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Observatoire social européen rapport

Activity Report 2019



European Social Observatory

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Introduction ⁽¹⁾

During the first half of 2019, Romania held the Presidency of the Council of the European Union: this period saw the adoption of several European social policy directives and regulations. At the beginning of the year, agreements were reached on the directive on transparent and predictable working conditions; the work-life balance directive; the revised directive on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to carcinogens or mutagens at work; and on the directive on accessibility requirements for products and services. Some of these legislative texts were the subject of lengthy negotiations, showing, once again, a split between the Eastern European Member States (generally in favour of liberalisation) and the Western European Member States (which tended to support, rather, harmonisation of the social policy rules). During this first half of the year, go-ahead was also given to the establishment of the European Labour Authority (ELA), to be based in Bucharest, in Romania.

The second half of 2019 was above all a time for the European Institutions to set up and launch activities. These institutions had some new faces and features following the European elections held on 23-26 May 2019. The elections, although they highlighted the emergence of some new movements (environmental, on the one hand, or parties of the extreme right), did not fundamentally shift the political balance in Europe. The new European Commission presented its major political priorities as well as its new organisational structure. Taking office on 1 December 2019 under the leadership of Ursula von der Leyen from Germany, it developed an ambitious programme, including the announcement of a proposal on a European minimum wage, a 'European Child Guarantee', and a European unemployment benefit reinsurance scheme. Nicolas Schmit, originally the Commissioner-designate for Jobs, became the Commissioner for 'Jobs and Social Rights'.

The Finnish Presidency of the Council (July-December 2019), for its part, attempted to relaunch the negotiations on the proposal for a directive on equal treatment, the proposal for a regulation on the coordination of social security systems, and the social aspects of the 'Mobility I' package. However, during this period the only progress made was on the latter package. This was partly because of the very full institutional agenda, and due to persistent political differences of view between the Member States: adoption of the regulation on the coordination of social security systems was postponed to the next parliamentary term. Finally, the Member States and the European Parliament continued their work on the multiannual financial framework 2021-2027, reviewing the role and financing of all the

1. This section draws on the regular European and International Digests which the OSE (Boris Fronteddu and Denis Bouget) produces for the Revue Belge de Sécurité Sociale (RBSS) and which are available online: <https://socialsecurity.belgium.be/fr/publications/revue-belge-de-securite-sociale>

European institutions and programmes, in the unusual context of the United Kingdom's continuously postponed, questioned and discussed exit from the EU.

It should be noted that the second half of 2019 saw numerous and interesting developments in the field of social and environmental policy, due, in particular, to the strong commitment from the new European Commission to the 'European Green Deal'. As part of this, the Commission aims for the EU to become a 'climate-neutral' zone by 2050. To achieve this, it submitted a spending plan for 1,000 billion EUR over 10 years, of which 100 billion will be allocated to the 'Just Transition Mechanism'. The European Parliament has also been very active on environmental issues.

This European context is reflected in the European Social Observatory (OSE) research activity during 2019, which addressed some of the issues at the very heart of the current policymaking agenda. All in all, the nine OSE researchers and four administrative staff were involved in eleven research projects in 2019. As a result of this vibrant activity, the OSE maintained its position (since 2016) among the top 100 social policy think tanks worldwide, together with renowned institutions such as the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung and the Brookings Institution.

We are happy to have kick-started a new exciting research project in the course of 2019: we produced the 20th edition of our annual 'Bilan social de l'UE', produced with the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI). This anniversary edition of our flagship book – 'Social policy in the European Union 1999-2019: the long and winding road – looks back at the main developments in EU social policymaking over the past two decades. Smaller new projects in 2020 included a summary report on mapping long-term care quality assurance practices in the EU, as well as the Belgian country report on the same topic; a report to support the EU-Thailand cooperation on social protection and social inclusion policies contributing to decent work; a presentation on healthcare systems in Europe and on long-term care provision for the elderly during the annual EU/China policy dialogue; and a policy brief on sickness benefits in the EU.

Other projects that continued from 2018 included the follow-up to EU level developments with an impact on health care systems (NIHDI), by means of, among other things, a quarterly electronic newsletter. We also continued investigating, in the context of two European Commission-funded projects, the extent to which trade unions have been involved in the European Semester (INVOTUNES and EFISTU). The International Digest written for the *Revue Belge de Sécurité Sociale* (RBSS) continued to reflect the main eco-social policy developments. And we continued our monitoring of the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights (EESC and ESN).

We also continued to cultivate our ties with European networks, notably through the Commission-funded European Social Policy Network (ESPN). In 2019, the OSE has

managed regular Thematic Reports, including the drafting of Synthesis Reports on in-work poverty in Europe and social protection expenditure and its financing in Europe. Other work for ESPN again included the quality control of the regular Flash Reports, Country Profiles, European Semester Reports and Economic Reform Programme Reports, produced by the 35 country teams. Research into social investment in human rights and capabilities continued in the final stages of the RE-InVest (Horizon 2020) project.

As a result of this research activity, the OSE's publication record in the past year is again impressive: the team produced 28 publications in 2019. This number includes three book chapters, five journal articles, two papers and 12 reports. No less than nine OSE working papers have been issued in the OSE Working Paper Series in 2019, most of these in the context of the INVOTUNES project. These new working papers were downloaded well over 3,000 times in 2019. If we consider all the working papers published up until December 2019, the total number of downloads *during 2019* alone exceeds 17,000. The data indicates that older OSE Papers continue to be downloaded in significant numbers in the years after they have been published. The visibility created by ESPN Synthesis reports is equally impressive: they were downloaded more than 25,000 times in 2019.

A number of in-house tools further boosted the dissemination of OSE expertise and knowledge to a large audience of researchers, think-tanks, EU and national social partner representatives (both trade unions and employers' organisations) and other social stakeholders such as European non-governmental organisations (NGOs):

- The organisation of conferences and seminars: nine events throughout 2019;
- The OSE website: more than 4,800 unique visitors came to visit every month in 2019;
- The OSE Flash News (+1,500 subscribers in 2019) and the European Health Care News (+1,000 subscribers) further enlarged our readership in Europe and beyond;
- The OSE Twitter account: around 1,800 followers in 2019; +1,000 persons followed us through LinkedIn.

This 2019 Activity report is organised as follows: Section 1 provides a short presentation of the OSE's goals, resources and organisational structure. Section 2 presents the OSE team in 2019 and describes each staff member's main tasks and activities. Section 3 briefly describes each of the projects carried out by the OSE during the past year. Section 4 presents a list of events (co)organised by the OSE during 2019. Section 5 provides a taste of the team members' participation in various external activities. Section 6 provides key output data (i.e. the OSE's 'reach'). Finally, Section 7 shows the full list of publications to which OSE researchers contributed in 2019.

New research in 2020 will include the 21st edition of our annual volume on the state of play of social Europe, pension adequacy, access to healthcare, long-term care, unemployment benefits, the European Semester, in-work poverty in Europe, as well as – crucially in the light of the EU developments described above – various projects regarding eco-social policies.

On behalf of the OSE team, I thank you for your interest in our work and wish you happy reading.

Bart Vanhercke,

Director

1. THE OSE IN A NUTSHELL: GOALS, RESOURCES AND ORGANISATION

The European Social Observatory (OSE) was founded in 1984 and is nowadays a leading centre for research, information and training, specialised in the social dimension of the European Union. It has a forward-looking approach and operates as a think-tank, identifying issues as they emerge. Following a decision of the federal government in 2013, the Belgian Federal Science Policy Office has recognised the OSE as a ‘Scientific Institution’. For the fourth consecutive time (since 2016), the OSE was again, in 2019, ranked among the top 100 social policy think-tanks worldwide by the Think-Tanks and Civil Societies Program (TTCSP) of the University of Pennsylvania ⁽²⁾, together with renowned institutions such as Bruegel, CIVITAS (Institute for the Study of Civil Society) and the Institute for Research on Public Policy (IRPP). The think-tanks in this category provide ‘superior innovative research and strategic analyses’ on topics pertaining to social issues and challenges.

The OSE is a partner organisation in several European research programmes and is actively involved in some major networks of academic excellence in Europe and North America. The OSE works closely with the Belgian and European public authorities, as well as with trade unions — including in TURI, a network of research institutes close to the trade union movement — and civil society organisations (including the Platform of European Social NGOs and the European Social Network). As a result, it has acquired specialist, in-depth knowledge on the social dimension of European integration and a profound understanding of the European context.

1.1 GOALS

The OSE’s main goals are to produce independent and state-of-the-art critical analysis of the social dimension of European integration. This implies, more concretely, that we:

- Analyse the impact of European integration on social and employment policies both at EU level and within the Member States, as well as neighbouring countries;
- Conduct research and formulate policy proposals;
- Provide an ongoing platform for discussion for a wide range of stakeholders, especially trade union organisations;
- Widely disseminate the results of our reflections through the website, Newsletters, publications – including the annual ‘Social Policy in the European

2. McGann (2020) 2019 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report.
https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1017&context=think_tanks

Union: State of Play' edited volume and the OSE Working Paper Series –, events, social media and short videos.

1.2 RESOURCES

The OSE consists of a pluralist, multidisciplinary and multilingual team of nine researchers and analysts, bolstered by a highly efficient administrative back office (four persons), eight research associates and by interns from all over Europe and North America. Together they:

- Have a variety of expertise in cross-cutting areas such as Economic and Monetary Union and its impact on the social dimension of European integration, institutional issues and the EU's social policy-making mechanisms (including policy coordination, EU legislation, social dialogue and EU funding);
- Are able to draw upon a broad-based network of public authorities, (academic and other) researchers, think-tanks, European and national social partner representatives and other social stakeholders (especially members of the Social Platform);
- Have more than 20 years of expertise in organising both major conferences and smaller events – including in the framework of European Framework Programmes (FP6, FP7 and Horizon 2020) and other EU-funded research such as PROWELFARE and INVOTUNES.
- Can draw on in-house resources, which include:
 - the website (in [English](#) and [French](#)): a valuable source of up-to-date information on OSE projects, publications, events and staff, also reflected in the [OSE Flash News](#);
 - the Health Care [Newsletter](#) (in English, French and Dutch) provides regular summaries of current EU developments that might affect national health care systems;
 - the Working Paper [Series](#) encompasses three different publications – 'Research', 'Briefing' and 'Opinion' papers – written by OSE researchers and external scholars;
 - the Lunchtime [Sessions](#), at which leading academics, policymakers and stakeholders regularly shed light on issues topping the EU agenda before an audience of OSE researchers and their guests;
 - the LinkedIn page ([OSE Group](#), +1,000 members) and [Twitter](#) account (@OSE_be, +1,800 followers).

1.3 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The day-to-day management of the OSE lies in the hands of Bart Vanhercke and Françoise Verri. Bart Vanhercke has been Director since 2010: he manages the team as well as the broad research strategy and communication. Françoise Verri, the Financial and Administrative Manager, manages the administrative team as well as organisational, budgetary and financial issues and supports the Director with regard to the calls for tenders.

