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Gulf between vision and action is far too wide

European Commission proposals on Social Europe

The European Commission has today presented their proposals for a European Pillar of Social Rights and Work-Life Balance. This coincides with the publication of a reflection paper in which it sets out its long term vision for a Social Europe. The gulf between vision and action is far too wide, says Greens/EFA co-president **Philippe Lamberts**:

"Juncker has failed to keep his promise on delivering a social pillar for the EU. What is needed is concrete action to ensure social progress for all and support the poorest and those left behind in Europe. But there is a huge gulf between the vision set out today and the reality of the measures Juncker's Commission proposes to make it happen.

"After Brexit and the rise of the populists in many EU countries, now should be the time for Juncker to show courage. The EU has to prove that it can deliver a genuinely shared prosperity if it is to gain back the trust of the people. But instead of taking tough action on adequate minimum income or introducing the legislation demanded by the parliament on working conditions, we instead have only consultations. With next to nothing to improve social protections, wages and working conditions, these proposals are little more than a tick box exercise and won't do enough to improve the lives of citizens or rebuild their faith in the EU."

Greens/EFA MEP **Tatjana Ždanoka**, who was co-rapporteur for the European Parliament's report on Work-life Balance, adds:

"It's little coincidence that Juncker has presented his work life balance proposals front and centre of this otherwise lacklustre social pillar. There are plenty of positive headline grabbing initiatives on show today. Ten days paternity leave, five days a year carers' leave, and four months non-transferable parental leave are all things that we have been demanding for a long time. We are very happy that the Commission has finally put forward some of our proposals in its draft legislation, albeit somewhat watered-down. However, if Juncker thinks that this draft legislation will distract people from the fact that the Social Pillar is empty, he is sorely mistaken. He has not even met his own promise to introduce a proposal for longer maternity leave.

"The Commission will have to come up with more than what we have received today to convince EU citizens that it cares for fundamental social rights and gender equality."

Notes:

A more detailed analysis can be found here: https://www.greens-efa.eu/en/article/news/european-pillar-of-social-rights-and-work-life-balance/

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