

Press release – Fair transition to digital and green economy: a new social agenda for Europe



In order to complement the changes that the European economy is currently undergoing, clear objectives should be put in place to ensure social justice in the labour market. In a resolution that was adopted today by 380 votes in favour, 219 against and 97 abstentions, Parliament sets out its priorities for a strong social Europe for Just Transitions.

The COVID-19 crisis has highlighted the precarity of some workers – particularly young people and women with low-skilled jobs – and has exposed the urgent need for adequate social protection and an inclusive employment policy.

Setting an ambitious “Porto 2030 Agenda”

In the resolution, MEPs call on member states and the European Commission to adopt an ambitious political agenda with mandatory indicators for social sustainability during the May 2021 EU Social Summit in Portugal. The so-called “Porto 2030 Agenda” should include targets and measures to guarantee decent work and wages, social justice and equal opportunities, robust social welfare systems, and fair labour mobility.

Furthermore, MEPs urge that the Porto Agenda should set concrete goals towards the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights (ESPR), to ensure that social rights receive the same protection as economic freedoms in the single market.

Monitoring the progress of social recovery

To mitigate the social repercussions of COVID-19, member states should make

full use of the available flexibility for public finances and fiscal policies. Investments made under NextGenerationEU and the Recovery Fund should support social equality as much as economic and environmental objectives. To this end, member states should submit Social Progress Plans (SPP) alongside the existing National Recovery plans and national Climate and Energy plans, says the [resolution](#).

Quotes

[Agnes Jongerius \(S&D, NL\)](#): “In what what kind of Europe do we want to live in 10 years’ time? I want to live in a Europe where all workers earn a living wage, all families can afford housing, and no child has to grow up in poverty.

Recommendations are simply not enough to get there. EU governments and the Commission must commit to concrete mandatory targets to be reached by 2030, such as halving youth unemployment, equal pay, and more affordable social housing.”

[Dennis Radtke \(EPP, DE\)](#) added: “Climate change change and digitisation will challenge an entire generation. They will inevitably lead structural change, which must be shaped in a socially acceptable and just way. This can only work if we protect and support both our industry and our workers.

Our report proposes clearly defined targets for a socially just transition to a greener and more digital economy. We expect the EU Commission to take our proposals into account in its action plan for the next EU Social Summit in Porto 2021.”

Background

In January 2020, the European Commission published a communication on [A strong social Europe for just transitions](#) ahead of the implementation plan for the [European Pillar of Social Rights \(EPSR\)](#). The EPSR is a list of 20 key principles and rights for fair and effective labour markets and welfare systems in the 21st century, which all EU institutions signed up to in 2017. The communication led to a [broad discussion](#) with institutions, social stakeholders, and citizens.

In January 2021, the European Commission will publish an action plan for the implementation of the EPSR.