Altogether the nine OSE researchers cover the following policy areas: employment and labour markets, restructuring and industrial change; education and training; gender and diversity; institutional matters; health care; poverty and social exclusion; social dialogue; welfare systems and pensions; and governance (European Semester, European Pillar of Social Rights etc.). A paragraph on each staff member can be found in Section 2, while more detailed profiles of all team members (scientific and administrative) can be found on the Team page of the website.

The elected Board of Directors ⁽³⁾ jointly oversees the activities of the OSE, while the General Assembly ⁽⁴⁾ brings together the broader group of stakeholders linked to the OSE. These include representatives from national and European trade union organisations, trade union-related research institutes, academic institutions and the International Labour Organisation.

The Scientific Advisory Board ⁽⁵⁾ provides independent scientific advice from renowned scholars, for example in the context of the peer review of the OSE Working Paper Series or the chapters of the annual ‘Social Policy in the EU: state of play’ (‘Bilan Social’ in French) book.

1.4 FUNDING

The diversity of the projects described in Section 3 below demonstrates that the OSE continues to be funded from a variety of sources, which include:

- Research contracts from Belgian federal and regional authorities, including notably (a) the longstanding collaboration with the Belgian national health insurance institute (NIHDI/INAMI/RIZIV) and the Federal Public Service Social Security; (b) wage subsidies from the Brussels regional employment office (ACTIRIS); and (c) the partial withholding tax exemption for research from the

3. See http://www.ose.be/EN/team/board_directors.htm

4. See http://www.ose.be/EN/team/general_assembly.htm

5. See http://www.ose.be/EN/team/scientific_advisory_board.htm

Belgian Federal Science Policy Office (BESLPO). Altogether these national resources made up 58.70% of our funding in 2019;

- Contracts with European and international institutions: notably the European Commission, but also the European Economic and Social Committee. These resources provided 30.49% of our 2019 funding;
- Contracts (especially with the European Trade Union Institute (ETUC) and the European Federation of Public Services, EPSU) and subsidies from the Belgian Confederation of Christian Trade Unions (CSC/ACV); these amounts accounted for 9.84% of our budget in 2019;
- Other resources, including various academic collaborations, training and consultancy represented less than 0.97% of our 2019 budget.

2. THE OSE STAFF: GOLDEN PARAGRAPHS

The OSE was made up of 13 staff members during 2019: nine (full-time as well as part-time) researchers (including the Director) and four fulltime administrative staff. Six research interns and a visiting PhD researcher provided important additional human resources in terms of research assistance. The OSE team underwent several changes: Cécile Barbier left the OSE at the end of 2018, while Boris Fronteddu and Sophie Cès joined the research team during 2019 to work on topics such as eco-social policies and inequalities in health care. Sherihane Bensemmane provided key input (as an external expert) to the telemedicine project. These new human resources bolstered our ability to scrutinize the emerging debates on the European social agenda.

2.1 THE SCIENTIFIC TEAM

Rita Baeten - Senior Policy Analyst - Health Care and European Integration

Rita Baeten, with a Master's in Social Sciences, focuses her OSE research activities (since 1999) on the impact of European integration on national healthcare systems and on their social character. Her research topics include themes such as EU economic governance and health systems; patient mobility in the EU; healthcare services in the internal market; and EU-level co-operation in the field of healthcare. Rita Baeten advises the Belgian National Institute for Health and Disability Insurance (NIHDI) on EU policy developments with a potential impact on healthcare in Belgium, and has coordinated the scientific preparation and follow-up of several international and ministerial conferences on EU integration and health systems. She has been work leader for the OSE contribution to several projects financed by the European Commission under its Framework Programmes for Research.

These include Re-Invest (2015-2019), ECAB (2010-2013) and 'Europe for patients' (2004-2007).

During 2019 Rita Baeten has been the lead researcher of three projects funded by the NIHDI: 'Cross-border telemedicine: the involvement of Belgian actors'; 'Inequalities in access to health care in Belgium, from a European perspective: a diagnosis'; and 'European reference networks of centres of expertise offering highly specialized care, developments and impact'. The results of the telemedicine project have been published in the OSE Working Paper Series (with Sherihane Bensemmane). Intermediate results of the project on inequalities in access to healthcare were published in the 'Jaarboek Armoede 2019' (Yearbook on Poverty) and in *la Revue Belge de Sécurité Sociale* (with Slavina Spasova and Bart Vanhercke). Rita Baeten gave several presentations, amongst others during the annual EU-China Policy Dialogue (through ESPN), the Council of European Studies conference, the Re-Invest final conference and the Belgian 'Federatie Vrije Beroepen'.

Dr. Sophie Cès – Health care, long-term care

Sophie Cès is an economist and obtained her doctorate in public health from the Université Catholique de Louvain (UCL) in 2018 where she is currently a member of the academic staff. She started working at the OSE in 2019 on a part-time basis. Her research and publications cover various areas: the assessment of complex health interventions, home support to dependent elderly people (particularly help from family and friends), the financing of long-term care and affordability of healthcare. Sophie previously provided her expertise to the Belgian Health Care Knowledge Center (*Centre Fédéral d'Expertise des Soins de Santé*, KCE), working on the evaluation of pilot projects in mental health and as a statistician.

During this year she co-authored the ESPN ad hoc Summary report on 'Mapping long-term care quality assurance practices in the EU' (with Stéphanie Coster), which provides an overview of existing national policies and practices in place (or being debated) in the EU Member States. She is the lead author of the study 'Inequalities in access to health care in Belgium (with Rita Baeten) for the Belgian NIHDI and co-authored the Belgian ESPN country report on long-term care quality assurance (with Stéphanie Coster).

Dr. Stéphanie Coster – Researcher – Unemployment, social exclusion, job quality

Stéphanie Coster has been a part-time researcher at the OSE since November 2017. She has held a PhD in Economics and Management Sciences since March 2017. She is also a lecturer at the *Université Catholique de Louvain* (UCL) where she teaches courses in human resource

management and labour studies. Her expertise is in the fields of industrial relations and human resource management. Currently, her research interests are mainly related to social exclusion, in-work poverty, precariousness, job quality, inequalities and unemployment.

During 2019, Stéphanie Coster co-authored the ESPN ad hoc Summary report on ‘Mapping long-term care quality assurance practices in the EU’, with Sophie Cès, which provides an overview of existing national policies and practices in place (or being debated) in the Member States and flags the main gaps in policy making, legislation and implementation in this area. She also co-authored the Belgian ESPN country report (with Sophie Cès) on long-term care quality assurance and contributed to the writing of several project proposals in response to calls for tenders.

Boris Fronteddu – Researcher – Eco-social policies, industrial policy, international trade

Boris Fronteddu has been a researcher at the OSE since April 2019. He has a Master’s degree in European journalism and a further Master’s in European politics and communication from the ‘Institut des Hautes Études des Communications Sociales’ (IHECS). Boris has mostly worked on international trade issues, such as the functioning of multinational businesses, free trade agreements between the European Union and third countries, and the posting of workers. From 2017 to 2019, Boris worked on projects for the non-profit ‘Forum Pour un Contrat de Génération Nord-Sud’. Before that, he worked as a parliamentary assistant in the Senate, the Walloon Parliament and the Committee of the Regions.

During 2019 Boris Fronteddu authored an OSE Opinion Paper on the European taxonomy for sustainable investments. He also collaborated on the regular European Health Care News (with Rita Baeten) and on the European Digest for the *Revue Belge de Sécurité Sociale* (with Denis Bouget). He contributed to the OSE flagship book ‘Social policy in the European Union 1999-2019: the long and winding road’, authoring chronologies for both the year 2018 and the 20-year period 1999-2018 (with Denis Bouget) and co-reviewing several chapters (with the book editors). He also wrote a cross-country analysis for the European Social Network’s (ESN) ‘European Semester 2020’ report (with Sebastiano Sabato) and contributed to quality control for ESPN (with Slavina Spasova). He gave a presentation on the different approaches to a European unemployment benefit scheme (based on Günther Schmid’s OSE Opinion paper) at a brainstorming session organised by the Confederation of Christian Trade Unions of Belgium (ACV/CSC).

Dalila Ghailani – Senior Researcher – European Law, Employment and Work, Social protection, Gender Equality

Dalila Ghailani, with a Master's in Law and Advanced Master's in European Business Law, has 18 years of experience in monitoring a range of issues related to the social dimension of the EU, including employment policies, social protection, fundamental rights, gender issues, and the case law of the Court of Justice of the EU. She has conducted several studies for EU institutions, including the European Commission (PROWELFARE projects; assessment of the capacity of welfare systems and private enterprises to encourage older workers to stay in the labour market; assessment of the EU legal framework for the coordination of social security schemes and the portability of supplementary pension rights); the European Parliament (assessment of French and Belgian political parties' policies and strategies for gender balance in the European Parliament, 2015; assessment of the impact of the crisis on Fundamental Rights in Belgium, 2015) and the European Economic and Social Committee (assessing the feasibility of introducing a European instrument relating to non-contributory minimum income schemes).

During 2019, Dalila Ghailani co-authored the ESPN Synthesis Report on 'In-work poverty in Europe: a study of national policies' (with Ramón Peña Casas) and the ESPN ad hoc report 'EU-Thailand cooperation on social protection and social inclusion policies contributing to decent work' (with Ramón Peña Casas and Mathis Porchez). Dalila was also involved in the INVOTUNES project, for which she drafted the Belgian case study (with Ramón Peña Casas). She also worked with Ramón Peña-Casas on the project 'Public service trade unions: effective intervention in the European Semester' (EFISTU), for which they wrote the case study on France. She was a co-editor of the 20th edition of the OSE's flagship book on 'Social policy in the European Union 1999-2019: the long and winding road', together with Bart Vanhercke and Slavina Spasova. Dalila also co-authored a book chapter, with Sonja Bekker, on 'Institutional and organizational regulations of part-time work' and co-authored an article on 'Self-employment and social protection: understanding variations between welfare regimes' (lead author Slavina Spasova) published in the Journal of Poverty and Social Justice. She worked with Rita Baeten and Boris Fronteddu on the NIHDI contract (including the European Health Care News). Dalila presented her work on various occasions, including at an ESPN expert meeting, MISSOC, the Social Protection Committee (SPC), final conferences of the EFISTU and INVOTUNES projects, and the annual 'Social policy in the EU: state of play' conference in Nantes.

Ramón Peña-Casas – Senior Researcher –Employment and work, Poverty, Social Inclusion, industrial relations

Ramón Peña-Casas, with a Master's in Social Sciences, joined the OSE team in 2000. He has a background in sociology and extensive expertise in the field of socio-economic analysis, gained during previous employment as a researcher at the ULB's Institute of Sociology as well as the Brussels regional employment office. Since 2000, he has coordinated many European and national projects on a range of different subjects. His diverse areas of expertise cover, in particular, the diagnosis and comparative analysis of cross-cutting socio-economic issues affecting the various aspects of the European Union's social dimension: poverty and social exclusion, social assistance and minimum income, quality of employment and work, in-work poverty, insecure employment, working conditions, active labour market policies and activation, flexicurity, restructuring, active ageing and corporate social responsibility. Ramón Peña-Casas is also well-versed in the development, quality and political use of statistical indicators in OMCs (including employment, social inclusion and pensions). Ramón Peña-Casas is a permanent member of several expert groups, including the 'Belgian federal group on social indicators' and the 'Belgian Interdisciplinary Research Network on Poverty' (GIREP). He is also a member of the Scientific Committee of the 'Observatoire Girondin de la Pauvreté et Précarité' (Bordeaux – France) and of the 'Belgian Platform on social inclusion'.

