

Remarks of President Juncker at the joint press conference with Mr Li Keqiang, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, and Mr Donald Tusk, President of the European Council, following the EU-China Summit

Mr Prime Minister,

Dear Donald,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In today's world, our partnership is more important than ever before. We share the same challenges and the same belief that working together makes the world a stronger, safer and more prosperous place.

This was the message of the Meeting on Global Governance in Paris which I attended alongside President Xi some two weeks ago.

Our partnership with China for us is a priority – and it needs a comprehensive approach to match. This is why we recently published our strategic outlook on China with 10 actions for the future.

As partners, we can also be honest with each other when we need to be or when progress is slower than we would like. This honesty and a strong determination to face our challenges together have allowed us to make real progress. This is reflected in today's Joint Statement, which is the fruit of over 50 hours of careful negotiations over the last 10 days.

Today we are making good on our joint commitment to uphold and update the rules-based global order that has served us so well. Rules-based global order, you can express it in a different way.

We have agreed to deepen our dialogue on the reform of the World Trade Organisation to make it fit for the modern economy.

In particular, we will now step up our bilateral talks on the rules for industrial subsidies. This is an area that we believe can make a real difference to create a level playing field globally.

I also welcome the explicit agreement that there should be no forced transfer

of technologies as a price for investment.

As we work in the global level, we also want to move more together bilaterally.

Our cooperation simply makes sense for both sides. The European Union is China's largest trading partner and China is the EU's second largest. We trade well over EUR 1.5 billion worth of goods every single day. European investment in China went up for the first time in four years in 2018. This is good news.

But we can do a lot better. We need to find a better balance and level of reciprocity. Europe wants to trade more and invest more in China but we need rules that allow us to do so.

With this in mind, we agreed to set up a process to allow us to identify and remove barriers to market access – with the clear target to take stock of progress at the next EU-China Summit.

We also committed to stepping up negotiations on an ambitious Comprehensive Investment Agreement, with the aim of reaching agreement in 2020 to help boost investment and create a more level-playing field.

Today's Summit is a big step in the right direction. But commitments are only worth anything if we deliver on them. And that is what we must do in the weeks and months ahead.

In this spirit, we also took stock of ongoing bilateral negotiations. There is still more work to do on geographical indications and we agreed to work quickly on this to resolve it by the end of this year.

Similarly, we finished negotiations on two aviation agreements back in December 2017 and it is now high time to sign them.

To finish, let me say that Europe's position is clear. We believe in China and we believe in our partnership. And we are ready to work together and at the same time be more ambitious in standing up for our interests and values.

Thank you.

Opening speech by Commissioner Thyssen at the High-Level Conference on the Future of Work

Ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome to this important conference.

The future of work is one of the defining challenges of our time. How we manage this challenge will define the future of our continent.

It will be your job today, to help shape future policy.

So I'm sorry, there's no free lunch for you, today.

I'm very happy that Professor Maarten Goos is with us. He is the Chair of the High Level Expert Group on the Impact of Digital Transformation of the EU Labour Market.

This expert group published their report yesterday. I am sure it will influence our discussions.

To start, let me say this.

Digital change is not only a European challenge. It's a global challenge.

Digital change is not only about the future of work. It's about the future of our economy, society and democracy.

And

The future of work is not only about digital change. It's also about the greening of our economy, global value chains, demographic change, especially ageing.

We can't and should not stop these changes.

Instead we need to manage these changes. And turn challenges into opportunities.

In doing so we must stick to our values; to our European way of life. Which increasingly contrasts with that of other powers.

First, our values must guide our trade policies. Not just because that's fair. But because they give us a competitive edge.

Take privacy and data protection for example.

Consumers want their robot Hoover to clean their house for them. They don't want it to spy on them

Second, our values decide our digital policies.

We must not allow digital change to control our people.

Instead, we must empower our people, to control digital change

That's why this Commission has taken steps to:

- Invest in ethical, human centred Artificial Intelligence.
- Protect the privacy of our citizens.
- Protect our democracies from hacking and fake news
- Make sure global giants pay their fair share of tax

Third, our values guide our response to the changing world of work.

