committees for 2021-2024	(MB 3/8)
5.	<i>Decision No. 32</i> – Adoption of Eurofound’s Anti-fraud Strategy	(MB 3/9)

**List of Participants**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of Eurofound's Management Board<sup>1</sup>**  
**(held online)**

	<b>Lastname</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Member state</b>	<b>Status</b>
1.	Ms Alsvik	Employers	EFTA/EEA	Observer
2.	Mr Alves	Workers	Portugal	Alternate
3.	Mr Antila	Workers	Finland	Member
4.	Mr Argyrides	Workers	Cyprus	Member
5.	Ms Balint	Employers	Hungary	Member
6.	Mr Brankov	Employers	Bulgaria	Member
7.	Mr Bugeja	Workers	Malta	Member
8.	Ms Bulgarelli	Governments	Italy	Member
9.	Mr Canales	Employers	Spain	Member
10.	Ms Castex-Chauve	Governments	France	Alternate
11.	Mr Ciechański	Governments	Poland	Member
12.	Mr Darrigrand	Employers	France	Member
13.	Mr De Meester	Employers	Belgium	Member
14.	Ms Demireva Todorova	Governments	Bulgaria	Member
15.	Ms Djalinous-Glatz	Workers	Austria	Member
16.	Ms Drbalová	Employers	Czechia	Member
17.	Mr Ferreira	Governments	Portugal	Member
18.	Mr Fugger	Governments	Austria	Member
19.	Mr Gans	Governments	Netherlands	Member
20.	Mr Gourzoulidis	Governments	Greece	Member
21.	Mr Gran	Workers	Germany	Member

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<sup>1</sup> The quorum for the meeting (simple majority) and two-thirds majority required for certain decisions was reached.

	<b>Lastname</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Member state</b>	<b>Status</b>
22.	Mr Gregarek	Governments	Czechia	Alternate
23.	Mr Gryp	Workers	Belgium	Member
24.	Ms Hansen	Governments	EFTA/EEA	Observer
25.	Ms Hoffmann	Workers	Coordinator	
26.	Mr Hopfner	Employers	Germany	Member
27.	Mr Hostak	Employers	Slovak Republic	Member
28.	Mr Ioannou	Employers	Greece	Member
29.	Mr Jørgensen	Governments	Denmark	Member
30.	Mr Joyce	Workers	Ireland	Member
31.	Mr Karlsson	Employers	Sweden	Member
32.	Ms Kauffmann	European Commission	European Commission	Member
33.	Ms Kissné Bencze	Governments	Hungary	Member
34.	Ms Kiukucane	Employers	Latvia	Member
35.	Ms Komel	Governments	Slovenia	Member
36.	Ms Konjar	Workers	Slovenia	Member
37.	Mr Kouwenberg	Workers	Netherlands	Member
38.	Mr Lasserre	Workers	France	Alternate
39.	Ms Lope Fontagné	n/a	European Parliament	Observer
40.	<i>Ms Lovén Seldén</i>	<i>Workers</i>	<i>Sweden</i>	<i>Member</i>
41.	Ms Lynch	Workers	Coordinator	
42.	Mr Messios	Governments	Cyprus	Alternate
43.	Ms Miettinen	Employers	Finland	Member
44.	Ms Misslbeck-Winberg	Employers	Denmark	Member
45.	Mr Mone	Workers	Italy	Member
46.	Ms Nic Giolla Mhicíl	Governments	Ireland	Member

	<b>Lastname</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Member state</b>	<b>Status</b>
47.	Mr Nyman	Governments	Sweden	Alternate
48.	Ms O'Hare	Employers	Ireland	Alternate
49.	Mr Olszewski	Workers	Poland	Member
50.	Mr Pallagi	Workers	Hungary	Member
51.	Ms Pasat	Employers	Romania	Member
52.	Mr Pena Costa	Employers	Portugal	Member
53.	Mr Peterson	Workers	Estonia	Member
54.	Ms Piette	Governments	Belgium	Alternate
55.	Ms Propst	Employers	Austria	Member
56.	Mr Rudka	Employers	Poland	Member
57.	<i>Ms Sladovic</i>	<i>Employers</i>	<i>Croatia</i>	<i>Member</i>
58.	<i>Ms Šlekytė</i>	<i>Governments</i>	<i>Lithuania</i>	<i>Member</i>
59.	Ms Smith	Employers	Coordinator	
60.	<i>Ms Söber</i>	<i>Employers</i>	<i>Estonia</i>	<i>Member</i>
61.	Mr Subotic	Governments	Croatia	Member
62.	Ms Tare	Governments	Latvia	Member
63.	Mr van Mierlo	Employers	Netherlands	Member
64.	Ms Vella Muscat	Governments	Malta	Member
65.	Mr Voigtländer	Governments	Germany	Member
66.	Mr Waldorff	Workers	Denmark	Member

### The following members provided Proxy votes<sup>2</sup>

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Member State</b>	<b>Status</b>
1.	Mr Hartung	European Commission	n/a	Member

<sup>2</sup> In accordance with article 13 of the rules of procedure when a member or their alternate is unable to attend they may authorise a member of their group to vote on their behalf.

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Member State</b>	<b>Status</b>
2.	Ms Calle	Governments	Spain	Alternate
3.	Ms Dumitrescu	Governments	Romania	Alternate
4.	Ms Kaldmäe	Governments	Estonia	Member
5.	Ms Romele	Workers	Latvia	Alternate
6.	Ms Krupaviciene	Workers	Lithuania	Member
7.	Ms Eischen	Workers	Luxembourg	Member
8.	Mr Kokalov	Workers	Bulgaria	Member
9.	Ms Studnicna	Workers	Czechia	Member
10.	Ms Hanzevacki	Workers	Croatia	Member

### Also in attendance

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Member State</b>	<b>Status</b>
	Mr Scheele	Governments	Netherlands	Alternate
	Mr Blasco de Luna	Employers	Spain	Alternate
	Mr Rodriguez	Governments	Spain	Observer
	Mr Tagger	European Commission	n/a	Alternate
	Ms Roelen	European Commission	n/a	Observer
	Mr Menéndez-Valdés	Eurofound		
	Ms Jepsen	Eurofound		
	Mr Grimmeisen	Eurofound		
	Staff Committee	Eurofound		

Regrets were received from the following

Ms Sedlatschek & Ms O'Brien	EU-OSHA
Mr Poupkos	Greece (Workers)