

# Europe's social dimension: President Juncker and Prime Minister Löfven present way forward after the Social Summit

The [concluding report](#) published today will serve to frame the follow-up of the Summit, which starts with the December European Council. The discussions between Heads of State or Government at the Summit showed a lot of common ground on the need for Europe to be equipped with a strong and tangible social dimension. Going forward, tackling the challenges of labour markets, as well as focusing on both economic and social development will be essential. The Summit was a first milestone in the debate on the future of Europe as laid out in President Juncker's [Roadmap for a more United, Stronger and more Democratic Union](#), as well as the first stop [on the road to the meeting of EU Leaders in Sibiu on 9 May 2019](#).

President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude **Juncker**, said: *"The Social Summit was a landmark moment in the debate on the future of Europe. It sent a clear message that a stronger, more democratic and fairer Union must be built on fair jobs, inclusive growth and equal opportunities. With the proclamation of the European Pillar of Social Rights, all EU institutions and leaders have made it our joint responsibility to stand up for the rights of our citizens in a fast-changing world. Now it is time to deliver. This starts with the December European Council. And you can be sure that the European Commission will continue to play a strong role in this endeavour, notably through the country specific recommendations in the European Semester process."*

Prime Minister of Sweden, Stefan **Löfven**, added: *"It's time for a social Europe. We need to improve people's working and living conditions and at the same time increase our competitiveness in a global economy."*

At the Summit, participants reaffirmed their joint responsibility to tackle the challenges our labour markets face at all levels. The [European Pillar of Social Rights](#) was proclaimed at the Summit by the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission as an embodiment of this joint commitment. In the spirit of the Pillar, the participants at the Summit agreed that the need to promote convergence of our economies and societies should be met by efforts at all levels, including by the social partners. Further steps should be taken to improve access to labour markets to increase the number of men and women in employment, ensure fair employment and working conditions and support transitions between jobs by investing in people, while taking account of the diversity of social traditions across Europe.

More specifically, the Summit recalled the need to put people first through joint efforts at all levels, and to further develop the social dimension of the Union based on a shared commitment and established competences. As a first next step, the following should be taken forward:

In December, the European Council will follow up the Gothenburg Summit, addressing the social dimension in the discussion on the future of Europe. As co-host of the Social Summit, the European Commission will continue to play its part in these discussions. The European Semester of Policy Coordination should be the main framework for taking the discussions on the social dimension forward.

## **Background**

European Heads of State or Government met in Gothenburg on 17 November 2017 with EU institutions, social partners, civil society, students and leading experts at the Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth, organised by the Swedish Government and the European Commission.

Eight months on from the 60th anniversary celebrations of the Treaties of Rome, the Summit constituted an extraordinary opportunity for leaders and stakeholders to discuss topics that touch on the everyday lives of citizens. As such, it contributed to the debate on the future of the EU, which was initiated at the [Bratislava Summit](#) and shaped by the European Commission's [White Paper](#) and the five subsequent reflection papers, notably the one on Europe's social dimension, presented earlier this year.

The Summit focused on how to boost inclusive growth, create fair jobs and foster equal opportunities for all men and women, while acknowledging common challenges and the wealth of experiences around Europe. Discussions took place in a unique, open and interactive format which resulted in different perspectives being heard and different solutions debated, all taking account of common challenges and the specificities of national context and priorities. Live streams allowed citizens all over Europe to follow the discussions in real time. The Summit also witnessed the joint proclamation of the European Pillar of Social Rights by the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission. This sent a strong message of unity and political commitment.

## **For More Information**

[Concluding report on the Social Summit](#)

[Website on the Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth](#)

[Programme and input notes for the three Summit working sessions on how to promote fair jobs and growth in the future](#)

[Commission factsheets on the Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth](#)

[Website on the European Pillar of Social Rights](#)