A lot is at stake: the future of our European social market economy. Based on the idea that Economic Growth and Social Progress go hand in hand.

An idea that's anchored in our Treaty, and at the heart of our Union.

With this in mind, we are updating our labour market policies and our social systems for the 21st century and the new world of work.

Because it's not enough for us to ask people to change.

It's not enough to say:

- Work flexible hours.
- Have many different jobs.
- Learn for the rest of your life.

We, as policy makers, must also adapt our public institutions, our rulebooks and education systems. To support people in transitions and to empower people. So that people can be confident about their future, and the future of their children.

When we started four years ago, we put social back in the heart of Europe. By rebooting social dialogue. By making labour mobility fairer. By strengthening social considerations in our economic governance. By fighting cancer-causing chemicals in the workplace.

And we launched the European Pillar of Social Rights.

The Pillar is built on the philosophy that:

- As Europeans we share social rights.
- Rights that we must put into action.
- Action that we must take together.

The Pillar consists of 20 rights and principles dealing with three main issues:

- access to the labour market,
- fair labour conditions
- social protection and inclusion.

The Pillar acts as a compass. With two goals. First, to steer Europe towards upwards convergence.

And second, a compass to help us navigate economic and social change in the new world of work.

One and a half years ago, in Gothenburg, at the first social summit in twenty years, we all committed to the Pillar. The Commission, the European Parliament, the Council on behalf of all our Member States. Supported by social partners and civil society.

All of us are now turning rights into realities and principles into policies. Everybody, according to their own competence.

The Commission is leading by example. In November 2017, we immediately integrated the Pillar into the European Semester, our annual cycle of economic governance.

We developed the social scoreboard, which allows us to follow social developments at a glance.

And now the Pillar is present in every stage of the Semester. Including in our country reports. And our Country Specific Recommendations.

The Semester is now more social than ever before.

Through the Semester, our proposals and initiatives, we are now updating our 20th century institutions, our labour law and our social security systems. Today, more than 40 per cent of working people in Europe are in self-employment or non-standard employment. The job for life is making way for a lifetime of different jobs.

Flexibility brings jobs and growth. But what's flexibility to some, is uncertainty to others.

Working many different jobs can cause career gaps, which can create holes in social security coverage. If fewer people pay into the system, that puts the social and economic sustainability of our social security systems at risk.

On top of this, the platform economy is on the rise. For millions of people, platform work is their main source of income.

We need to embrace the platform revolution. But prevent a platform proletariat from forming.

First of all, we are bringing our rulebook up to date, to meet these 21st century realities.

We put forward legislative proposals. Our Directive on Transparent and Predictable Working Conditions will help create minimum standards of predictability and stability for all workers, regardless of the contract type. Standards, that are especially important, in the digital and flexible economy. Such as the right:

- To know your working conditions from the start of your employment relationship
- To know in advance when you can be called to work.
- The right to compensation, if your boss cancels work with late notice.
- The right to work in parallel for other employers.

And all Member States committed to implement our Recommendation on Access to Social Protection. Social security systems, pension systems, health coverage are all different in Europe. But one principle now is the same: Member States have promised to make sure that all working people – also the non-standard workers and the self-employed – will have formal and effective coverage against life risks.

Coverage that can be transferred between jobs, and jobs status. Which is essential, in the flexible economy.

We also put forward our New Skills Agenda. We are doing everything to make sure that our people have the skills they need to get jobs. And our companies have the skilled people they need, to compete.

What we need most in the digital age are: skills, skills, skills. That's why we made "education, training and life long learning" the first principle of the Pillar of Social Rights.

Some jobs will disappear, as a result of digitalisation. Jobs that rely on routine, can be easily automated. And nowadays, also higher skilled jobs. We already see robot journalists, machine translators and artificial investment bankers.

I see many of you are starting to worry.

But I say: don't be afraid. Some jobs will disappear. But many new jobs will appear. And most of all, jobs will change.

That's why we all need to keep learning, our entire working lives.

Ladies and gentlemen

We invited you as experts.

