

# After the Porto Social Summit, regions and cities urge for the recognition of their role in building a Social Europe



□ First Vice-President Vasco Cordeiro and SEDEC Commission chair Anne Karjalainen represented the European Committee of the Regions at the EU Social Summit in Porto on 7-8 May. They welcomed the commitment of the EU Heads of State and Government to strengthen the pledge to work towards a Social Europe, to reinforce social cohesion and to reach the new EU headline targets on jobs, skills and poverty reduction. However, they regretted that the final [Summit Declaration](#) lacks reference to the role of regional and local governments.

First Vice-President Vasco Alves Cordeiro, Member of the Regional Parliament of Azores, said: “The implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights can only succeed if all levels of governance, from European to local, are involved. It is very positive that the need to reinforce territorial and social cohesion, with the involvement of the European, national, regional and local levels of government, has been included in the Social Summit stakeholders’ declaration. However, it is disappointing that the European Council did not recognise our role in the final Summit Declaration. Building a social Europe can only happen with and thanks to local and regional authorities and this worrying trend needs to change, also in view of the Conference on the Future of Europe.”

SEDEC Commission Chair Anne Karjalainen (FI/PES), Member of Kerava City Council and rapporteur of the [opinion](#) requested by the Portuguese EU Council Presidency on the local and regional dimension of the European Pillar of Social Rights, said: “We welcome that the EU leaders have agreed on common goals with the aim of putting people’s well-being and equality at the heart of policy and making social issues an enduring priority in the European Union. However, success will depend on the commitment of all levels of government, from European to local, to building a strong and resilient social Europe, which will guarantee that the green and digital transitions are fair and which will facilitate recovery from the COVID-19 crisis both economically and socially.”

More information:

Mr Cordeiro and Ms Karjalainen participated in the [high-level conference](#) of the Summit organised on Friday with EU leaders and a wide range of stakeholders. At the end of the conference, a [joint declaration](#) was signed.

Portugal’s Prime Minister António Costa [addressed the CoR plenary session](#) last week, underlining the role of cities and regions as key partners for the success of Europe’s fair, green and digital recovery.

EU leaders met in Porto on 8 May to agree on specific quantitative targets and timelines to implement the European Pillar of Social Rights, which was proclaimed in 2017 in Gothenburg. As specified in the [Action Plan](#) presented by the European Commission in March, the new headline targets imply that by 2030 at least 78% of EU population aged 20 to 64 should be in employment, at least 60% of all adults should participate in training every year and the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion should be reduced by at least 15 million.

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