European Commission

SOCIAL PRIORITIES UNDER THE JUNCKER COMMISSION

#FutureofEurope #EURoad2Sibiu *12 September 2018*

"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."

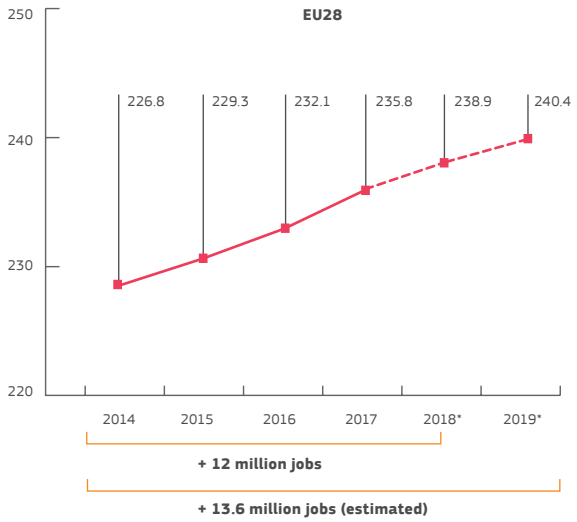
European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker,
Speech before the European Parliament, 22 October 2014

Since the start of its mandate, the Juncker Commission has placed social priorities at the core of its action and at the heart of the debate on the future of Europe.

Progress has been made: around 12 million jobs have been created since the start of the Juncker Commission, unemployment decreased to its lowest level since April 2008 and, with almost 239 million people in a job in the second quarter of 2018, employment levels have reached an all-time high.

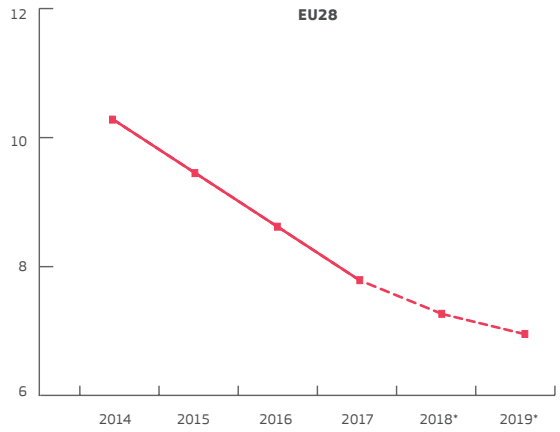
EMPLOYMENT LEVEL IN THE EU 2014–2019* (MILLIONS OF PEOPLE)

* Forecast
Data source: Eurostat, National Accounts, ECFIN.



UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN THE EU 2014–2019* (%)

* Forecast
Data source: Eurostat Labour Force Survey, ECFIN.