But many of you are also parents and grandparents. And maybe ask: How can my child prosper, in the digital age? What if they are not good at math or ICT? To those parents, I say: It's not just about digital skills. In an age of automation, there's a premium on creativity and humanity.

We should:

- Teach kids how to code. But also to be critical and creative.
- Teach kids technology, and teamwork.
- Teach kids how to build computers, and their confidence.

We also need to teach green skills. An ambitious climate policy is not only about what we need to do less.

- Less airplane travel.
- Less coal.
- Less meat.

It's also about what we need to do more. And that's boosting green skills. We can only get solar panels on our homes, with engineers to design them and technicians to install them.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Beyond legislation and our skills agenda, we have several other tools at our disposal, to make sure the future of work, is also an inclusive future.

We coordinate the efforts of Member States to improve employment and social policies. We do this through the European Semester.

We support national and regional reforms with our budget. Our future European Social Fund Plus, at 101 billion euros, will help people to adjust to change. We support investment in the new economy. With our Juncker Plan and future regional development fund.

We work with civil society and with social partners. Who also need to reshape themselves. Because the platforms and the platform workers are not yet taking part in social dialogue.

And we have our Trade Agreements. In which we include social provisions. To export not only products and our services, but also our values.

Last but not least: We are working constantly to improve the economy. To foster growth and create jobs in the first place.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The mandate of our Commission is nearly at an end. This does not mean all problems are solved. We now have to reflect on the next steps. The report of the High Level Group on the Impact of Digital Transformation of the EU Labour Market gives a number of ideas.

Real-time social dialogue.

Digital single windows for social security contributions and taxes.
individual lifelong learning accounts.

I call on you, to consider them.

Ladies and gentlemen,

This Commission has put social back on the European agenda. And I am confident it will remain there. The Parliament may change. The Commission may change. But the digital revolution will continue.

In an ageing and digital Europe our businesses will need to tap into an older and more diverse workforce. And if we want to compete in the green and digital economy, we need to train our workforce for new jobs, green jobs.

After our mandate ends some people fear, the social will disappear.

Some, may even hope so.

But I don't think so.

I am very proud of everything we've achieved over the last few years. But, as a great European once said. "This is not the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning". I hope you will come with many new ideas. And that our values will shine through.

Technology may change.

Society may change.

But our values don't change.

I wish you a very successful conference.

[Speech by Commissioner Tibor Navracsics at the Digital Day 2019 on making cultural heritage accessible to all](#)

Dear Ministers,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very happy to speak to you today. Let me first congratulate the Romanian Presidency and my colleague, Commissioner Mariya Gabriel, for having organised this Digital Day – and especially for having built a consensus around the Declaration on advancing the digitisation of cultural heritage.

I fully support this declaration. It is an important element of the legacy of the European Year of Cultural Heritage that we celebrated in 2018. We need to find ways to make our cultural heritage accessible to all. Digital means have an important role to play in this. Everyone should have the opportunity to discover how they belong to the complex tapestry that is Europe, no matter their socio-economic background.

To make this reality, we are working closely across the European Commission's services, with Member States and stakeholders. We also work closely with Europeana, our digital partner. I am pleased to see how it has been helping us make heritage resources more accessible, engaging citizens with digitised heritage and promoting the use and re-use of digital content for educational purposes. The Europeana migration campaign – helping people to re-discover their roots and make them aware of the value of diversity – is just one example.

Last year, I launched the online platform 'Story maps', developed by the Commission's Joint Research Centre, our in-house science and knowledge service. These free, interactive maps put cultural heritage at users'

fingertips, providing them with easily accessible information about EU initiatives in this field. They have already attracted almost 17,000 users. Also last year, the Joint Research Centre released a free and open-source web application entitled 'Cultural gems'. It enables residents and tourists to share and discover hidden cultural treasures in cities and towns across Europe.

These are important steps. But there is more to do. Only 10% of our cultural heritage is currently estimated to have been digitised, and even less is available online.

