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5 top priorities for the European Pillar of Social Rights

On 17 November, the European Parliament, Council and Commission will sign the Inter-institutional Proclamation of the European Pillar of Social Rights in Göteborg. The Greens/EFA group welcomes this declaration of intent, but wants action to make a social Europe a reality. Here we present some of the key priorities of our group, and the opportunities to make them happen.

1) Social rights for all workers

We want social rights including adequate social security and social protection for all workers, irrespective of status and type of contract.

Opportunity: On 20 December the Commission will publish a proposal to revise the written statement directive. We will take this opportunity to start addressing atypical contracts, social security coverage, social protection, and training opportunities for all workers, irrespective of status and type of contracts.

2) Living wages with decent working conditions for all workers

We want living wages with decent working conditions accessible to all workers throughout their professional life. Living wages should be ensured irrespective of employment status and type of contract.

Opportunity: In the frame of the European Semester, the Commission should recommend Member States to increase progressively minimum wages with the objective of attaining at least 60 % of the respective national median wage, by the means of Country Specific Recommendations.

We will continue putting pressure on the social partners and the Commission to work together to present a proposal for a framework directive on decent working conditions in all forms of employment, extending existing minimum standards to new kinds of employment relationships, based on a thorough impact assessment.

3) Affordable quality care for all dependents

Spending on quality affordable services that are accessible to all along the life-cycle and starting from children is an investment for the future that brings social and economic returns. Economic returns can be measured both in increased labour productivity, higher employment rates, as well as medium and long-

term savings in public budgets (fight against unemployment and poverty, health expenditure, fight against criminality etc.).

Opportunity: by fighting tax evasion and avoidance and tackling corruption in the public administration, we will ensure that adequate public budgets are available for essential quality services.

4) Adequate minimum for all those who need it

Adequate minimum income set above the poverty line should be available and easily accessible to all people who need it. To be effective in the fight against poverty, minimum income schemes should be accompanied by access to quality services and measures to facilitate entry or re-entry in the labour market for people in vulnerable situations, if they can work.

Opportunity: We will continue pushing for a framework directive. If there is no political will to propose the directive, we will put pressure on the Commission to use the European Semester to call on Italy and Greece to introduce adequate minimum income schemes and the other Member States to upward them progressively above the poverty line, which is set at 60% of median income. The Commission should also monitor progress by Member States against set benchmarks and call on Member States to revise their investment priorities of ESIF when needed.

5) Work-life balance for all

Work-life balance measures will have to take into account the diversity of family relations and society as a whole (single parents, same-sex couples, unmarried couples, migrants, refugees, people with disabilities). We focus on care credits as equivalent periods for building up pension rights. Employee-oriented flexibility and smart-working for us does not mean flexicurity in the traditional way and it will have to be designed in a way that supports the worker without causing additional burden. Parental leave should be not transferable and adequately paid and paternity leave should have a minimum of a compulsory two-week fully paid leave.

Opportunity: proposal for a directive on work-life balance for parents and carers; non-legislative package on work-life balance.

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