During 2019, Ramón Peña-Casas was the lead author of the ESPN Synthesis Report on 'In-work poverty in Europe: a study of national policies' and the ESPN ad hoc report on 'EU-Thailand cooperation on social protection and social inclusion policies contributing to decent work' (with Dalila Ghailani and Mathis Porchez). Ramón was also involved in the INVOTUNES project, for which he drafted the Belgian case study (with Dalila Ghailani). He worked on the project 'Public service trade unions: effective intervention in the European Semester' (EFISTU), for which he co-authored the case study on France (with Dalila Ghailani). Ramón presented his work on various occasions, including at an ESPN expert meeting, a MISSOC expert meeting, a Social Protection Committee (SPC) meeting and the final conferences of the EFISTU and INVOTUNES EU projects.

Dr. Sebastiano Sabato – Senior Researcher – European Integration, Policy Learning, Governance

Sebastiano Sabato holds a PhD in Political Science from the *Istituto Italiano di Scienze Umane* (SUM) in Florence, with a doctoral thesis (2013) on 'The Impact of the Open Method of Coordination on National Policies: an Analysis of the Peer Review meetings in the Open Method of Coordination for Social Protection and Social Inclusion'. He holds a Master's Degree in Economics and Politics of European Integration from the University of Bologna,

Faculty of Political Sciences (*Forlì*). In 2013, he worked as a part-time post-doctoral researcher at the Department of Social and Political Science of the University of Milan and, in 2014-2015, he worked at the Department of Sociology at Antwerp University. Since February 2014 he has been working as a researcher on European Integration at the OSE and is responsible for monitoring funding opportunities. Since February 2019 he is Senior Researcher at the OSE. Since January 2019, he has been a member of the Scientific Committee of the journal 'Politiche Sociali/Social Policies', where he is responsible for the journal's 'Welfare Europa' section (together with Prof. Valeria Fargion). Currently, his research interests include EU socio-economic governance, comparative social policy, social innovation, policy learning and transfer in EU social policy and interest groups.

During 2019 Sebastiano Sabato was Scientific coordinator of the Commission-funded project on 'National Trade Union Involvement in The European Semester – INVOTUNES' (project leader: Bart Vanhercke), and worked as a researcher in the project on 'Public service trade unions: effective intervention in the European Semester (EFISTU), for which he co-authored the Italian case study (with Chiara Belletti and Bart Vanhercke). He was lead author of the report on integrating the European Pillar of Social Rights into the roadmap for deepening Europe's Economic and Monetary Union, for the European Economic and Social Committee (with Francesco Corti, Bart Vanhercke and Slavina Spasova). He co-authored (with Francesco Corti and Bart Vanhercke) two opinion pieces on the European Social Unions. He published (with Gert Verschraegen – University of Antwerp) an article on 'The multi-level governance of social innovation: how the EU supports social innovative initiatives' for the Italian Review of Public Policies (*Rivista Italiana di Politiche Pubbliche*). He presented his work in public on several occasions, to audiences of policymakers, stakeholders and academics.

Dr. Slavina Spasova – Researcher – Social Protection, Social dialogue, Trade Unions, Pension reforms

Slavina Spasova, PhD in Political Science (Université Libre de Bruxelles, ULB 2015), has been a researcher in the area of social protection at the OSE since January 2016. She is both Pension leader and OSE coordinator in the European Commission-funded European Social Policy Network (ESPN). Her research agenda focuses on various social policy issues such as social dialogue and social protection, including pension reforms, work-life balance, healthcare, long-term care, sickness benefits and, most recently, unemployment benefits. Slavina is also a Research Associate at the Centre d'étude de la vie politique (CEVIPOL), Université Libre de Bruxelles. Her previous work has explored the transformation process of the Bulgarian trade unions since 1989 and their involvement in building social institutions through the mechanisms of international socialisation and 'usages of Europe',

as well as investigating systemic pension reforms in Central and Eastern European countries and social dialogue.

During 2019, Slavina Spasova worked on a variety of issues – including social protection expenditure and its financing in Europe (Synthesis report with Terry Ward) and in-work poverty in Europe ⁽⁶⁾ – in the context of the European Social Policy Network (ESPN). In this context, she also managed the quality control of the regular ESPN Flash reports, Country Profiles and European Semester reports. She was a co-editor of the 20th edition of the OSE’s flagship book on ‘Social policy in the European Union 1999-2019: the long and winding road’, together with Bart Vanhercke and Dalila Ghailani. She was also the lead author of an article on ‘Self-employment and social protection: understanding variations between welfare regimes’ (with Denis Bouget, Dalila Ghailani and Bart Vanhercke) published in the *Journal of Poverty and Social Justice*. Slavina contributed to the report on integrating the European Pillar of Social Rights into the roadmap for deepening Europe’s Economic and Monetary Union, for the European Economic and Social Committee (with Sebastiano Sabato, Francesco Corti and Bart Vanhercke). She was the lead author of the OSE horizontal work package on ‘National trade union strategies for involvement in the European Semester’ in the INVOTUNES project. She also published (with Bart Vanhercke and Christos Louvaris) a book chapter on ‘Pension reforms after the crisis: bringing adequacy back in the domestic and EU policy equation?’. Together with Rita Baeten and Bart Vanhercke, she published both an article (in *la Revue Belge de Sécurité Sociale*) and a book chapter (in the ‘Jaarboek Armoede 2019’ - Yearbook on Poverty) on the overall positive trend but important persisting inequalities regarding access to healthcare in the EU. She presented her views at several events, including conferences on social protection for the self-employed (Tilburg University and the Netherlands Institute for Social Security, NISZ) and long-term care (University of Zagreb) She participated in ESPN Network Meetings and dissemination events as well as several INVOTUNES project meetings and the ‘Bilan social’ conference in Nantes in January 2019.

Dr. Bart Vanhercke – Director and Senior Researcher - European Integration, Social Protection and Social Inclusion, Governance

Bart Vanhercke, PhD in Social Science, has been Director at the European Social Observatory since 2010. He is therefore in charge of the broad research strategy, the internal organisation of the team, managing the budget with Françoise Verri, and overseeing the OSE communication strategy. His current research focuses on the social dimension of European economic governance (including the EU’s economic surveillance of

6. Peña-Casas R., Ghailani D., Spasova S. and Vanhercke B. (2019).

national healthcare systems) and the European Pillar of Social Rights. Earlier research experience dealt with the Europeanization of domestic social inclusion, health care and pensions policies through different EU policy instruments and the social challenges of EMU and EU enlargement. Bart Vanhercke was appointed, for the academic year 2013-2014, Associate Professor at the Institute for European Studies of Saint-Louis University (FUSL). In March 2016, he obtained his PhD (cum laude) at the Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research (AISSR) of the University of Amsterdam. He was appointed Policy Fellow at the Institute for the Study of Labour (IZA Berlin) in November 2015. He was appointed associate member of the academic staff at the Research Institute for Work and Society (HIVA, KULeuven) in June 2016.

During 2019, Bart Vanhercke worked on in-work poverty in Europe (Ramón Peña-Casas lead author) and, as a reviewer, on social protection expenditure and its financing in Europe (report authored by Slavina Spasova and Terry Ward) in the context of the European Social Policy Network (ESPN), of which he is Social Protection leader. He was also the project leader of the Commission-funded project on ‘National Trade Union Involvement in The European Semester – INVOTUNES’ and worked as project leader for the project on ‘Public service trade unions: effective intervention in the European Semester (EFISTU)’, for which he co-authored the final report (with Howard Stevenson et al.) and the Italian case study (with Chiara Belletti and Sebastiano Sabato). He was the lead editor of the 20th edition of the OSE’s flagship book on ‘Social policy in the European Union 1999-2019: the long and winding road’, together with Dalila Ghailani and Slavina Spasova.

Bart also contributed a chapter on ‘From the Lisbon strategy to the European Pillar of Social Rights: the many lives of the Social Open Method of Coordination’ and co-authored the book’s conclusions, signed by the editors. He contributed to the report, for the European Economic and Social Committee, on integrating the European Pillar of Social Rights into the roadmap for deepening Europe’s Economic and Monetary Union, led by Sebastiano Sabato. He co-authored (with Francesco Corti and Sebastiano Sabato) two Opinion pieces on the ‘European Social Union’. He co-authored (with Slavina Spasova and Christos Louvaris) a book chapter on ‘Pension reforms after the crisis: bringing adequacy back in the domestic and EU policy equation?’. Together with Rita Baeten and Slavina Spasova, he published both an article and a book chapter on the overall positive trend but important persisting inequalities regarding access to healthcare in the EU. He also co-authored an article on ‘Self-employment and social protection: understanding variations between welfare regimes’ (lead author Slavina Spasova) for the Journal of Poverty and Social Justice. He presented his views at several dissemination events (in Brussels, Budapest, Edinburgh, Leuven and Nantes) for the annual book ‘Social policy in the EU: state of play’. He also presented the EESC report on implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights at several events (EESC, ESN, ETUC and ETUI) and chaired several INVOTUNES and

EFISTU workshops and roundtable discussions. He also participated in the ESN Reference Group Meeting on the European Semester, ESPN Network Meetings and dissemination events (NISZ), the European Parliament, HIVA and KULAK (KULeuven) and brainstorming meetings (Dutch and Finnish Presidencies of the EU).

2.2 THE OSE BACK OFFICE: THE ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

Elodie Kibendo – Secretary

Elodie Kibendo has been the secretary at the European Social Observatory since November 2017. She works with the administrative and logistics team in a supporting role. Her tasks consist of: receiving telephone calls, drafting reports of administrative meetings, sending and receiving institutional emails (internal and external communication). She works and arranges documents with the research team. She also helps to organise events and harmonises bibliographical references in the OSE Working Paper Series and the annual 'Bilan social' books. She is responsible for the distribution of the paper copies of the book and for the updating of the OSE database. Elodie is also in charge of interview transcription.

Benoît Malice – Web Assistant

Benoit Malice provides logistics support for conferences (preparing files of documents, reception – publication displays). He performs various secretarial tasks: document-binding, photocopies, transcribing texts, etc. He is in charge of the layout of the 'OSE Working Paper Series'. He performs a number of support tasks for the website: input to the various sections of the site, html layout of the newsletter 'European Health Care News' (French, Dutch and English), for the NIHDI contract; corrections and addition of various sections (French and English); checking all web pages, uploading new content, updating bibliographical references in the publications pages as well as the posting of registration forms.