The EU, Member States, research communities and other stakeholders have to commit and work together to change this. Preserving cultural heritage and opening it up to all parts of society is vital if we are to create a common sense of belonging – and a European community. This means strengthening Europeana, but also developing complementary initiatives – such as the Cultural Heritage Cloud, proposed in the new Horizon Europe programme. It also means equipping people with the competences needed to use digital content in a confident and creative way. The Digital Education Action Plan that I presented last year goes in this direction, setting out initiatives designed to boost digital skills. These include efforts to get more schools involved in EU Code Week, so that all students from a young age can become creators rather than users of digital technologies, or for example making primary and secondary school teachers more aware of cybersecurity risks.

Innovative technologies, such as virtual or augmented reality, can enhance how people experience cultural heritage. There is clearly great potential here – for museums, for instance. We know well that new and exciting digital technologies can offer a unique, creative and interactive experience and attract wider audiences. It is therefore important to support the development of specialised skills, and to help museum-related professions adapt to the digital world.

At the same time, digital tools such as 3D scanning play a major role in preserving and restoring physical heritage assets. We want to marshal digital technologies to respond to threats to cultural heritage, such as natural disasters, climate change, terrorism or vandalism. For instance, we should help make sure that structural aspects of built heritage are documented through the use of IT tools, including by digitising archival records and using on-site laser scanning. This will boost our capacity to manage disasters affecting cultural heritage.

Our Horizon 2020 programme also makes a significant contribution to the preservation of cultural heritage through cutting-edge research, the development of advanced materials for conservation and the use of advanced digital technologies, including 3D technologies.

But digitisation still focuses mainly on capturing the visual appearance of objects, collections or sites. With heritage being both tangible and intangible, digitally born and digitised, the challenge for the future is to develop more dynamic and personalised digital resources. That is why the European Commission will continue funding research and innovation projects on

advanced digitisation and curation of digital assets. Our aim is to support the development of new technologies and methods that will help present cultural heritage in a comprehensive and attractive way. A new Horizon 2020 call for proposals, with an expected budget of EUR 20 million, will be launched by the end of 2019.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Cultural heritage is our bridge to the past – and into the future. And this is not only because we want to connect generations and communities, creating a shared sense of belonging – it is also because heritage often holds solutions to the societal challenges facing us.

To help ensure that we better harness this potential, I have launched a series of platforms, spaces for discussion and learning involving national governments, key global institutions, experts and young global leaders. The first meeting, focusing on social innovation, in Dublin, took place just last week. Next, we will look at digital heritage, in Prague, in October 2019. I invite you all to join the discussion – this will be the perfect opportunity to take forward the commitments expressed in the Declaration of Cooperation.

Because heritage is so fundamental to our societies and our future, I presented the European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage last December. This set of initiatives will ensure that cultural heritage stays high on the political agenda, ensuring a lasting impact of the European Year of Cultural Heritage. It will guide our work at EU level in promoting and safeguarding cultural heritage across many areas, including the digitisation of cultural heritage.

The framework looks at the tangible, intangible and digital dimensions of cultural heritage as inseparable and interconnected. Cultural heritage is the thread that connects us to each other, to our elders and to our children. And this, ladies and gentlemen, is how we find meaning. To digitise our heritage is to provide longevity and depth to this meaning, allowing more people to find they belong to larger and larger communities.

Thank you.

Speaking points by Commissioner Thyssen on Brexit Preparedness in the area of Social Security Entitlements

Ladies and gentlemen,

Free movement of workers is one of the cornerstones of the EU Single Market.

And many EU and UK citizens have made a choice to exercise that right. Almost 4 million EU citizens live or work in the UK and 1.3 million UK nationals are living or working in the EU.

It is our collective duty to make sure we respect the life choices and protect the social security rights of those mobile EU and UK citizens.

For the Commission, it has been a clear guiding principle from the beginning that citizens should not pay the price of Brexit and we have been working hard for the best possible protection of citizens' rights.

But let us be clear, this is complex.

The substance matter is complex: Social security coordination consists of a very detailed set of rules built up over a long period of 60 years; different situations of mobile workers, pensioners and students are covered. And even an EU tourist who breaks his leg on Trafalgar square has his health care rights protected by EU law.