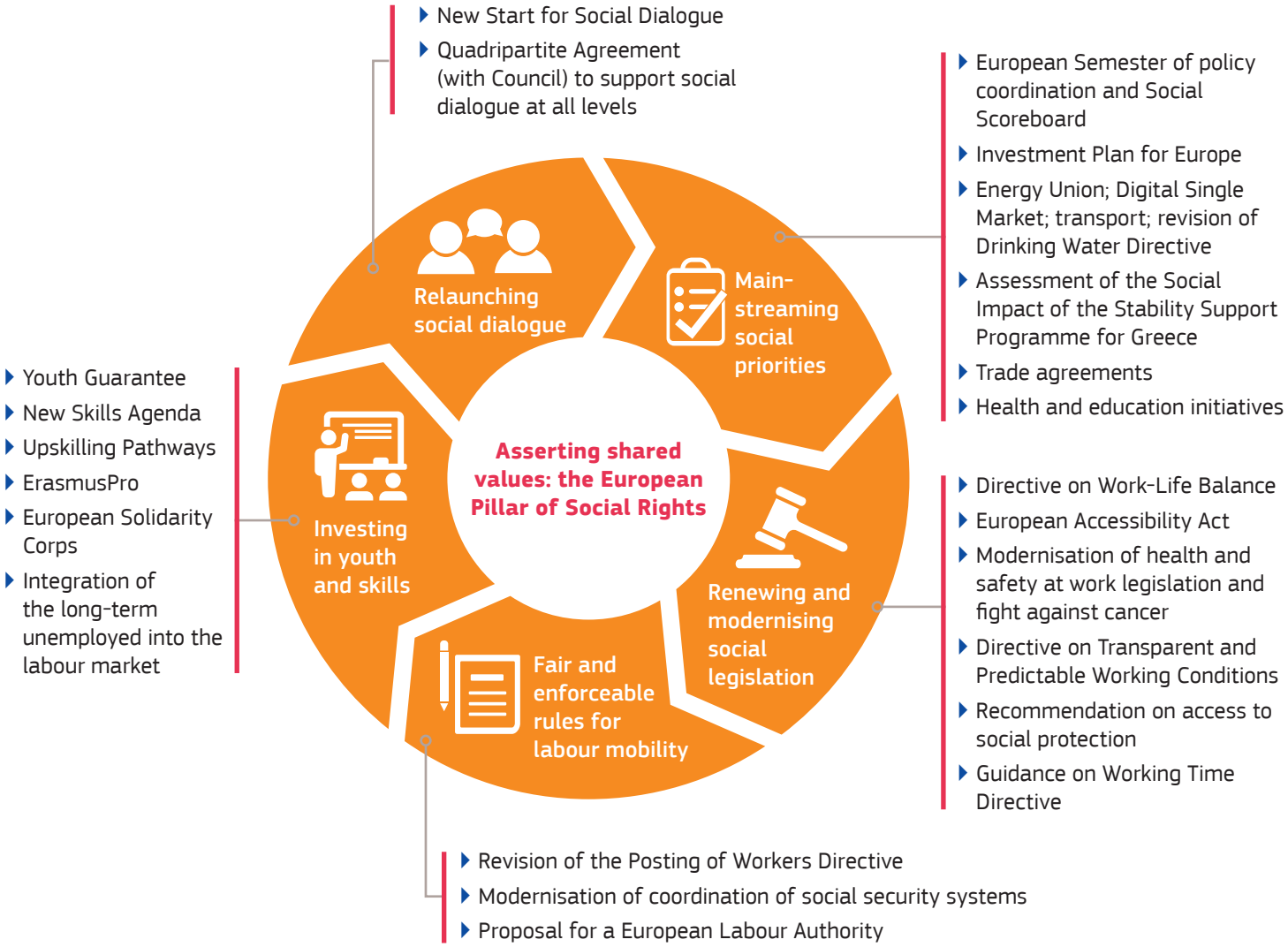


There is wind in Europe's sails but there must be no complacency. As of July 2018, 16.7 million persons were still unemployed, including 3.3 million young people.

At the same time, the world of work and our societies keep changing and there are as many new opportunities as there are challenges.

This Commission has taken and continues to take action to modernise Europe' social market economy and achieve a 'social triple A' for Europe. Several initiatives are still pending before the EU legislator: out of the 27 legal proposals put on the table so far during this mandate in this field, 13 still need to be adopted.

KEY INITIATIVES UNDER THE JUNCKER COMMISSION IN THE EMPLOYMENT & SOCIAL FIELD



The tables below recall progress in these six work streams, according to their status:

- *Presented by Commission / Agreed by European Parliament or Council*
- *Proposal / agreement before the European elections in May 2019*
- *Not involved*

ASSERTING SHARED VALUES: ESTABLISHING A EUROPEAN PILLAR OF SOCIAL RIGHTS

Presented / agreed: 1 2 3 4 5

At the Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth on 17 November 2017, EU Institutions proclaimed the European Pillar of Social Rights. The Pillar expresses 20 principles and rights which are essential in the light of today's and tomorrow's social realities. It is a shared and future-proof commitment to assert and better deliver on the rights that Europeans stand for, from gender equality to social protection and from fair working conditions to lifelong learning. The Pillar serves as a framework for a renewed process of convergence towards better living and working conditions across the EU. Funds like the new European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) and the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) will support the implementation of the Pillar.

	Proposal	Description	Status*			
			European Commission	European Parliament	Council of the European Union	Final agreement
1	Establishment of the European Pillar of Social Rights	President Juncker announced the establishment of a European Pillar of Social Rights in his September 2015 State of the Union Address. Following a public consultation that ran from March to December 2016 and a proposal tabled in April 2017, the Pillar was jointly proclaimed by the Parliament, the Council and the Commission at the Social Summit on 17 November 2017.	April 2017	November 2017	November 2017	November 2017
2	Presentation of the Social Scoreboard to monitor Member States' progress	The Social Scoreboard was presented alongside the European Pillar of Social Rights to monitor Member States' progress on key employment and social indicators, in the spirit of the 'Social Triple A' Europe and mainstreamed as part of the European Semester.	April 2017			
3	Reflection paper on the social dimension of Europe	Following the publication of the Commission's White Paper on the Future of Europe in March 2017, the Commission presented a dedicated reflection paper on Europe's social dimension by 2025.	April 2017			
4	European Social Fund Plus (ESF+)	Following its proposals for the long-term EU budget 2021–2027, the Commission presented on 30 May 2018 the proposal for an ESF+ focusing on investment in people.	May 2018			
5	European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF)	Together with the ESF+, the Commission proposed a revised EGF for the period 2021–2027, which can intervene more effectively to support workers who have lost their jobs.	May 2018			