Renaud Smoes – Webmaster

Renaud Smoes manages the IT equipment and security, manages and updates the OSE site, project webpages and contact database. He analyses and implements online working solutions such as Office 365, Basecamp and Google Drive, which have proved to be an essential tool for managing the constant flow of documents in collaborative research projects such as ESPN. He manages the OSE Flash News and the 'European Health Care News' newsletter (html layout, sending out the letter, mailing list) for the NIHDI contract. His other tasks include events organisation (invitations, management of the subscriptions, welcoming, technical support) and generating graphic material for researchers, slides and visual aids for OSE events. He has also managed the websites for several projects, including

INVOTUNES. He is in charge of the IT aspects of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Françoise Verri –Financial and administrative Manager

Françoise Verri, with the OSE Director, manages calls for tender (e.g. drafting budgets, planning tables, checking of the OSE offers and online registration), manages the finances of the institution, produces financial reports for all projects (both European and national), draws up the budgets and is responsible for the administrative management of the OSE (staff, relations with outside bodies, supplies, etc.). She prepares the accounts, makes payments, is responsible for invoicing and VAT as well as for the organisation and practical coordination of books, papers, programmes and invitations, the final revision of notes and reports and managing translations for the various publications. Finally, she drafts the minutes of the key meetings: the Board of directors, General Assembly and monthly meetings of the research team.

2.3 INTERNSHIPS

The OSE has concluded internship agreements with the University of Milan as well as with Brigham Young University (Utah, United States). The University of Amsterdam and King's College London have been sending students on a regular basis, while we regularly receive direct applications from individuals. As a result, Bachelor and Master students in political science, sociology, economics and law make ongoing contributions to the OSE research activities. For most OSE interns their stay at the OSE is a mandatory part of their curriculum, for which they receive a scholarship.

The OSE provides these students with opportunities to network with top researchers and politicians in various fields, as well as (in case of an outstanding internship) giving them letters of recommendation that they can take to future job interviews. For many interns at the OSE, it is the first time that they get to experience work in research, which often proves to be invaluable in their future career decisions. Interns are involved at different levels in a variety of research projects covering all employment and social fields. They help by drafting minutes of events, qualitative research, editing work, interview transcriptions, translation and drafting the OSE Activity Reports. Interns' written pieces regularly appear in OSE publications, and are acknowledged as such (in several cases, interns have been recognised as co-authors).

In 2019, the OSE welcomed three research interns and two visiting PhD researchers. Chiara Belletti was the lead author (with Bart Vanhercke) of the Italian case study of the EFISTU project and co-authored the project's Final report (Stevenson et al. 2019); she provided research assistance for the ESPN report on Financing Social Protection and co-authored the

ETUI Policy Brief on sickness benefits (Spasova et al. 2020). Mathis Porchez co-authored the ESPN ad hoc report on decent work in Thailand (Pena Casas et al. 2019) and co-authored the INVOTUNES analytical report on trade union strategies in the Semester (Spasova *et al.* 2020). As a visiting PhD researcher, Francesco Corti co-authored the report for the EESC on integrating the European Pillar of Social Rights into the roadmap for deepening EMU (Sabato et al. 2019) as well as two opinion pieces (with Sebastiano Sabato and Bart Vanhercke) on the EU Social Imbalances Procedure. Abigail Woodfield provided key input for the 2019 publications on inequalities in access to healthcare as well as on long-term care; she also aided the quality check of ESPN deliverables and produced a draft of the 2018 OSE Activity report

Table 1. OSE research internships in 2019

<i>Name</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Sending Institution</i>
1. Francesco Corti	<i>7 November 2018 – 29 January 2019</i>	<i>Università degli Studi di Milano (visiting PhD researcher)</i>
2. Chiara Belletti	<i>1 April 2019 – 31 July 2019</i>	<i>Università degli Studi di Milano</i>
3. Abigail Woodfield	<i>7 May 2019 – 23 July 2019</i>	<i>Brigham Young University</i>
4. Mathis Porchez	<i>2 September 2019 – 2 October 2019</i>	<i>King's College London</i>
5. Sophie Klara Dura	<i>4 November 2019 – 31 December 2019</i>	<i>University of Amsterdam (visiting PhD researcher)</i>

3. NUTS AND BOLTS: RESEARCH PROJECTS CARRIED OUT IN 2019

This section provides a snapshot overview of the 11 research projects managed by the OSE team in 2019. More details on each of them can be found on the Project page of the OSE website (in EN and FR).

3.1 SOCIAL POLICY IN THE EUROPEAN UNION 1999-2019: THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD (2019)

This research project culminated in the 20th edition of Social policy in the EU: state of play. This anniversary edition looks back at the main developments in EU social policymaking over the past two decades. Key questions addressed in this volume include: what was the place of the social dimension during the financial and economic crisis?; who has driven, and who has put a brake on, EU social policymaking?; which instruments does the EU have at its disposal for 'market correcting' policies?; and what are the next steps in the further

implementation of the EU's social dimension, especially in the context of the European Pillar of Social Rights? Despite many optimistic statements by the EU leaders, social policy remains a 'nice to have' item (if and when the economic and political context allows for it), not a 'must have'. Contributors to this edition: Denis Bouget, Rob Cornelissen, Valerie D'Erman, Frederic De Wispelaere, Boris Fronteddu, Sacha Garben, Paolo Graziano, Roberta Guerrina, Philippe Pochet, Laura Polverari, Jean-Paul Tricart, Bart Vanhercke and Amy Verdun

3.2 THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL POLICY NETWORK 2, EUROPEAN COMMISSION: ESPN2 (2018-2019)

The 'ESPN1' consortium successfully secured the continuation of this Commission-funded network. The ESPN2 currently covers 35 countries: the 28 EU countries as well as seven candidate and potential candidate countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYR of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey. It also provides ad hoc social policy analysis for an additional set of countries inside and outside Europe. Finally, the ESPN acts as the secretariat to MISSOC (Mutual Information Systems on Social Protection). At the heart of ESPN2 are still 35 Country Teams of independent social policy experts who are supported and coordinated by a central team of international experts.

In 2019, the OSE has managed regular Thematic Reports, including the drafting of Synthesis Reports on in-work poverty in Europe (lead author Ramón Peña-Casas) and social protection expenditure and its financing in Europe (Slavina Spasova and Terry Ward). The OSE was in charge of quality control of the regular Flash Reports (with Eric Marlier). As of 2019, the OSE is also in charge of quality control of the Country Profiles and European Semester Reports and the Economic Reform Programme Reports, produced by the 35 country teams. **OSE researchers involved in this project in 2019:** Stéphanie Coster, Boris Fronteddu, Dalila Ghailani, Ramón Peña-Casas (co-authors), Paola Signorelli (research intern), Slavina Spasova (ESPN Pensions leader and lead researcher) and Bart Vanhercke (ESPN Social Protection leader).

3.3 THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL POLICY NETWORK 2: AD HOC DELIVERABLES, EUROPEAN COMMISSION (2019)

In addition to our regular work for the European Social Policy Network (ESPN), the European Commission asked the OSE to produce several 'ad hoc deliverables' on topical social protection and social inclusion issues. These included a summary report on mapping long-term care quality assurance practices in the EU as well as the Belgian country report on this topic (Sophie Cès and Stéphanie Coster) and the quality control of a review of selected areas of social protection and inclusion policy in Albania (Slavina Spasova). A

report was produced to support the EU-Thailand cooperation on social protection and social inclusion policies contributing to decent work (Ramón Peña-Casas and Dalila Ghailani), and Rita Baeten gave a presentation on healthcare systems in Europe and on long-term care provision for the elderly during the annual EU/China policy dialogue. **OSE researchers involved in this project:** Rita Baeten, Sophie Cès, Stéphanie Coster, Dalila Ghailani, Ramón Peña-Casas, Slavina Spasova and Bart Vanhercke, with Mathis Porchez (research intern).

3.4 FOLLOW UP OF EU LEVEL DEVELOPMENTS WITH AN IMPACT ON HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS: RIZIV/INAMI (2018-2019)

This project provides the Belgian National Institute for Health and Disability Insurance (NIHDI) and the Belgian health authorities with expertise and analysis on EU policies with a potential impact on national health care systems. This project is the continuation of a longstanding collaboration between the OSE and the NIHDI in this field. The 2018-2019 project included: a) expert advice on EU policies with a potential impact on health care systems in general and the Belgian health care system in particular; b) the publication of a quarterly electronic newsletter on recent EU developments with a potential impact on national health care systems; and c) research on:

- Cross-border telemedicine: the involvement of Belgian actors
- European Reference Networks of centres of excellence: developments and impact
- Inequalities in access to healthcare in Belgium, in a European perspective

OSE researchers involved in this project: Rita Baeten (lead researcher), Sophie Cès, Dalila Ghailani, Boris Fronteddu and Bart Vanhercke

3.5 SICKNESS BENEFITS IN THE EU, ETUI (2019-2020)

The European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) asked the OSE to produce a Policy Brief on sickness benefits in the EU. It aims to a) review the current legal arrangements as well as the take-up of sick leave, sick pay and sickness benefits in the Member States; b) discuss the payment arrangements and the evolution of sick pay and sickness benefit expenditure, as well as current reform trends across the EU; and c) consider key challenges related to gender, age and socio-economic status. The work draws on earlier Synthesis Reports produced by the OSE in the context of the ESPN. **OSE researchers involved in this project:** Slavina Spasova (lead researcher) and Bart Vanhercke, with Denis Bouget, ETUI and Chiara Belletti (OSE research intern from the University of Milan). The Policy Brief will be published in 2020.

3.6 NATIONAL TRADE UNION INVOLVEMENT IN THE EUROPEAN SEMESTER, EUROPEAN COMMISSION: INVOTUNES (2018-2019)

The OSE is the lead partner of this Commission-funded project. The partnership is made up of ten institutions. These include universities (the University of Macerata, Uppsala University and University of Turku); trade union-related research institutes (the European Social Observatory, the Hans Boeckler Foundation's Institute of Economic and Social Research (WSI), and the Institute for Social and Trade Union Research (ISTUR)); independent research centres (the Centre for Studies for Social Intervention (CESIS)), the Bulgarian Academy of Science and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) is an associate partner in the project.

INVOTUNES explores the extent to which national trade unions are involved (if at all) in the European Semester, the access channels and impact of such involvement and finally the linkages between the European Semester and national social dialogue. At the core of the project are eight case studies of eight countries: Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Portugal and Sweden. During 2019, these case studies were further developed into OSE Working Papers, while work continued on the three Analytical Reports. Françoise Verri organised several national project workshops during 2019. The project will develop concrete recommendations for national and EU trade union organisations and for policymakers, with a view to ensuring effective and quality trade union involvement in the Semester. **OSE researchers involved in this project:** Dalila Ghailani, Ramón Peña-Casas, Sebastiano Sabato (scientific coordinator), Slavina Spasova and Bart Vanhercke (project manager), with Mathis Porchez (research intern).

3.7 PUBLIC SERVICE TRADE UNIONS: EFFECTIVE INTERVENTION IN THE EUROPEAN SEMESTER, EUROPEAN PUBLIC SECTOR UNION: EFISTU (2018-2019)

The OSE is a partner in this project led by the European Public Sector Union (EPSU) and funded by the European Commission. The partnership also includes the School of Education of the University of Nottingham. The project aims at investigating the extent to which public sector trade unions – in particular in the area of education – have been involved (if at all) in the European Semester. The project is intended to provide public sector trade unions with tools to achieve effective involvement in the Semester. During 2019, the OSE conducted case studies in France and Italy, and contributed to writing the Final Report of the project. **OSE researchers involved in this project:** Dalila Ghailani, Ramón Peña-Casas, Sebastiano Sabato, Bart Vanhercke (project leader), with Chiara Belletti (research intern) and Francesco Corti (visiting PhD researcher).

