



European Economic and Social Committee

WORKERS WANT CONCRETE CHANGES: A SOCIAL EUROPE THAT WORKS FOR PEOPLE

Today the European Commission published its "social package", consisting of 17 different documents including proposals regarding a European Pillar of Social Rights. This is the Juncker Commission's first reaction to the trade union movement's demands.

There is an urgent need to close the social deficit by correcting the imbalance in social and economic policy and repairing the damage done to social Europe after so many years of austerity policy. Workers demand a social Europe that works for them, with concrete and enforceable rights.

The Workers' Group will analyse in detail the Commission's proposals, which consist of a mix of legislative and non-legislative initiatives, to assess how these measure up to civil society's expectations and to the objectives we set out in the EESC position on the European Pillar of Social Rights.

This is an opportune moment for us to reiterate that the workers of Europe are immensely proud of the European social Acquis that we have been instrumental in building and the related enforceable social rights.

We will not support any attempts to weaken the social Acquis by moving towards merely principles and benchmarks.

The European Union needs to provide a positive project for workers, which also addresses the challenges of the 21st century and work 4.0. The Workers' Group has called for measures which will ensure social progress including: ensuring fair working conditions for all, a framework directive for minimum income, social security protection for all, respect for collective bargaining and trade union rights, and a common EU approach to minimum wages.

If the European Union fails to deliver, we will have to live with the consequences: increased nationalism, protectionism and xenophobia that could ultimately lead to its destruction.