



## Commission adopts proposals for a European Labour Authority and for access to social protection

Strasbourg, 13 March 2018

**Today, the European Commission is taking more concrete new initiatives to further deliver on the European Pillar of Social Rights.**

**[Making the European Pillar of Social Rights a reality: Commission makes proposals to increase social fairness](#)**

More specifically, the Commission presents its proposal for a European Labour Authority, as announced by [President Juncker in his 2017 State of the Union address](#), as well as an initiative to ensure access to social protection for all workers and self-employed. These initiatives are accompanied by a Communication on the monitoring of the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights, which will be closely linked to the European Semester of policy coordination.

Vice-President for the Euro and Social Dialogue, Valdis **Dombrovskis**, said: *"Europe is now steadily growing and employment is on the rise, but we have to ensure that growth is more inclusive to the benefit of all. This package sets out a number of steps to make that happen: by making sure the rules for people to live and work across the European Union are well known and enforced, by following up on the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights, pushing the broader momentum for social rights, and by focusing on access to social protection. A stronger social Europe is a more sustainable Europe."*

Marianne **Thyssen**, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, added: *"Our work to ensure fair labour mobility culminates in today's proposal for a European Labour Authority. This is essential for a well-functioning European labour market. It will help citizens and businesses on the move find the right information and strengthen cooperation between the Member States to enforce fair and effective rules. And with our proposal on access to social protection, we are working with Member States to make sure that nobody is left behind. Our aim is to ensure that people have access to adequate benefits no matter how the new world of work evolves."*

Over the last decade, the number of mobile citizens, people living and/or working in another Member State, has almost doubled to reach 17 million in 2017. The **European Labour Authority** will help individuals, businesses and national administrations to get the most out of the opportunities offered by free movement and to ensure fair labour mobility. The objective of the Authority is three-fold.

First, the Authority will provide information to citizens and business on opportunities for jobs, apprenticeships, mobility schemes, recruitments and training, as well as guidance on rights and obligations to live, work and/or operate in another Member State of the EU.

Second, the Authority will support cooperation between national authorities in cross-border situations, by helping them ensure that the EU rules that protect and regulate mobility are easily and effectively followed. Today, an extensive body of EU legislation regulates the free movement of workers and a number of such rules are being amended and modernised, such as for the coordination of social security systems across the EU and issues like posting of workers in the context of service provision. The priority is not just to make these rules fairer and fit-for-purpose but also to make sure that they can be correctly applied and enforced in a fair, simple and effective way in all economic sectors. For instance, the Authority will help improve information exchange, support capacity building among national authorities and assist them in running concerted and joint inspections. This will strengthen mutual trust between actors, improve day-to-day cooperation routines and prevent possible fraud and abuse of rules.

Third, the European Labour Authority will be able to provide mediation and facilitate solutions in case of cross-border disputes, such as in the event of company restructuring involving several Member States.

The European Labour Authority will be established as a new decentralised EU agency and, following the completion of the EU legislative process, should be up and running in 2019. To facilitate the establishment of the Authority and make sure it is rapidly up and running once created, the Commission is also setting up an advisory group composed of key stakeholders to look into the

practical aspects of the future functioning of the Authority.

The Commission is also presenting today a proposal for a **Council Recommendation on access to social protection** for workers and the self-employed. As the world of work evolves due to new lifestyles, business practices and digitisation, social protection systems constantly need to match new realities. Today, almost 40% of people employed are either in an atypical employment situation - meaning that they are not working under a full-time, open-ended contract - or self-employed. Such persons are not always well covered in terms of social security, lacking unemployment insurance or access to pension rights. In line with the European Pillar of Social Rights, this proposal aims to set a direction for Member States to support access to social protection for all workers and self-employed, in particular for those who, due to their employment status, are not sufficiently covered by social security schemes.

The Recommendation foresees:

- to close formal coverage gaps by ensuring that workers and the self-employed in comparable conditions can adhere to corresponding social security systems;
- to offer them adequate effective coverage, so that they can build up and claim adequate entitlements;
- to facilitate the transfer of social security entitlements from one job to the next;
- to provide workers and the self-employed with transparent information about their social security entitlements and obligations.

Finally, as a complement to the initiatives already taken and still to come at EU level, the **Commission outlines its views for the monitoring of the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights**. This will be done by reflecting the priorities of the European Pillar of Social Rights in the annual cycle of the European Semester of policy coordination, which includes an analysis of measures taken and progress made at national level; the provision of technical assistance, benchmarking exercises and exchange of good practices; and the screening of employment and social performances, also with the help of the new [Social Scoreboard](#), which tracks trends and performances across EU Member States in the three areas of principles under the Pillar of Social Rights. The Commission is also publishing today a [staff working document recalling the legal framework for each of the principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights](#), with due regard to the respective competences of the EU and of the Member States, including the role of the social partners and recent EU-level actions in each area.

## Next steps

*European Labour Authority:* In accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure, this proposal for a Regulation will now be examined by the European Parliament and the Council. The ambition of the Commission is for the Authority to be up and running in 2019.

*Access to social protection:* This will now be examined by the Council, which can adopt recommendations on the basis of a Commission proposal in the areas of EU competence.

The Commission will present today's package of initiatives to national Employment and Social Affairs Ministers at the Council meeting in Brussels on 15 March. At the European Council of 22 and 23 March 2018, Heads of State and Government will also come back to addressing the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights.

## Background

The Commission's intention to set up a European Labour Authority was announced by President Juncker in his [State of the Union Address on 13 September 2017](#). The European Labour Authority will complement and facilitate the implementation of ongoing initiatives to ensure fair mobility, including the [reform of the Posting of Workers Directive](#), the [Lex Specialis in the international road transport sector](#) and the [modernisation of EU rules for the coordination of social security systems](#).

Increased labour market flexibility and a growing diversity of forms of work have created new jobs and allowed more people to become professionally active, as recalled during the consultation on the European Pillar of Social Rights and in the [Reflection Paper on the Social Dimension of Europe](#). But they also led to some gaps in social protection coverage that need to be closed. The Commission's proposal for a Council Recommendation on access to social protection is a response to these changing labour market realities, in particular the new forms of work that have developed in recent years. The initiative was announced in April 2017 together with the European Pillar of Social Rights. It is part of the 2017 and 2018 Commission Work Programmes and follows a two-stage consultation of EU social partners.

These initiatives are part of the roll-out of the **European Pillar of Social Rights**, which was jointly proclaimed at the [Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth in Gothenburg in November 2017](#). Delivering on the European Pillar of Social Rights is a shared political commitment and responsibility and

monitoring its implementation is essential for ensuring tangible progress on the ground. This is why in today's Communication, the Commission takes stock of initiatives that it has taken to roll out the Pillar, including an [initiative on work-life balance](#) and [proposal for transparent and predictable working conditions](#) in the European Union.

### **Further information**

[Communication: Monitoring the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights](#)

[Factsheet: European Pillar of Social Rights](#)

[Memo: Question and Answers on the European Labour Authority](#)

[Factsheet: European Pillar of Social Rights: Towards fair labour mobility: Setting up a European Labour Authority](#)

[Memo: Questions & Answers on the Commission's proposal to improve access to social protection for all workers and the self-employed](#)

[Factsheet: European Pillar of Social Rights: Access to social protection for workers and the self-employed](#)

[News item with links to legal documents on the DG Employment website](#)

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