3.8 INTEGRATING THE EUROPEAN PILLAR OF SOCIAL RIGHTS INTO THE ROADMAP FOR DEEPENING EUROPE'S ECONOMIC AND MONETARY UNION: EESC II

The aim of this study for the Workers' Group of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), which started in 2018, is twofold: a) to analyse concrete proposals aimed at integrating the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR) into EU policies; and b) to provide policy-makers and stakeholders with specific recommendations to achieve such an objective. The study, which uses qualitative research methods, discusses three policy initiatives: a) the possibility of 'socialising' the EU budget and creating a (social) budget for the Eurozone; b) setting up a macro-economic stabilization instrument for the EMU in the form of an equivalent European Unemployment Benefit Scheme (EUBS); and c) the possibility of striking a new balance between the economic and social dimensions of the EU by setting up a 'Social Imbalances Procedure' (SImp) or a non-binding 'Social Imbalances Framework'. The report was published in 2019 and presented at the EESC. OSE researchers involved in this project: Sebastiano Sabato (lead researcher), Slavina Spasova, Bart Vanhercke and Francesco Corti (visiting PhD researcher).

3.9 EUROPEAN SEMESTER REVIEW: WHICH WAY FORWARD FOR A SOCIAL EUROPE? ESN (2019)

With inequality increasing across Europe and the EU not on track to achieve the Europe 2020 social objectives, the European Social Network (ESN) has again asked the OSE to provide scientific underpinning of its work on the European Semester. The OSE provides cross-country analysis of the issues put forward by the ESN's Reference Group, on the basis of the questionnaires filled out by members of the Group from 24 EU countries. The focus was – among other things – on identifying achievements, progress, challenges and broader trends across a number of areas. Policy areas covered included quality of services, homelessness and housing exclusion, long-term care and de-institutionalisation as well as the social inclusion of immigrants and people with disabilities. The report will provide the substance for ESN proposals regarding the 2019 Country-specific Recommendations. **OSE researchers involved in this project:** Boris Fronteddu (lead researcher), Sebastiano Sabato and Bart Vanhercke.

3.10 REBUILDING AN INCLUSIVE, VALUE-BASED EUROPE OF SOLIDARITY AND TRUST THROUGH SOCIAL INVESTMENTS, EUROPEAN COMMISSION: RE-INVEST (2015 - 2019)

In 2013, as a response to rising inequalities, poverty and distrust in the EU, the European Commission launched a major endeavour to rebalance economic and social policies - the Social Investment Package (SIP). Funded under the Horizon 2020 Programme, the RE-InVEST project aimed to strengthen the philosophical, institutional and empirical underpinnings of the SIP, by means of social investment in human rights and capabilities. The project actively involved European citizens severely affected by the crisis in the co-construction of a more powerful and effective social investment agenda. The OSE contributed to this project by applying the social investment model to public intervention in the health care sector and in the formulation of policy recommendations. **OSE researchers involved in this project:** Rita Baeten (lead researcher) and Sebastiano Sabato. In 2019, Rita Baeten presented the findings during the project's final conference.

3.11 INTERNATIONAL DIGEST: BELGIAN REVIEW FOR SOCIAL SECURITY, FEDERAL PUBLIC SERVICE SOCIAL SECURITY: FPS/SS (2019 -2021)

The OSE was awarded a new contract with the Belgian Federal Public Service Social Security to write the 'European and International Digest' for the quarterly Revue Belge de Sécurité Sociale (RBSS/BTSZ). The Digest will continue to provide a regular overview of international developments (EU, OECD, ILO etc.) that have a direct or indirect impact on social protection and social inclusion policies and debates. As of 2019, this Digest includes information on environmental decisions taken by these institutions with a direct impact on public health and welfare. The goal is to emphasise the increasingly close link between the environment (water quality, air quality, soil quality, etc.) and our daily lives. This points to the need to include these elements in a new, broader understanding of the concept of 'social protection'. The RBSS/BTSZ is available online, in French and Dutch. **OSE researchers involved in this project:** Denis Bouget and Boris Fronteddu (lead researcher).

4. THE PLACES TO BE: OSE EVENTS IN SHORT

This section describes the **nine** events that have been (co-)organised by the OSE throughout 2019. More details can be found on the Past Events [page](#) of the OSE website. An overview of the participation of OSE researchers in events organised by other institutions is provided in Section 5 ('Up close and Personal').

08/01/2019 – Bilan social de l'Union Européenne 2018 – MSH, Nantes – ETUI/OSE Joint Event

To celebrate the 19th edition of their flagship publication, the European Social Observatory (OSE) and the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) jointly present, for the first time in France, the 2018 stock-take of Social Europe – Social Policy in the EU: state of play 2018. The dominant issue in this annual review is the way in which the European Pillar of Social Rights has influenced EU policy making even before it was politically endorsed.

Speakers: Dalila Ghailani (OSE), Philippe Pochet (ETUI), Slavina Spasova (OSE), Bart Vanhercke (OSE). *With:* Pascal Caillaud (CNRS/DCS), Laure Depres (University of Nantes), Pascale Vielle (UCL).

22/01/2019 – Social partners and the European Semester: Belgium and Germany between agency and neglect? – Brussels – INVOTUNES National Workshop and Roundtable Discussion

The draft country case studies for Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, Hungary, Germany, Italy, Portugal and Sweden were the main focus of the 1.5-day mid-term event: the eight country teams presented and discussed fully updated and revised reports, following the feedback received at the first National Workshop (Uppsala, 27-28 September 2018). Furthermore, discussions took place on the initial results of the online survey and on the outline of the horizontal (analytical) work packages. The project's dissemination strategy was also briefly discussed. The second INVOTUNES Roundtable allowed a discussion of intermediate findings with an audience (some 40 in total) of academics (including several Steering Committee members), EU and national stakeholders and policymakers. They provided essential feedback on the first research output, making it possible to plan the further project activities.

Speakers: Birgit Kraemer (WSI/Hans Boeckler Foundation), Dalila Ghailani (OSE). *With:* Tom Bevers (Belgian Federal Public Service Employment/Labour and social dialogue),

Sigfried Caspar (DG Social Affairs & Inclusion/EC), Katja Lehto-Komulainen (ETUC), Jean François Wansart (ACLVB/CGSLB). *Moderator:* Bart Vanhercke (OSE)

18/03/2019 – Eco-social policies in the European Union: state of play 2018 – European Parliament, Brussels – Lunch debate

The European Social Observatory (OSE) and the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) held a lunchtime debate on sustainable welfare, de-growth and eco-social policies in the European Union, as well as the distributional and labour market effects of climate policies.

The event was hosted by Philippe Lambert (Co-Chair of the Greens/European Free Alliance).

With: Philippe Lamberts, Bart Vanhercke (OSE), Milena Buchs (University of Leeds), Sebastiano Sabato (OSE), Béla Galgóczi (ETUI), Claudia Hahn (DG ENV, EC), Georg Zachmann (Bruegel Think tank).

28-29/03/2019 – Rebuilding an Inclusive, Value-based Europe of Solidarity and Trust through Social Investments – Leuven – RE-InVEST Final Conference

The RE-InVEST project held its final conference in the Irish College in Leuven: an opportunity for dialogue between researchers, policy makers, public and social services and civil society organisations. It sketched a full panorama of the 50 reports.

Chairs: Ides Nicaise (HIVA-KU Leuven), Michel Debruyne (Beweging.net), Sandra Araujo (EAPN Portugal), Christina Chert (Fundatia TON), Peter Kelly (The Poverty Alliance), Mike Allen (Focus Ireland), Jeremy Leaman (Loughborough University), Cinzia Bretari (CNCA Italy), Jean-Michel Bonvin (University of Geneva), Jean De Munck (UC Louvain)

Speakers included Ortrud Lessman (University of Hamburg), Rita Baeten (OSE), Frank Vandenbroucke (University of Amsterdam), Sian Jones (EAPN), Jean-Luc Dubois (Institut de Recherche pour le Développement), Mary Murphy (Maynooth University), Marietta Haffner (TU Delft), Michael Lavalette (HOPE University Liverpool), Anne Van Lancker, Maria Jepsen (ETUI), Robert Salais (CNRS), Ides Nicaise (KU Leuven).

28/05/2019 – The European Semester in Central and Eastern Europe: does Europe matter for Bulgarian and Hungarian social partners? – Sofia – INVOTUNES National Workshop and Roundtable Discussion

This 1.5-day workshop was organised around a first in-depth discussion of the three draft Analytical work packages (WPs), dealing with: a) trade union access channels, outputs and outcomes; b) the interplay between national social dialogue and the European Semester;

and c) trade union strategies for Semester involvement. Each of the draft reports were presented by the WP leaders, after which they received feedback from their peers. Furthermore, discussion took place on the dissemination strategy and the next steps in the project. The third INVOTUNES Roundtable discussion on ‘The European Semester in Central and Eastern Europe: does Europe matter for Bulgarian and Hungarian social partners?’ allowed a discussion of intermediate findings with an audience (some 21 in total) of academics, EU and national stakeholders and policymakers.

Chair: Chavdar Hristov (CITUB). *Speakers:* Lyuben Tomev (ISTUR), Fruzsina Albert (Hungarian Academy of Science, Centre for Social Sciences). *Panellists:* Dimitar Brankov (BIA), Marina Kirova (European Semester Officer, EC representation in Bulgaria). *Moderator:* Bart Vanhercke (OSE)

04/07/2019 – Integrating the European Pillar of Social Rights into the roadmap for deepening Europe’s Economic and Monetary Union – EESC, Brussels – Presentation and debate

The event was jointly organised by the European Social Observatory (OSE) and the Workers’ group of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), to discuss the socialisation of the European budget, the foreseeable future of unemployment benefit schemes and a social imbalances procedure for the EU.

Speakers: László Andor (FEPS), Liina Carr (ETUC), Francesco Corti (University of Milan and OSE), Cinzia Del Rio (EESC), Anne Demelenne (EESC), Cosmin Dobran (EC), Jeroen Jutte (DG EMPL, EC), Karl Pichelmann (DG ECFIN, EC), Kelig Puyet (Platform of European Social NGOs), Oliver Röpke (Workers’ Group, EESC), Sebastiano Sabato (OSE), Frank Vandembroucke (University of Amsterdam), Bart Vanhercke (OSE)

13/09/2019 – National social dialogue in Southern Europe: opportunities and threats from the European Semester – Lisbon – INVOTUNES National Workshop and Roundtable Discussion

This 1.5-day workshop was also organised around the discussion of the three draft analytical work packages (WPs): the three WP leaders presented fully updated and revised reports, following the feedback received at the second National Workshop in Sofia. These presentations were followed by in-depth discussion with the country teams and two Steering Committee members. A final session was used to create common ground for the final conference and the final reporting obligations, which was followed by a brief evaluation of the INVOTUNES project (outputs, workshops, coordination). The well-attended third Roundtable discussion on national social dialogue in Southern Europe

allowed a discussion of the key findings of the project with an audience (some 55 in total) of academics, EU and national stakeholders and policymakers.