MAINSTREAMING SOCIAL PRIORITIES: ACKNOWLEDGING THE SOCIAL DIMENSION IN ALL POLICIES

Presented by Commission / Agreed by European Parliament or Council 6 7 8 10

Proposal / agreement before the European elections in May 2019 9 11

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, such as the European Semester of Economic Policy Coordination, the deepening of Economic and Monetary Union, the Investment Plan for Europe (the so-called 'Juncker Plan') and its flagship initiatives for the completion of the Single Market – from the Digital Single Market to the Energy Union – as well as in the EU's trade and international relations.

	Proposal	Description	Status*			
			European Commission	European Parliament	Council of the European Union	Final agreement
6	Mainstreaming of social priorities and indicators in the European Semester of Economic Policy Coordination	The Commission has put greater focus on social priorities and indicators as part of the annual cycle of EU economic governance – the European Semester. Since 2017, the priorities of the European Pillar of Social Rights have been integrated into the Semester, including by the adoption of the new Employment Guidelines.	Yearly cycle			
7	Social impact assessment of the new Stability Support Programme for Greece	When the Commission signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Greece for a new stability support programme, it made sure to publish, for the first time, an *ex ante* social impact assessment of the new programme.	August 2015			
8	Investment Plan for Europe	Under the Investment Plan for Europe, the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) is able to provide financing for social infrastructure and equipment, as well as strategic investments in social enterprises. As of July 2018, 30 projects targeting the social sector in 19 Member States have been signed and are ready to get underway, with another 10 approved for financing. The EFSI also supports microfinance, young entrepreneurs and social enterprises by guaranteeing agreements made by the European Investment Fund and financial intermediaries. Altogether, the EFSI is currently expected to trigger around EUR 13.4 billion in investments in the social sector.	November 2014			

	Proposal	Description	Status*			
			European Commission	European Parliament	Council of the European Union	Final agreement
9	Energy Union	The Commission's 'Clean energy for all Europeans' package focuses on tackling energy poverty by the roots, by adopting a social approach rather than implementing regulated energy prices. In addition, the package includes the establishment of a new Observatory on energy poverty and the exchange of best practices between Member States. Trilogues are currently ongoing.	November 2016			
10	Digital Single Market	Through the WiFi4EU initiative, the Commission seeks to promote free Wi-Fi connectivity for citizens and visitors in public spaces such as parks, squares, public building, libraries, health centres, and museums everywhere in Europe by 2020.	September 2016			
11	Mobility in the transport sector	The EU's transport sector employs more than 5 million Europeans. Under the 'Europe on the Move' initiative, the Commission has put on the table proposals to ensure social fairness and competitiveness in this sector. The objective is to fight against illicit employment practices and 'letterbox companies', and to improve social and employment conditions in the transport sector, particularly for truck drivers.	May 2017			

RENEWING AND MODERNISING SOCIAL LEGISLATION

Presented by Commission / Agreed by European Parliament or Council 12 13 14 16 17 18

Proposal / agreement before the European elections in May 2019 12 14 15

The Commission has proposed several updates to the EU's legislation in order to bring the 'social acquis' in line with the needs of today's world of work. Part of this action is also to clarify and ensure easier take-up and implementation of existing rules.

	Proposal	Description	Status*			
			European Commission	European Parliament	Council of the European Union	Final agreement
12	Legislation on making products and services more accessible for people with disabilities	With the European Accessibility Act, the Commission proposed to set common accessibility requirements for certain key products and services that will help people with disabilities at EU level to participate fully in society. Trilogues are currently ongoing.	December 2015			
13	Communication to improve health and safety at work	With its Communication to improve health and safety at work, the Commission presented an action plan to better protect workers against work-related cancer and to help businesses, in particular small and medium-sized enterprises and micro-enterprises, in their efforts to comply with the rules.	January 2017			
14	Legislation on the protection of workers from exposure to cancer-causing chemicals at work	As part of the Commission's action plan on health and safety at work, exposure to certain cancer-causing chemicals at the workplace has been limited further. So far, three batches of new and / or stricter exposure limits have been introduced. With this Proposal, more than 100,000 lives will be saved in the next 50 years.	First batch: May 2016 Second batch: January 2017 Third batch: April 2018			

