

Decision making

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[The Council of European Union](#) is an essential EU decision-making body. The Council configuration of Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs (EPSCO) works to increase employment levels and improve living and working conditions as well as ensure a high level of human health and consumer protection in the EU. In EPSCO meetings of ministers responsible for the employment and social policies as well as the issues relating to gender equality Latvia is represented by the Minister for Welfare. EPSCO meetings usually are held four times per year (twice during each Presidency).

The work of the Council of European Union is led by [the Presidency](#) which in rotation order changes every six months.

Decisions to be adopted at EPSCO meetings are prepared by the Working Party on Social Questions (Latvia is represented by social and employment *attachés*) as well as the Employment Committee and the Social Protection Committee (Latvia is represented by experts of the Ministry of Welfare).

Experts of the Ministry of Welfare also participate in discussions on the EU-level initiatives and policies both in [the European Commission](#) working groups and committees (mainly within [Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion](#) (DG EMPL) as well as [Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers](#) (DG JUST)) and within various structures of the EU agencies, including with the participation of social partners.

The EU agencies active in the field of employment and social policy are:

[European Agency for Safety and Health at Work](#)

[European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions](#)

[European Institute for Gender Equality](#);

[European Labour Authority](#).

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