With: Ana Cardoso (CESIS), Pedro Perista (CESIS), Emmanuele Pavolini (University of Macerata), Antonieta Ministro (Ministry of Labour, Solidarity and Social Security–GEP, Portugal), Catarina Dantas Machado (EC Representation in Portugal), Fernando Marques (CGTP-IN), Salvatore Marra (CGIL), Ana Paula Bernardo (General Union of Workers–UGT), Helena Leal (Portuguese Commerce and Services Confederation–CCP). Moderator: Bart Vanhercke (OSE)

01/10/2019 – Public Service Trade Unions, effective intervention in the European Semester – Brussels – EFISTU Conference

This conference was organised by the European Public Service Union (EPSU), together with the OSE and Nottingham University, to discuss the result of Commission-funded research into the impact of the European Semester on public services. The main focus was on education and the role played by public service trade unions in the Semester process. Five country case studies – Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy and Latvia – were discussed in detail, along with the key recommendations from the research project.

Chairs: Jan Willem Goudriaan (EPSU), Richard Pond (EPSU), Paola Cammili (ETUCE). Speakers: Howard Stevenson (University of Nottingham), Dalila Ghailani (OSE), Ramón Peña-Casas (OSE), Chiara Belletti (OSE, research intern), Bart Vanhercke (OSE). Panel discussants: Bart Vanhercke, Filip Tanay (DG, Employment Unit responsible for Semester), Jan Willem Goudriaan (EPSU), Susan Flocken (ETUCE), Leonard Ebner (CEMR local government employers' organisation), Daniel Wisniewski (EFEE).

03/12/2019 – Social partner involvement in the European Semester – Brussels – INOTUNES Final Conference

This event was organised as part of the European Commission-funded INVOTUNES project. It brought together researchers, EU and national policy makers, social partners and other stakeholders to discuss the present and future role of social partners in the Semester. The project's key findings and the eight case studies – Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Italy, Portugal and Sweden – were examined. Finally, the Roundtable Discussion raised the tricky question of whether Europe should take initiatives, via soft governance or legislations, to encourage Member States to enhance the quality of social partners' involvement in the Semester.

Chairs: Bart Vanhercke (OSE), Ramón Peña-Casas (OSE), Andrea Pritoni (University of Turin), Slavina Spasova (OSE). Speakers: Lorenza Antonucci (OSE), Liina Carr (ETUC),

Maxime Cerutti (Social Affairs Department, Business Europe), Vassil Kirov (Bulgarian Academy of Science), Emmanuele Pavolini (Macerata University), Richard Pond (EPSU), Dalila Ghailani (OSE), Lyuben Tomev (Institute for Social and Trade Union Research), Olli Kangas (University of Tuku), Marcello Natili (University of Macerata), Pedro Perista (CESIS), Heloisa Perista (CESIS), Birgit Kraemes (Hans-Böckler-Stiftung), Fruzsina Albert (HAS), Olle Jansson (Uppsala University), Giovanni Casale (ETUC); Ricardo Rodríguez Contreras (Eurofound), Richard Pond (EPSU), Jonathan Zeitlin (University of Amsterdam) and Ilze Zvidrina (EMCO). *Moderator:* Bart Vanhercke (OSE).

5. UP-CLOSE AND PERSONAL: TEAM MEMBER ACTIVITIES

08/01/2019 – ‘Bilan social’ conférence, Maison des Sciences de l’Homme Ange Guépin (MSH), Nantes

Dalila Ghailani, Slavina Spasova and Bart Vanhercke presented their views during the first-ever conference in France to disseminate the edited volume ‘Social policy in the European Union: state of play 2018’.

22/01/2019 – INVOTUNES Midterm Workshop and Roundtable Discussion – Brussels

Dalila Ghailani (roundtable discussion), Sebastiano Sabato and Slavina Spasova (Strategies for involvement), Ramón Peña-Casas (Belgian case study) and Bart Vanhercke (moderator) presented their views on trade union involvement in the European Semester during this 1.5-day workshop and Roundtable.

21/02/2019 - Progressive Society - Seminar on the State of Well-Being - Brussels

Sebastiano Sabato was invited to present his views during the Seminar on the State of Well-Being organised by the Progressive Society.

26/02/2019 – ETUI Training – European Pillar of Social Rights: how trade union could play an active role in its implementation

Bart Vanhercke presented his views on ‘The European Pillar of Social Rights: Why should trade-unions care?’ during a training session for trade union officers in charge of labour legislation, economic issues and social protection coming from Bulgaria, France, Latvia, Finland, Romania and Spain.

14-15/03/2019 – Conference ‘Towards Resilient Nordic Welfare States’ – Helsinki

Sebastiano Sabato attended the conference ‘Towards Resilient Nordic Welfare States’, organised by the University of Helsinki. He presented a paper on ‘EU’s potential for

promoting the eco-social agenda', co-authored by Matteo Mandelli and Matteo Jessoula (University of Milan).

18/03/2019 – Eco-social policies in the European Union: state of play 2018 – European Parliament, Brussels – Lunch debate

Bart Vanhercke ('Has the Juncker Commission been a game changer?') and Sebastiano Sabato ('Towards a Roadmap for implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights') presented their views during this event hosted by Philippe Lambert (Co-Chair of the Greens/European Free Alliance).

25-26/03/2019- Experts Meeting of the European Social Policy Network - Brussels

Dalila Ghailani and Ramón Peña-Casas presented the main findings and recommendations of the ESPN synthesis report on in-work poverty (IWP). Slavina Spasova presented (with Terry Ward from Applica) the first draft of the ESPN Synthesis report 'Social protection expenditure and its financing in Europe, A study of national policies'.

28/03/2019 – Public hearing of the European Economic and Social Committee on the European Pillar of Social Rights - Brussels

Sebastiano Sabato was invited to participate to the Public hearing on 'the European Pillar of Social Rights – evaluation of the initial implementation and recommendations for the future'. Notably, he contributed to the panel on 'Implementation of the social pillar to date – Reflections from civil society'.

28-29/03/2019 – RE-InVEST Final Conference – Leuven

The RE-InVEST project held its final conference in the Irish College in Leuven: an opportunity for dialogue between researchers, policy makers, public and social services and civil societies. It sketched a full panorama of the 50 reports. Rita Baeten presented the OSE input to the project.

01/04/2019 – Lecture Europe Direct and KULAK University – Kortrijk

Bart Vanhercke was invited by Prof. dr. Steven Van Hecke to give a lecture on 'Social Europe', exchanging views about the topic with Inge Beernaerts, Head of Cabinet of the European Commissioner Marianne Thyssen, at the university satellite campus of the KU Leuven in the city of Kortrijk.

09-11/04/2019 - Trade Union Semester Liaison officers' meeting – Texel (the Netherlands)

Sebastiano Sabato was invited to participate – as an observer – in the meeting of the Trade Union Semester Liaison officers organised by the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC).

11/04/2019 – ETUC - Employment and Labour Market Committee – Brussels

Francesco Corti and Bart Vanhercke presented the EESC report on implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights to this ETUC committee, which meets twice a year to develop policy and is made up of labour market policy staff from ETUC affiliates as well as the European sectoral federations (ETUFs).

04/05/2019 – Social Europe Conference – Budapest

Bart Vanhercke presented his views at a conference organised by the Institute for Social Democracy - at the initiative of László Andor and Bertalan Tóth, president of the Hungarian Socialist Party - on the state of European societies and on the possibility of a social union.

09/05/2019 – Workshop “Atypische arbeidsvormen in de werknemersverzekering: hoe zelfstandigen en platformarbeid sociaal verzekerd krijgen?” – Amsterdam

Slavina Spasova and Bart Vanhercke presented the ESPN report on ‘Access to social protection for the self-employed in Europe’ at a workshop organised by Tilburg University and the Netherlands Institute for Social Security (NISZ), at the initiative of Paul Schoukens (KULeuven).

16/05/2019 – INGRID-2 third General Assembly meeting – Leuven

Bart Vanhercke presented the most recent ‘Social policy in the EU: State of play’ edited volume to the General Assembly of the InGRID H2020 network of European research infrastructure.

21/05/ 2019 – Council of European Studies conference – Madrid

During this conference, Rita Baeten presented a paper, jointly drafted with Slavina Spasova and Bart Vanhercke, on Inequalities in access to healthcare in the EU and ‘soft’ EU guidance growing teeth.

24/05/2019 – EU-China Policy Dialogue – Brussels

During this exchange between the Commission and a Chinese delegation on social policies, Rita Baeten gave a presentation on Healthcare systems in Europe and on Long-term care provision for the elderly in Europe.

28/05/2019 – INVOTUNES Roundtable Discussion – Sofia

Dalila Ghailani (plenary discussion), Slavina Spasova (trade union strategies for Semester involvement), Sebastiano Sabato (discussion of transversal WPs), Ramón Peña-Casas (discussant on access channels) and Bart Vanhercke (moderator) presented their views on trade union involvement in the European Semester during this 1.5-day workshop and Roundtable.

05/06/2019 – a European unemployment benefit scheme: 40 years of standstill? –

Brussels - Confederation of Christian Trade Unions of Belgium (ACV/ CSC)

The ACV/CSC invited Boris Fronteddu to present the different approaches to a European unemployment benefit scheme, based on Günther Schmid's OSE Opinion paper, at a brainstorming meeting organised by the Social Security Working group (Chris Serroyen).

12/06/2019 – Federatie van vrije beroepen (Federation of liberal professions) - Brussels

At this conference on the Directive on a proportionality test for regulation in liberal professions (Directive (EU) 2018/958), Rita Baeten gave a presentation on the impact of the Directive on the regulation of health professions.

17/06/2019 – Workshop 'Challenges of Welfare Policies in Central and Eastern Europe', Dubrovnik

Slavina Spasova was invited to make a presentation on 'Long-term Care for the elderly in Central and Eastern Europe in the making' at this workshop organized by the University of Zagreb, Centre for Advanced Academic Studies in Dubrovnik, Croatia.

13/06/2019 – Conference 'Implementing and enforcing the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR): Quo Vadis?' - Brussels

Sebastiano Sabato was invited to participate in the conference 'Implementing and enforcing the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR): Quo Vadis?' organised by the European Trade Union Institute. He gave a speech on 'The implementation of the EPSR through the European Semester'.

20/06/2019 – Multi-stakeholder Roundtable, on the Economy of Well-being and EU Economic Governance – Brussels

Bart Vanhercke spoke at an event organised by the 'All Policies for a Healthy Europe' initiative and the Finnish Presidency of the Council of the EU, focusing on the European Pillar of Social Rights and its implementation through the European Semester.

27-28/06/2019 – European Semester 2019 – Brussels – Reference Group Meeting

Sebastiano Sabato and Bart Vanhercke presented the cross-country analysis of the questionnaires filled out by ESN members from 24 EU countries, and engaged in a vivid dialogue during the policy discussion about the European Semester with ESN members and European Commission officials (Jeroen Jutte, Jiri Svarc and Ana Carla Pereira).