	Proposal	Description	Status*			
			European Commission	European Parliament	Council of the European Union	Final agreement
15	Legislation to improve the work-life balance of working parent and carers	This Proposal sets a number of higher minimum standards for parental, paternity and carer's leave, by increasing possibili- ties for men to take up parental and caring respon- sibilities and by supporting women's participation in the labour market.	April 2017			
16	Proposal for a Directive on transparent and predictable working conditions	With this proposal, the Commission wants to make working conditions contracts more transparent and predictable for all types of work, in particular atypical forms of work such as on-demand or part time work.	December 2017			
17	Council Recommendation to ensure access to social protection for workers and the self-employed	The Commission wants to encourage Member States to ensure that everyone who works has access to social protection coverage and employment services on the basis of their contributions, in particular people in non-standard forms of employment and the self-employed.	March 2018			
18	Guidance on the implementation of the Working Time Directive	This document provides guidance on how to interpret various aspects of the Directive in line with a growing body of case law, such as the nature and conditions related to rest periods, on-call and standby periods, the implementa- tion of paid annual leave.	April 2017			

FAIR AND ENFORCEABLE RULES FOR LABOUR MOBILITY

Presented by Commission / Agreed by European Parliament or Council 19 20

Proposal / agreement before the European elections in May 2019 21 22 23

Labour mobility is one of the most cherished freedoms of our EU: more than eight in ten Europeans support the free movement of citizens and the possibility to live, work, study and do business anywhere in the EU. The Commission wants to strengthen labour mobility by establishing clear and fair rules, by facilitating cooperation between Member States and by fighting cases of abuse.

	Proposal	Description	Status*			
			European Commission	European Parliament	Council of the European Union	Final agreement
19	European platform to enhance cooperation in tackling undeclared work	The European Platform tackling undeclared work enhances cooperation between EU countries. It brings together relevant actors involved in fighting undeclared work, to tackle this issue more effectively and efficiently, while fully respecting national competences and procedures. The platform was launched in May 2016.	April 2014			
20	Legislation to revise the rules on the posting of workers	The Proposal establishes the principle 'equal pay for equal work at the same place'. Building on the 2014 Enforcement Directive on Posted Workers, which entered into force in June 2016, it also foresees new arrangements for administrative cooperation between Member States.	March 2016			
21	Legislation to modernise the rules on the coordination of social security systems	This Proposal seeks to establish a closer link between where social contributions are paid and where they are being received. It also provides better tools for cooperation between Member State authorities and covers new aspects such as long-term care.	December 2016			
22	Proposal to establish a European Labour Authority	This new Authority will 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.	March 2018			
23	Proposal to establish a European Social Security Number	The initiative on a European Social Security Number intends to simplify the interactions of mobile citizens with public authorities and to facilitate administrative cooperation across national borders.				

INVESTING IN YOUTH AND SKILLS

Presented by Commission / Agreed by European Parliament or Council 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33

Investing in Europe's human capital and the future of its youth are among the most important actions to make Europe's economies and societies more cohesive, competitive and more resilient in the light of changes in the world of work. By issuing detailed policy guidance, boosting the Youth Guarantee, maximising the use of the European Social Fund and rolling out the New Skills Agenda for Europe, the Commission is supporting actors at all levels. The Commission has also launched a European Solidarity Corps to provide volunteering and occupational opportunities for young Europeans.

	Proposal	Description	Status*			
			European Commission	European Parliament	Council of the European Union	Final agreement
24	Legislation to boost the Youth Guarantee by increasing the pre-financing of the Youth Employment	The Commission proposed to pre-finance EUR 1 billion from the Youth Employment Initiative to boost the Youth Guarantee as of 2015.	February 2015	●	●	●
	Initiative and raising its financing for 2017–2020	Extra funding was secured for the period 2017–2020. The Youth Employment Initiative was topped up by EUR 1.2 billion and matched by EUR 1.2 billion of funding from the European Social Fund.	October 2017	●	●	●
25	Council Recommendation on integrating the long-term unemployed in the labour market	This Recommendation outlines the support to be provided to the long-term unemployed to facilitate their return to work. For instance, it foresees that all jobseekers, who have been out of work for more than 12 months, receive an individual assessment.	September 2015	●	●	●
26	Council Recommendation on "Upskilling Pathways": New Opportunities for Adults	The Recommendation calls on Member States to develop a series of targeted interventions to improve and consolidate support to low skilled/ low qualified adults. For instance, it foresees that each beneficiary would receive a skills' assessment; a learning offer designed around this assessment; and opportunities to have acquired skills validated and recognised.	June 2016	●	●	●

