



European Commission



A More Social Europe

May 2019

TOWARDS A MORE UNITED, STRONGER AND MORE DEMOCRATIC UNION

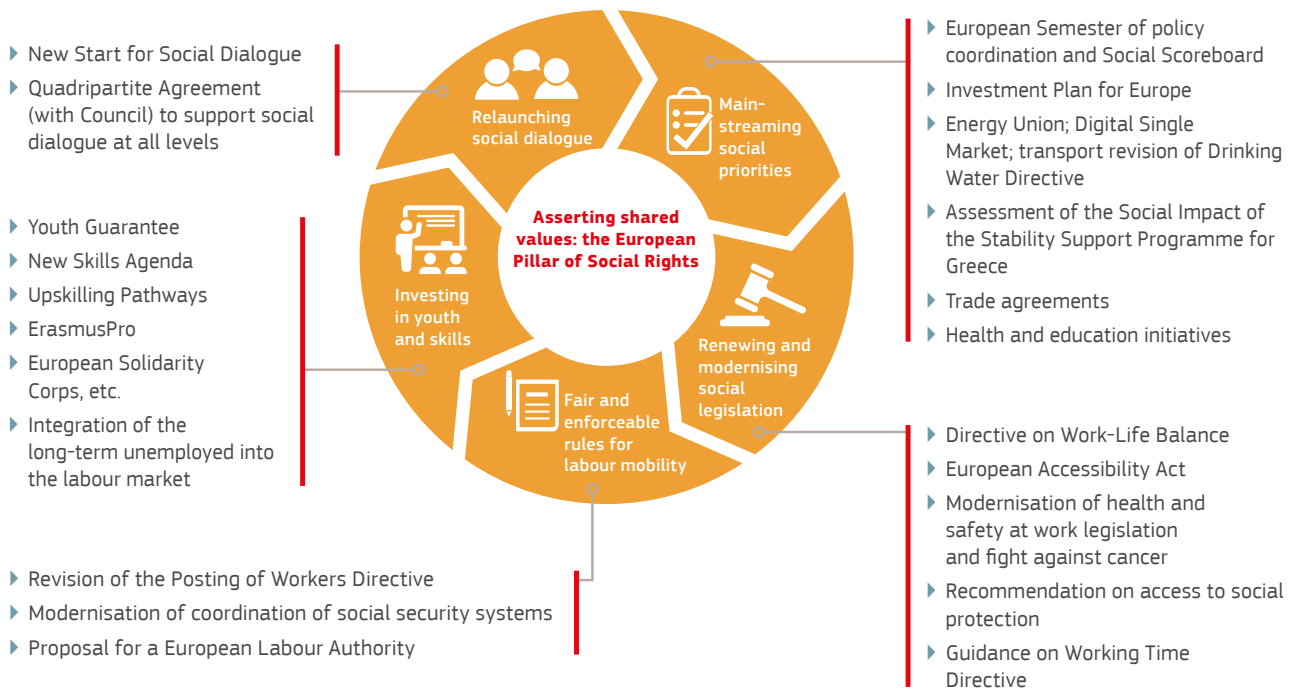


'It is up to us to ensure that the handwriting of the European Social Model is clearly visible in everything we do. Because Europe is the protective shield for all of us who can call this magnificent continent their home.'

Then President-elect Jean-Claude Juncker, speech before the European Parliament, 22 October 2014

Since the start of its mandate, the Juncker Commission has placed social priorities at the core of its work, from the establishment of the European Pillar of Social Rights to mainstreaming social priorities in all policies. We have made significant progress: 12.6 million jobs have been created since the start of the Juncker Commission, unemployment has reached its lowest level since the start of recordings in 2000, and with about 240 million people in employment, the employment level has never been as high as today.

THE JUNCKER COMMISSION ACTED ON SEVERAL FRONTS:



Together with the proclamation of the European Pillar of Social Rights, 24 legal acts proposed by the Commission in the social field have now been agreed upon. A deal was provisionally reached on social security coordination, which needs to be confirmed by the colegislators. The other 2 proposals still on the table are linked to the broader discussion on the next long-term EU budget for 2021–2027, and will be decided in this context.

PUTTING SOCIAL PRIORITIES AT THE HEART OF EUROPE'S AGENDA

President Juncker announced the establishment of a **European Pillar of Social Rights** in his September 2015 State of the Union Address. The Pillar aims to deliver **new and more effective rights for citizens**. It expresses 20 principles and rights which are essential in the light of today's and tomorrow's social realities.

The European Pillar of Social Rights was proclaimed by the Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the Commission at the **Social Summit** for Fair Jobs and Growth on 17 November 2017 in Gothenburg. **This was the first meeting of EU leaders in 20 years entirely dedicated to social issues**. It was co-organised by the European Commission and the Swedish Government.





To make sure the Pillar becomes a reality on the ground, the Commission has taken a number of legislative and non-legislative initiatives where the EU has a legal competence to act. It has developed a Social Scoreboard to monitor Member States' progress on key employment and social indicators. This effort should help to achieve a 'social triple A' for Europe.



RENEWING AND MODERNISING SOCIAL LEGISLATION

The Commission has proposed several updates and complements to EU legislation to bring the social laws in line with the needs of today's world of work and societies.