04/07/2019 – Integrating the European Pillar of Social Rights into the roadmap for deepening Europe's Economic and Monetary Union – EESC, Brussels – Presentation and debate

Bart Vanhercke and Sebastiano Sabato presented their views on the socialisation of the European budget, the foreseeable future of unemployment benefits schemes and a social

imbalances procedure for the EU during this conference that was jointly organised by the OSE and the Workers' group of the EESC.

10/07/2019 – Roundtable discussion on upward socioeconomic convergence – Brussels

Bart Vanhercke shared his views on the future of the social dimension of the EU during this closed Roundtable discussion organised by the Dutch Permanent Representation to the EU, with participants from the Commission, Parliament, social partners, NGOs, think tanks and Member States.

13/09/2010 – INVOTUNES National Workshop and Roundtable Discussion – Lisbon

Dalila Ghailani (plenary discussion), Slavina Spasova (trade union strategies for Semester involvement), Ramón Peña-Casas (plenary discussion) and Bart Vanhercke (moderator) presented their views on trade union involvement in the European Semester during this 1.5-day workshop and Roundtable.

26-27/09/2019 – ESPN Expert meeting – Brussels

Slavina Spasova presented a review of the 2018-9 ESPN Flash Reports during a session chaired by Bart Vanhercke, who also chaired the session on dissemination at this 2-day meeting.

01/10/2019 – EFISTU Final Conference – Brussels

Chiara Belletti (Italian case study), Dalila Ghailani and Ramón Peña-Casas (French case study) and Bart Vanhercke (Italian case study and moderator of the final panel discussion) presented their views during this final conference about effective intervention in the European Semester of public service trade unions. Event organised by EPSU, together with the OSE and Nottingham University.

11/11/2019 – Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence, University of Edinburgh – Edinburgh

Bart Vanhercke was invited as a visiting scholar to give a Jean Monnet lecture for students of the School of Social and Political Science, at the invitation of Dr. Elke Heins, on 'Social policy in the EU: a state of play'.

14-15/11/2019 - MISSOC Network Meeting – Helsinki

Dalila Ghailani and Ramón Peña-Casas (European Social Observatory, OSE) presented the main findings and recommendations of the ESPN synthesis report on in-work poverty.

22/11/2019 - In-work poverty in Europe. A study of national policies – Catholic University of Louvain

Ramón Peña-Casas and Dalila Ghailani were invited to give a lecture to the students of the Master's in Labour Sciences in their course on the Labour context in Europe. They presented the main findings and recommendations of the ESPN synthesis report on in-work poverty.

26/11/2019 - EU Social Protection Committee – Brussels

Dalila Ghailani and Ramón Peña-Casas (European Social Observatory, OSE) presented the main findings and recommendations of the ESPN synthesis report on in-work poverty.

03/12/2019 – INVOTUNES Final Conference – Brussels

Dalila Ghailani (Belgian case study), Ramón Peña-Casas (Belgian case study), Sebastiano Sabato (plenary discussion), Slavina Spasova (Strategies for trade union involvement and panel discussion moderator) and Bart Vanhercke (conference chair and panel discussion moderator) presented their views on trade union involvement in the European Semester during this 1-day final conference.

06/12/2019 – European Semester Group (ESG) meeting, European Economic and Social Committee – Brussels

Francesco Corti, Sebastiano Sabato and Bart Vanhercke presented the study on integrating the European Pillar of Social Rights into the roadmap for deepening EMU during this European Semester Group, which replaces the EESC's earlier Europe 2020 Steering Committee.

6. OUTPUT DATA: THE OSE'S REACH

6.1 PUBLICATIONS

As illustrated in Table 1, the OSE team has produced 28 publications in 2019 (as compared to 24 in 2018). This number includes three book chapters, five journal articles, two papers and 12 reports. In addition, 6 digests and opinions have been written. The details of these OSE publications are given in Section 7 below.

Table 1. Type and number of OSE publications in 2019

<i>Type of publication</i>	<i>Number</i>
Articles	5
Papers	2
Reports	12
Book chapters	3
Digests and opinions	6
Edited volumes/books	N/A
Total	28

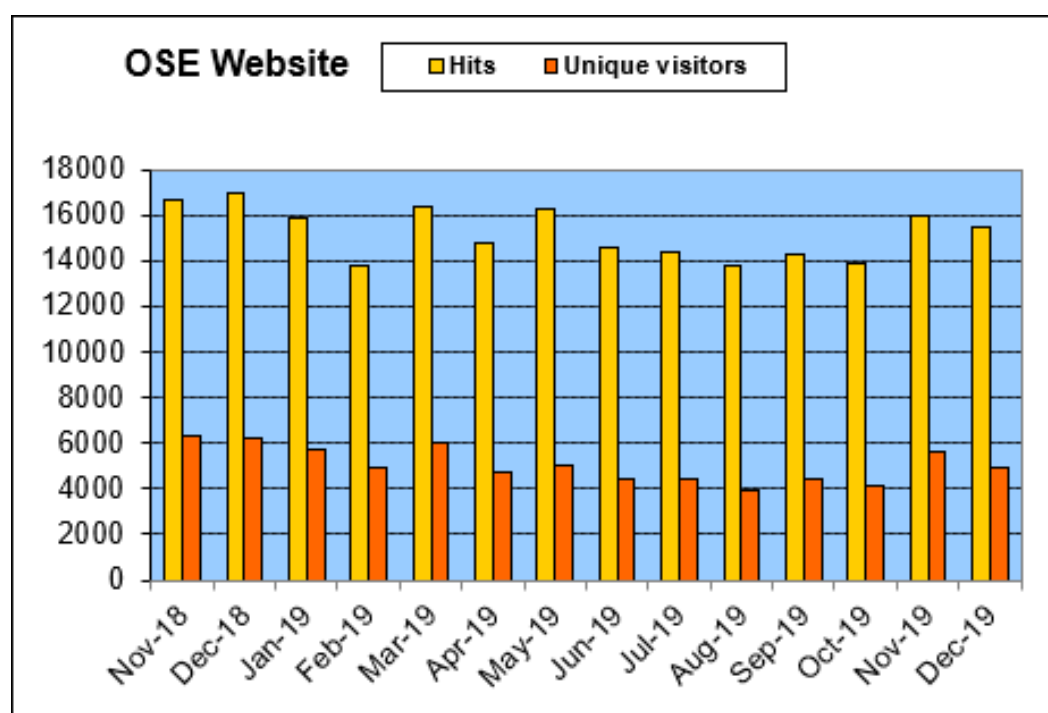
Publications by OSE researchers have been cited well over 5,000 times – 3,108 times since 2015 – in the scholarly literature, across an array of publishing formats and disciplines (Source: Google Scholar). Google Scholar harvests publications of all types across the internet, giving students and researchers easy access to the OSE's work through the familiar format of Google. However, it should be noted that Google Scholar is largely limited to English publications, while the OSE continues to publish in French and (occasionally) Dutch. Google Scholar also fails to include the most up-to-date version of publications, as there is a two-month lag between publication and appearance on Google Scholar. Most importantly, such a citation tool obviously ignores the fact that some OSE publications may not be quoted but are actively used as background material (e.g. for stakeholders and policymakers) and as food for thought for internal discussions (e.g. in European institutions), while other publications (e.g. some of the deliverables written for the European institutions) are published without the author's name.

6.2 THE OSE WEBSITE: STRUCTURE AND VISITORS

The OSE website is available in [English](#) and [French](#), and is structured as follows:

- The welcome page highlights the latest news, events, publications, activities, and appearances in the media of the OSE;
- The ‘Contact’ page explains how to reach the OSE, both electronically and physically, while the ‘Team’ page provides information (incl. publications) on most team members;
- The ‘Agenda’ section displays upcoming events hosted by the OSE (and affiliates) detailing the event’s content, date, location, and contact information, as well as various network activities;
- Information about past events is available through a link on this page;
- Many OSE publications can be accessed through the ‘[Publications](#)’ page, which provides a chronological list of published works by present and past OSE researchers, including the OSE Working Paper Series. Sorted by year, the prolific ‘Publications’ section displays the commitment shown by the OSE researchers to their subjects.
- On the ‘project’ page, interested readers can find current and past projects in which the OSE team were involved, with links to key documents and partners in OSE research;
- Finally, the ‘Links’ page is a tool for additional research, as it gives an extensive list of various NGOs, institutions, organisations, research fields, etc.

As illustrated in Graph 1 and Table 2, the total number of hits on the OSE website varied between 13,800 and 16,300 hits per month in 2019. The number of *unique visitors* – which are counted only once no matter how many times they visit the site – ranges between 3,900 and 6,000 visitors per month: on average, more than 4,800 unique visitors came to visit every month in 2019.

Graph 1: Visitors and unique visitors per month to the OSE website

Source: AWAT Service linked to web hosting

The OSE website is given a light update on a weekly basis and is fully updated at the time of every OSE Flash News publication or new OSE event. We continue to work on the new OSE website (using Drupal Open Source content management system), to make it easier to include multimedia content and sharing functions and to manage the content, and in order to have an attractive layout on a range of devices (PC, tablet, smartphone).

Table 2: Traffic on the OSE website in 2019

Month	Hits	Visitors
Jan 2019	15,894	5,670
Feb 2019	13,816	4,925
Mar 2019	16,340	6,023
Apr 2019	14,791	4,679
May 2019	16,221	5,040
Jun 2019	14,563	4,471
Jul 2019	14,344	4,386
Aug 2019	13,809	3,938
Sep 2019	14,309	4,426
Oct 2019	13,873	4,122
Nov 2019	15,940	5,570
Dec 2019	15,492	4,880
Average	14,949	4,844

6.3 OSE PUBLICATIONS: DOWNLOADS

Nine OSE Working Papers have been issued in the OSE Working Paper Series in 2019 (compared to one paper in 2018): taken together, these new papers have been downloaded well over 3,000 times during 2019.