And the circumstances are complex, as due to the uncertainty in the UK we inevitably have had to prepare for several possible scenarios: on the one hand we remain deeply convinced that ratifying the Withdrawal Agreement would offer the best possible protection of citizens rights. On the other hand, we have been preparing and we continue to prepare also for a hard Brexit.

The Withdrawal Agreement offers clearly the best possible protection of mobile citizens' rights. It foresees that the EU social security coordination rules and mechanisms will continue to apply during the transitional phase – until the end of 2020 or even 2022 – until a definitive agreement on the future relation is in place.

If the Withdrawal Agreement is ratified, citizens' rights are legally secured in the EU and in the UK.

Conversely, in the absence of a ratified Withdrawal Agreement – this means in case of a “hard Brexit” – there will inevitably be a degree of legal uncertainty.

The Commission is working hard with the other EU institutions and the Member States to minimize the uncertainty.

In the first place, we have put in place a **Contingency Regulation** at EU level to ensure minimum of protection also in case of hard Brexit. The Contingency Regulation ensures that the periods you have worked as an EU citizen in the UK or as a UK citizen in the EU before Brexit, will be recognized, also after Brexit. This can be relevant for example for your entitlement to an old age pension at the end of your career.

Secondly, we are giving **guidance to Member States** and we are coordinating their unilateral contingency measures. Concretely, we have encouraged Member States to continue providing certain social security rights to those UK and EU citizens who have exercised their free movement rights prior to Brexit.

In particular, we have discussed with Member States that they will continue to allow citizens to export their pension benefits to the UK. And that they will continue to compensate the UK for medical expenses incurred in the UK by EU citizens who legally reside there. When a citizen residing in the UK is undergoing a medical treatment in the EU, that patient will be able to continue his or her treatment. Tomorrow, the Commission will publish a package of guidance documents, including one on citizens' rights where you will find further information on this.

To be noted, however, that the contingency measures do not apply to tourists. We have been advising citizens to take out private health insurance for tourist or business trips to the UK after Brexit.

And this brings me to our third type of contingency measures, we have been informing citizens about their rights: we issued detailed notices, have a free call-in number where people's questions get answered 7 days on 7, in all official EU languages. The free number is 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11. And we are providing information via our representations in the Member States and via our website.

It must be underlined that – contrary to the Withdrawal Agreement – our contingency measures are unilateral measures. They only cover the rights of EU and UK citizens in the EU27. They do not and cannot cover the rights of EU citizens in the UK. This being said, the UK Government has repeatedly committed politically to equally protect citizens rights in the UK and our representation in London closely follows the preparation of such measures.

Contrary to the Withdrawal Agreement also, the contingency measures do not guarantee a uniform treatment across the EU. Notwithstanding our coordination, each one of the EU27 Member State has its own contingency measures in place and some are more comprehensive than others.

For concrete situations, citizens are therefore well advised to contact the relevant Member State for precise information. The Commission services can help pointing citizens in the right direction.

To conclude: Despite our efforts and precautions, Brexit in a no-deal scenario will have a negative impact on mobile EU and UK citizens. Our contingency measures cannot replace the Withdrawal Agreement.

But let me also be clear, and that is the purpose of our briefings these days on contingency: we are prepared also for a hard Brexit. Thank you.

Future of Work: High-level conference

discusses how the EU can face challenges and grasp opportunities

At the Conference hosted by President Jean-Claude **Juncker**, Vice-President Valdis **Dombrovskis** and Commissioner **Thyssen**, around 500 participants, among them Ministers, representatives from EU institutions and agencies, national governments, social partners, civil society and academia explored how to best harness changes in the world of work for the benefit of workers, businesses, society and the economy alike. The transformations that are taking place at a fast pace have prompted the European Union to take action to ensure that Europe's employment and social policies remain fit for the world of today and tomorrow. With the Proclamation of the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#), the EU established 20 principles and rights essential for fair and well-functioning labour markets and welfare systems in the 21st century. Today, work is ongoing to ensure its implementation at EU and Member State level.

