

# **EP ECON-BUDG Working Group on the scrutiny of the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF WG)**

**6<sup>th</sup> meeting**

**2 June 2021, 15.00 - 17.00**

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European Economic and Social Committee

# The EESC's European Semester Group

39 members, 13 from each of the EESC's 3 groups

President: **Javier Doz Orrit**, Workers' Group

Vice-Presidents: **Gonçalo Lobo Xavier**, Employers' Group

**Luca Jahier**, Diversity Europe



## Main activities of the ESG

- 2 annual opinions on the Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy
- Forum for dialogue with Organised Civil Society, including the National Economic and Social Councils
- 1 yearly conference
- Since COVID: Involvement in the NRRPs:  
how are the plans drawn up, implemented and monitored?

## Article 18 of the RRF Regulation, 12 February 2021

It shall in particular set out the following elements: 4(q)

“ ... for the ***preparation*** and, where available, for the ***implementation*** of the recovery and resilience plan, a ***summary of the consultation process***, conducted in accordance with the national legal framework, of ***local and regional authorities, social partners, civil society organisations, youth organisations and other relevant stakeholders***, and ***how the input of the stakeholders is reflected*** in the recovery and resilience plan.”

**HOWEVER, as consultation is NOT INCLUDED IN THE RRF ASSESSMENT CRITERIA, impact is limited and the EESC wants the Commission to thoroughly follow up the implementation of this Article.**

## Phase 1, January-February 2021

***27 delegations of 3 EESC members each consulted OCS in their respective MS on 5 questions:***

- 1) Are there mechanisms for consultation on the NRRP? Do you consider them sufficient and adequate?
- 2) Are there different consultation mechanisms for the social partners and rest of civil society?
- 3) Your country must submit its NRRP by 30 April. Where is your country in the process?
- 4) How does this procedure differ compared to the consultation of OCS during the normal Semester-procedure in your country?
- 5) To what extent does your country Plan correspond with the policy objectives of OCS ?

## Classification of the 27 Member states:

- **No or little involvement:** Denmark and Slovakia
- **Some involvement, but little influence:** Austria, Belgium, Czechia, Germany, Greece, Spain, Estonia, France, Croatia, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Latvia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Sweden, Slovenia
- **Some involvement, some influence:** Bulgaria, Cyprus, Finland, Italy, Malta

## Personal experiences from Italy

The consultation of Italian Civil Society by the 3-member delegation took place in January 2021 and was based on two pillars:

- All 24 Italian members of the EESC were consulted in writing, and many took part in a
- joint discussion with 70 members of the Italian ESC (CNEL)

## Resolution adopted in February 2021:

- NRRP-consultation of OCS is unsatisfactory, even if it is better than the consultation in the frame of the normal Semester-work
- Social partners are more involved than other CSOs
- Lack of time and access to information were main obstacles
- [EESC Resolution on Recovery and Resilience Plans](#)



## Follow-up done in April and May 2021:

*2 additional questions asked:*

- Compared to the situation in January, has there been an improvement regarding the involvement of OSC in the consultation process?
- What will be the role of organised civil society in the implementation of the national plan in your country?

## Follow-up done in April-May 2021, II

- In broad terms, the follow-up exercise ***confirmed the results of the survey*** undertaken in January-February.
- The general, OCSs have been informed and in many cases heard, but with ***only few tangible results***.
- In a ***majority of the Member States there have been no further effective consultations***, that have produced significant modifications in the initial proposals of the governments. This is often ascribed to a lack of time for the process.
- A few ***exceptions where some progress*** has been observed are Poland and – to a lesser extent – Bulgaria, Italy, Estonia and Latvia.

## Phase 2, Autumn 2021

- ❖ Mobilising the 27 delegations again to examine the situation in the Member states as regards implementation and monitoring.
- ❖ Working methods: workshops, Round Tables, using existing networks, using the National ESCs
- ❖ Aim: improving the involvement of OCS, possibly through creating a legally binding instrument or common EU guidelines and standards.
- ❖ New Resolution foreseen for early 2022

## Policy aims of the exercise

- ✓ Improve transparency, openness, dialogue, empowerment.
- ✓ This is exactly what we think EP RRF WG is working towards.
- ✓ Both the directly elected MEP, national parliaments, organised civil society and local and regional authorities must be involved in this process, thereby ***creating a "Citizens' Pillar"***.

## ***CONCLUSION***

The Recovery and Resilience Facility and National Plans, both for the ***Reform Agendas and the Key Investments***, are too important to be left to Commission, Council and Governments.



***THANK YOU***