For instance, the Commission proposed an initiative to **better balance professional and private life** for working parents and carers. The new rules, which are expected to come into force in the months to come, will give more rights to fathers and introduce new ones for carers:

 <p>10 days paternity leave</p> <p>at least, for all working fathers around the time of the birth of their child</p>	 <p>4 month parental leave</p> <p>at least, for each parent, of which 2 are non-transferable</p>	 <p>parents can take parental leave in a flexible form</p>	 <p>5 days carers' leave</p> <p>(at least), per year for all workers</p>
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In today's world of work, more and more workers have atypical contracts. To help make sure these workers have sufficient **transparency and predictability regarding their working conditions**, the European Parliament and the Council agreed on the Commission's proposal to improve transparency and predictability of working conditions. The issue of **access to social protection for workers on atypical contracts as well as the self-employed** is also addressed. Several other legislative initiatives were tabled to modernise the EU legal framework for occupational **health and safety at work**.

For instance, the Commission proposed to limit exposure to certain cancer-causing chemicals in the work place. So far, three batches of new and/or stricter exposure limits have been introduced, which will save more than 100,000 lives in the next 50 years. The first update was presented in May 2016, followed by proposals in January 2017 and April 2018. Since January 2019, all three updates have been agreed upon.

ENSURING FAIR LABOUR MOBILITY

Free movement is one of the most cherished freedoms of our Union: more than 8 in 10 Europeans support the free movement of citizens and the possibility to live, work, study and do business anywhere in the EU. The Commission has put several proposals on the table that will facilitate labour mobility and ensure it is exercised in a fair way. The new rules will, for instance, bring the following advantages:



Posted workers will receive the **same pay for the same work at the same place.**



A better coordination between social security systems, by establishing a closer link between where social contributions are paid and where they are being received. The EU's rules also cover aspects that were not covered previously such as long-term care. The Commission made a proposal to that end in December 2016, for which a provisional deal was found in March 2019 but not yet endorsed by the European Parliament and Council.



Facilitate access for individuals and employers to information, support cooperation between Member States in the cross-border enforcement of EU rules and mediate in cases of cross-border disputes related to labour mobility, thanks to the European Labour Authority. President Juncker announced the creation of this Authority in his State of the Union address of September 2017, the Commission presented an initiative in March 2018, and it was agreed upon in February 2019 in a record time.

INVESTING IN YOUTH AND SKILLS

The **European Social Fund** is the European Union's main means of investing in people, ensuring they are equipped with the right skills needed to deal with challenges and changes on the labour market. It has a particular focus on youth employment.

Investing in Europe's people and their skills, particularly for its young people, to make Europe's economies and societies more cohesive and competitive, as well as more resilient in the light of changes in the world of work. The Commission has front-loaded and strengthened EU funding and developed several initiatives to increase young people's skills.

The **Youth Guarantee** is a commitment to ensure that all young people under the age of 25 receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship or traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education. More than 14 million young people have participated in the scheme.

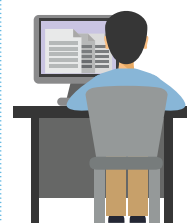


14 million young people have participated in the Youth Guarantee scheme

Via the European Vocational Skills Week, the Commission aims to modernise and promote vocational education and training. Following the resounding success of Erasmus+, we set up **ErasmusPro**, a similar initiative particularly targeted at apprentices. **Since 2017, young apprentices can go on a long-duration placement (6 to 12 months) abroad.**

The Commission has launched the **European Solidarity Corps** to provide both volunteering and professional opportunities for young Europeans and more than 124,000 people have registered. Since its launch, more than 14,250 young people have been participating in a solidarity project.

These efforts have been bearing fruit. Since 2013, there are **2.4 million less young people unemployed and 1.9 million less young people not in employment, education or training.** The youth unemployment rate has gone down faster than the overall unemployment rate, from 21.5% in November 2014 to 14.5% in March 2019.



2.4 million less young people unemployed in the EU



1.9 million less young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs)



more than **14,250** young people have been participating in a European Solidarity Corps project

RELAUNCHING SOCIAL DIALOGUE

The Commission launched a 'New Start for Social Dialogue' in March 2015 to strengthen the role of social partners. A quadripartite agreement was signed in June 2016, reaffirming the **fundamental role of the European social dialogue** as a significant component of EU employment and social policy making. Social partners have been closely involved in this Commission's policy-making processes, in particular as regards the work under the European Pillar of Social Rights and in the context of the European Semester of economic policy coordination.

MAINSTREAMING SOCIAL PRIORITIES ACROSS ALL POLICY DOMAINS

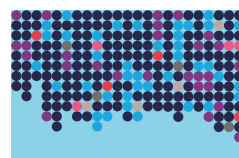
Europe's social priorities cut across all policy domains. This Commission has put social considerations on par with economic ones in all its core activities.

[Investment Plan for Europe:](#)

The so-called Juncker Plan also provides financing for social infrastructure and equipment, as well as strategic investments in social enterprises.



The Commission will help make high capacity broadband widely available, and focus on developing digital skills.



Europe on the Move: This initiative will ensure proper working conditions in the sector and improve passenger rights legislation for persons with reduced mobility.



The EU Energy Poverty Observatory (EPOV) is an innovative initiative by the European Commission to help Member States in their efforts to combat energy poverty. It exists to improve the measuring, monitoring and sharing of knowledge and best practice on energy poverty.

EU
ENERGY POVERTY
Observatory

