

Skills and Education, Jobs and Social Rights, Demography

Context

This portfolio is one of the main drivers of our **competitiveness** policy and central to implementing the recommendations of the **Draghi report**. It combines significant political weight, substantial EU funds, robust legislative and policy potential, and essential access to Commission services and agencies.

The role is an important contributor to the **European Semester**, covering the employment, social and educational aspects of **economic policy coordination**. This will influence the reforms guiding the next generation of cohesion and investment programmes.

Core responsibilities

There are two core parts of the work – separate but complementary - which both include significant political and financing responsibility.

The first responsibility is developing a new **Union of Skills**. This is the first time that Commission will have a dedicated portfolio for skills, combining an **education and labour market focus**. This reflects the role of skills for both a **just transition** and also the competitiveness of our industries.

The work on skills will focus on **investment**, skills retention, upskilling and reskilling and the development of the European Education Area and a skills portability initiative. Whereas before these policies were de-linked, their significance means they need to be developed by one Member of College drawing on the different elements – from recognition of qualifications to vocational education and training.

The second core part is the responsibility for the **European Pillar of Social Rights**. This is the portfolio which leads on strengthening our **social market economy**. The portfolio will oversee several flagship initiatives, including algorithmic management, the right to disconnect, the **quality jobs** roadmap or the anti-poverty strategy. It will look at the impact of digitalisation on the world of work. The portfolio is also in the lead for social dialogue, working with representatives from European trade unions and employers, and following up with a new Pact for **European Social Dialogue**.

Additionally, the portfolio is in the lead on tackling the **structural drivers and the impact of demographic change**. In this respect, the portfolio will be responsible for implementing the Demography Toolbox and **increasing participation in the labour market**.

Finally, the portfolio also has the overall lead on **Erasmus+**, one of Europe's most successful and visible programmes, which we need to keep strengthening so more people of all ages and different backgrounds can benefit from a placement in another European country.

EU funds

This portfolio is one of the most substantial in terms of EU funding, with significant stakes in the next Multi-annual Financial Framework. It includes responsibility for the **European Social Fund Plus**, the **Social Climate Fund** and **Erasmus+**, accounting for close to one-fifth of the EU budget.

Legislative and policy role

The portfolio carries legislative responsibilities in the areas of free movement of workers and social legislation, notably shaping **EU labour law and labour mobility legislation**. It also includes **enforcement responsibilities** in areas such as minimum wages, platform work, working time and occupational health and safety. It also has a significant policy focus in the **coordination of Member State policies** on employment, education and vocational training.

Institutional weight

The person in charge of this portfolio will work with the Commission services dealing with employment, social affairs and inclusion, as well as those working on education. The portfolio also involves coordinating a number of decentralized agencies, including the European Labour Authority.

Institutionally, the person in charge of this portfolio will represent the College in two Council formations: Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs (EPSCO) and Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council (EYCS). They will be the main counterpart to employment, social and education ministers and, in the European Parliament for the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL) and of the Committee on Culture and Education (CULT).