Vice President Valdis **Dombrovskis** said: *"Rapid technological development and the digital transformation have the potential to increase economic growth. But it must be inclusive growth – and the key to that is to keep Europe on the path of upward convergence. It is by winning the 'race to the top' that we can enhance economic and social cohesion across the EU."*

European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, Marianne **Thyssen** underlined: *"In a changing world of work, we cannot just expect people to get ready for and adapt to change. We, as policy makers, must also adapt our social institutions, our rulebooks and education systems to support people, so that people can be confident about their future, and the future of their children, also in the new world of work."*

Key messages

The following ten takeaways emerged from the discussions:

1. **The world is changing:** the European Union, like all other parts of the world, is being transformed, and often challenged, by mega-trends such as digitalisation, globalisation, migration, climate change, demographic change, notably ageing.
2. **The future of work is NOW:** changes on the labour market are happening now and they are irreversible – for example, automation and new business models, like the platform economy, which are enabled by digital technology.
3. **The EU provides a reference point and support to face these challenges:** the European Pillar of Social Rights is the compass to inspire – in line with existing competences – new legislation or policy initiatives at EU level, to steer reforms at national level through the European Semester, and to channel funding efficiently to address the most urgent social priorities.
4. **We need to define what we want the future world of work to look like, and on how to get there:** we want the European social model to be

preserved and reinforced, but this requires being capable of responding to the new challenges of a globalised world and to reap the benefits of technological innovation. To make this a reality, we need to set out a roadmap with concrete actions.

5. **We need an inclusive digital economy:** People facing job loss or transitions need comprehensive support, based on up-skilling and re-skilling, access to employment services, income support, and social services throughout their professional career. The impact of digital transformation on EU labour markets has been explored by a [dedicated High-Level Group](#), which presented proposals in the run-up to the conference around three main themes: a skilled workforce, new labour relations and a new social contract.
6. **We need adequate investment:** it will be critical to make the best use of the EU's long-term budget 2021-2027, including the European Social Fund Plus to fund future skills policies and measures to support labour market transitions.
7. **We need better active labour market policies:** provided by high-quality public administrations that deliver effectively the services our citizens and societies need. This requires better involvement of and working together between employment services, skills providers, social services and business.
8. **Nobody must be left behind:** economic benefits should reach all Europeans, also those living in a disadvantaged district of a big metropolis or a remote rural area. The success of any policy should be judged in light of its impact on the most vulnerable and cohesion of our social fabric.
9. **Strengthening a global level playing field is crucial:** the EU is well placed to intensify cooperation with other organisations and partners, including the International Labour Organisation, to promote decent work and to ensure progress in the implementation of international commitments.
10. **The future is our joint responsibility:** all levels of governance (global, EU, national, regional/local) have to work together with social partners and civil society to deliver what EU citizens and workers expect.

Background

On 9 April 2019, the European Commission hosted a high-level conference on the Future of Work. In the spirit of the [Social Summit in Gothenburg in November 2017](#), where the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the Commission proclaimed the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#), today's Conference aimed to deepen the reflection on the future world of work, and how to face the challenges and grasp the opportunities it may bring.

During the conference, six breakout sessions focused on different aspects of the future of work: a) Fair transformation: Bringing opportunities of digitalisation to all, b) Upward convergence: Employment, social and territorial cohesion, c) Global responsibility: The EU and the international scene, d) Empower people: Life-cycle transitions, education and skills

challenges, e) Protect and invest: Modernising welfare systems, making them sustainable and inclusive, f) Manage change: Governance and Partnerships.

One day before the event, the High-Level Group on the impact of digital transformation on the EU labour markets published their [concluding report](#). The main recommendations include personal learning accounts, labour market intermediaries to reduce structural skills gaps and social protection accessible independent of the employment status. Chair Martin Goos presented the findings of the group to the participants.

This high-level European conference took place ahead of the Centenary event of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in Geneva in June, where the discussion on the future of work will be pursued in a global perspective.

For More Information

[Link to the conference webpage with detailed programme and video streaming](#)

[Factsheet: Key employment figures](#)

[Factsheet: Social Priorities under the Juncker Commission](#)

More factsheets on several Commission initiatives in the social field can be found [here](#).

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