Table 3. OSE Working Papers issued in 2019: downloads from Website

	Number of downloads
Albert, F. (2019), 'Squeezed out from the policy-making processes? The European Semester in a context of weakened social partnership. Case study Hungary'. National trade union involvement in the European Semester (INVOTUNES) project. OSE Working Paper Series, Research Paper No. 37, Brussels: European Social Observatory, May, 33 p.	196
Bensemme, S. and Baeten, R. (2019), 'Cross border medicine: practices and challenges'. OSE Paper Series, Research Paper NO. 44, October 2019, 63 p.	469
Jansson, O., Jansson, J. and Ottosson, J. (2019), 'Neither sticks nor carrots: Swedish trade union involvement in the European Semester. Case study Sweden'. National trade union involvement in the European Semester (INVOTUNES) project. OSE Working Paper Series, Research Paper No. 42, Brussels: European Social Observatory, June, 29 p.	184
Kangas O. (2019), 'Hand in hand, or influencing by stealth? Finnish trade union involvement in the European Semester. Case study Finland.' National trade union involvement in the European Semester (INVOTUNES) project. OSE Working Paper Series, Research Paper No. 43, Brussels: European Social Observatory, September, 41 p.	145
Pavolini, E. and Natili, M. (2019), 'From an 'intrusion' to a 'window of opportunity'? Influencing the national debate through the European Semester. Case study Italy.' National trade union involvement in the European Semester (INVOTUNES) project. OSE Working Paper Series, Research Paper No. 38, Brussels: European Social Observatory, May, 37 p.	270
Peña-Casas R. and Ghailani D., 'Belgian trade unions and the European Semester: reciprocal but limited influence. Case study Belgium.' National trade union involvement in the European Semester (INVOTUNES) project. OSE Working Paper Series, Research Paper No. 40, Brussels: European Social Observatory, May, 38 p.	243
Perista, P. and Perista, H. (2019), 'Just being heard? Engaging in the European Semester in the shadow of macroeconomic surveillance. Case study Portugal.' National trade union involvement in the European Semester (INVOTUNES) project. OSE Working Paper Series, Research Paper No. 41, Brussels: European Social Observatory, May, 32 p.	177
Tomev, L., Daskalova, N., Kostov, L. and Ivanov, M. (2019), 'What Europe says matters: the European Semester as a catalyst to overcome national social dialogue blockages? Case study Bulgaria.' National trade union involvement in the European Semester (INVOTUNES) project. OSE Working Paper Series, Research Paper No. 36, Brussels: European Social Observatory, May, 38 p.	314

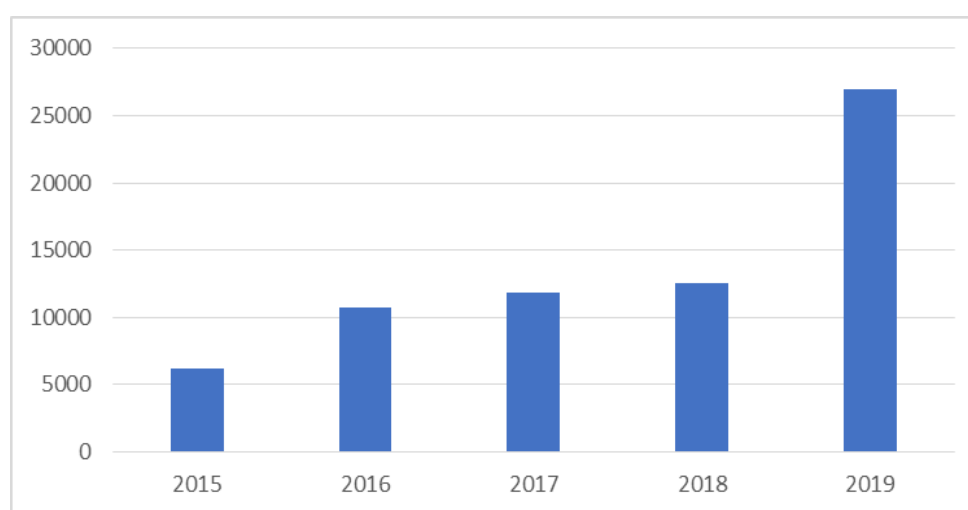
Schmid G. (2019), 'European Unemployment Insurance? A more modest approach in the short term, more ambition in the long term', OSE Paper Series, Opinion Paper No.20, May 2019, 26p.	1243
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If we consider *all the OSE working papers* published until December 2019 – 67 working papers: 35 Research Papers, 20 Opinion Papers and 12 Briefing Papers – the total number of downloads *during 2019* exceeds 17,000. The data indicates that older OSE Papers **continue to be downloaded** in significant numbers in the years after they have been published.

Another indication of the OSE's reach is dissemination of the **ESPN Synthesis Reports**, to which the OSE team actively contributes – mostly as (lead) authors – for all issues concerning the broad area of 'Social Protection'. Synthesis reports have been brought to the attention of the Social Protection Committee (In-Depth Reviews-IDR), the SPC's Working Group on Ageing, the SPC's Indicators Subgroup, MISSOC meeting, several EU Presidency conferences, the ETUC, European NGOs etc. Synthesis Reports are also featured in the 'Social Europe e-newsletter' (DG EMPL website), as 'Social Developments' News (DG EMPL website), on the OSE and ESPN Web pages, through social media (incl. the ESPN ResearchGate page) etc.

This has again resulted in impressive download figures for the ESPN Synthesis reports (data provided by the European Commission, May 2020): these reports (two out of three of which are written each year by the OSE) were downloaded more than 25,000 times in 2019 (a very steep increase when compared to previous years), giving the OSE a formidable visibility in the wider research and academic communities (see Graph 2).

Graph 2: downloads Synthesis Reports ESPN (2015-2019)



Source: European Commission

6.4 OSE Newsletters

The 'OSE Flash News' (named 'OSE Newsletter' between 2009 and 2017) was launched in September 2009, and the 'European Health Care News' in 2006.

The Health care Newsletter is sent by the NIHDI/RIZIV/INAMI to the NIHDI's General Council and Insurance Committee, which includes the key stakeholders of the Belgian national health insurance system. Additionally, it is published on the NIHDI and OSE websites and disseminated by the OSE to its registered readership.

Both newsletters have continuously increased their readership, which has now reached more than 1,000 active users for the Health Newsletter (published in three languages) and more than 1,500 for the 'OSE Flash News' (see Table 4). In compliance with the GDPR rules, we work with an 'opt-in registration system' for both: the newsletter and Flash News are only sent to persons who decide to subscribe after they received an invitation to do so by e-mail.

Table 4. OSE Newsletters: 2019 readership

	Number of subscribers (opt-in)
OSE Flash News	1,517
European Health Care News	1,035

7. FOOD FOR THOUGHT: OSE PUBLICATIONS IN 2019

Baeten, R., Spasova, S. en Vanhercke, B. (2019) 'Access to healthcare in the EU: an overall positive trend but important inequalities persist', In: Belgisch Tijdschrift voor Sociale Zekerheid, no. 1/2019, pp.199-219.

Baeten, R., Spasova, S. en Vanhercke, B. (2019), 'Toegang tot gezondheidszorg in de EU: de trend is positief, maar de ongelijkheden hardnekkig', in: Coene et al., Armoede en sociale uitsluiting, Jaarboek 2019. 28th edition, Acco Leuven/Den Haag, pp. 181-202.

Belletti C., Sabato S. and Vanhercke B. (2019), 'Country Case Study: Italy', Public service trade unions: effective intervention in the European Semester (EFISTU) Brussels: European Public Service Union (EPSU), 32 p.

Bensemmane S. and Baeten R. (2019), 'Cross-border telemedicine: practices and challenges', OSE Working Paper Series, Research Paper No.44, October 2019, 63p.

Bensemmane S. and Baeten R. (2019) Télémédecine transfrontalière : pratiques et défis. Synthesis report, OSE, 12 p.

Bensemmane S. and Baeten R. (2019) Grensoverschrijdende telegeneeskunde: praktijken en uitdagingen. Synthesis report, OSE, 12 p.

Bouget, D. (2018), 'Digest européen – Digest International', Revue Belge de Sécurité Sociale 2018, published online in 2019.

Bouget, D. and Fronteddu, B. (2018), "Digest européen – Digest International", Revue Belge de Sécurité Sociale 2018, published online in 2019.

Cès S. and Coster S. (2019), 'Mapping long-term care quality assurance practices in the EU', European Social Policy Network (ESPN), Brussels: European Commission.

Cès S. and Coster S. (2019), 'Mapping long-term care quality assurance practices in the EU: Belgium', European Social Policy Network (ESPN), Brussels: European Commission (mimeo).

Cès S., Hlebec V., Yghemonos S. (2019), 'Valuing Informal Care in Europe', Analytical Review of Existing Valuation Methods, Eurocarer.

Corti F., Sabato S. and Vanhercke B. (2019), 'The European (Social) Union is in need of a Social Imbalances Procedure', EuVisions, 3 May.

Fronteddu, B. and Bouget, D. (2019), 'Digest européen – Digest International', Revue Belge de Sécurité Sociale 2019 (2).

Fronteddu, B., Sabato, S. and Vanhercke, B. (2019), 'Cross-country analysis', in European Social Network (ESN), Social Service for a Social Europe, European Semester 2020.

Bekker, S. and Ghailani, D. (2019), 'Institutional and organizational regulations of part-time work. Regulations and governance of part-time work at the European level', In: Nicolaisen H., Kavli H.C. and Jensen. R.S (Eds.) 'Dualisation of Part-Time Work - The Development of Labour Market Insiders and Outsiders'.

Lambert AS, Cès S, Malembaka EB, Van Durme T, Declercq A and Macq J, (2019), 'Evaluation of bottom-up interventions targeting community-dwelling frail older people in Belgium: methodological challenges and lessons for future comparative effectiveness studies.', *BMC Health Services Research*, volume 19, Article number: 416.

Lambert AS, Legrand C, Cès S, Van Durme T and Macq J (2019), 'Evaluating case management as a complex intervention: lessons for the future', *PLoS ONE* 14(10): e0224286.

Peña-Casas R. and Ghailani D. (2019), 'Country Case Study: France', *Public service trade unions: effective intervention in the European Semester (EFISTU)* Brussels: European Public Service Union (EPSU), 35 p.

Peña-Casas R., Ghailani D, Spasova S. and Vanhercke B. (2019), 'In-work poverty in Europe. A study of national policies', *European Social Policy Network (ESPN)*, Brussels: European Commission.

Peña-Casas R. and Ghailani D. (2019), 'National trade unions and the European Semester: reciprocal influence and something for everyone', *Case study Belgium. OSE Paper Series, Research Paper No.40*, 37 p.

Peña-Casas R., Ghailani D. and Porchez, M. (2019), 'EU-Thailand cooperation on social protection and social inclusion policies contributing to decent work, Ad hoc report', *European Social Policy Network (ESPN)*, Brussels: European Commission.

Sabato S., Vanhercke B. and Corti F. (2019), 'The EU needs a Social Imbalances Procedure', *Social Europe*, 17 July.

Sabato S., Corti F., Vanhercke B. and Spasova S. (2019), 'Integrating the European Pillar of Social Rights into the roadmap for deepening Europe's Economic and Monetary Union', Brussels: *European Economic and Social Committee*, 78 p.

Sabato and Verschraegen (2019), 'The Multi-Level Governance of Social Innovation: How the EU Supports Socially Innovative Initiatives', *Rivista Italiana di Politiche Pubbliche*, 1/2019, pp. 35-66.

Spasova S., Bouget D., Ghailani D., Vanhercke B. (2019), 'Self-employment and social protection: understanding variations between welfare regimes', *Journal of Poverty and Social Justice* (27) 2, June 2019, pp. 157-175.

Spasova, S., Louvaris F., Ch. and Vanhercke, B. (2019), 'Pension Reforms After the Crisis: Bringing Adequacy Back in the Domestic and EU Policy Equation?', in Costa Cabral, N. and Cunha Rodrigues, N. (2019), *In book: The Future of Pension Plans in the EU Internal Market*, pp.283-310.

Spasova S. and Ward T. (2019), 'Social protection expenditure and its financing in Europe, A study of national policies', *European Social Policy Network (ESPN)*, Brussels: European Commission.

Stevenson H., Hagger-Vaughan L., Milner A., Vanhercke B., Belletti C. and Pond R. (2019), 'The European Semester: the challenges for public service trade unions', *EFISTU Final Report*. Brussels: European Public Service Union (EPSU), 29 p.