	Proposal	Description	Status*			
			European Commission	European Parliament	Council of the European Union	Final agreement
27	Initiatives to support the modernisation of vocational education and training, including ErasmusPro and the European Quality Framework on Apprenticeships	The new ErasmusPro initiative is aimed at supporting 50,000 placements of vocational learners in companies to spend at least 3 to 12 months abroad for the period 2018–2020. The Council Recommendation on a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships provides 14 key criteria that Member States and stakeholders should use to develop quality and effective apprenticeships.	December 2016 October 2017			
28	Launch of the European Solidarity Corps	The European Solidarity Corps was first mentioned by President Juncker in his 2016 State of the Union Address and launched in December 2016. The initiative gives young people between the ages of 18 and 30 the possibility to sign up for new opportunities to make a contribution to society across the EU, and to gain experience and acquire skills at the start of their career. In September 2018, more than 76,000 young people were registered with the Solidarity Corps, and almost 9,000 participants deployed.	May 2017			
29	Legislation to make skills and qualifications more visible through a revision of Europass and a Recommendation to revise the European Qualifications Framework (under the New Skills Agenda for Europe)	The Commission adopted a revision of the Europass Framework in October 2016, offering people better tools to present their skills and get useful real-time information on skills needs. The review of the European Qualifications Framework allows for a better understanding and comparison of qualifications and available skills in the European labour market.	October 2016 June 2016			

	Proposal	Description	Status*			
30	Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition	A Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition has been established to bring together Member States, companies, social partners, non-profit organisations and education providers that commit to take action to tackle the lack of digital skills in Europe.	●	●	●	●
31	BluePrint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills	The Blueprint is a strategic framework that brings together business, trade unions, education and training providers and public authorities to deliver solutions to sector-specific skills needs in an era of technological change and rapidly evolving skills needs. It was launched in January 2017, focussing on five sectors (automotive; maritime technology; space/geo information; textile, leather clothing & footwear; and tourism). This has been extended with four more sectors in 2018 (construction, steel, additive manufacturing, and maritime shipping) and more sectors will be added in 2019.	●	●	●	●
32	Recommendation on higher education and vocational graduate tracking (under the New Skills Agenda for Europe)	Proposal for a Council Recommendation on graduate tracking to encourage and support Member State authorities to improve the quality and availability of information on how graduates from higher education and vocational training progress in their careers or further education after finishing their studies.	● May 2017	●	●	●
33	The EU Skills Profile Tool for non-EU nationals	Off and online web editor that enables non-EU nationals to present their skills, qualifications, and experiences in a way that is well understood by employers, education and training providers and organisations working with migrants across the EU. Launched in 2017, the tool is regularly updated and improved.	●	●	●	●

RELAUNCHING SOCIAL DIALOGUE

Presented by Commission / Agreed by European Parliament or Council 34 35 36 37

The Commission launched a 'New Start for Social Dialogue' in March 2015 to strengthen the role of social partners at all levels. 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. The agreement identifies actions to be undertaken by the signatories with the aim of further strengthening social dialogue at EU and national level.

	Proposal	Description	Status*			
			European Commission	European Parliament	Council of the European Union	Final agreement
34	Launch of a New Start for Social Dialogue	In March 2015, the European Commission together with the social partners launched a renewed partnership between social partners and the EU institutions to focus on a number of priorities to promote growth and create jobs.	●	●	●	●
35	Quadripartite Agreement as part of the New Start for Social Dialogue	Agreement concluded in June 2016 between the EU employer organisations, trade unions, Presidency of the Council of the European Union and Commission reaffirming the fundamental role of the European social dialogue in the EU's policy making process.	●	●	●	●
36	Legislation on improving working conditions in the fishing sector, implementing an agreement of EU social partners	In 2013, the EU social partners in the fishing sector reached an agreement, which proposed to align EU law with the 'Work in Fishing' Convention 2007 of the International Labour Organisation. The agreement aims at improving the working conditions in the fishing sector and provides for a higher level of protection of EU fishermen.	●	●	●	●
37	Legislation to improve the working conditions of seafarers on board of EU-flagged vessels, implementing a social partners agreement	In July 2017 the Commission adopted a Proposal for a Council Directive implementing the social partners' agreement to reflect the latest changes to the Maritime Labour Convention.	●	●	●	●