

Transparent and predictable working conditions: Commissioner Thyssen welcomes the provisional agreement

Ladies and gentlemen,

I'm happy to announce that early this morning – the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission – reached a provisional agreement that will provide workers across Europe with transparent and predictable working conditions.

This is a major milestone to make the European Pillar of Social Rights a reality. We are modernising European labour law and adjusting it to the new world of work. As you know a growing number of people today is in atypical forms of work and flexible contracts.

Also for those contracts we need to make sure that rights and obligations for employers and workers are in balance. The more flexibility that is required of workers, the more employers must see to it that they provide predictability and protection.

With the new rules in place, we will ensure **more transparency**:

It sounds obvious but many workers in Europe don't receive basic information right from the beginning when they start a new job. How much will I earn? What is my working schedule? How long is my probation? This is especially the case for the most vulnerable workers.

We are modernising and expanding the scope of the rules.

All workers in Europe will now receive information on key working conditions. Workers will know at the beginning of their employment, this means within the first week, what their basic rights and obligations are. This includes information on their remuneration, their working schedule and the duration of their contract.

All workers will have to be informed at the start of their contract in writing. And this can be done in the most efficient way like simple email. This improves the situation on the ground compared to today where employers have two months to inform their workers.

The new Directive will also apply to substantially more people. An additional 2-3 million workers will be covered which were excluded until now. This includes platform workers, domestic workers, voucher workers, workers on zero hour contracts and other short-term workers.

And it's not only about information rights. The Directive has a brand-new component compared to the old one, with new rights leading to **more predictability**:

- (1) Probation periods cannot last longer than 6 months, unless justified.
- (2) We prohibit unreasonable reliance on exclusive contracts. When somebody is offered only a limited number of hours to work a week, the employer cannot claim exclusivity.
- (3) Workers with on-demand contracts like zero-hour workers must know reasonably in advance when they can be called to work and for which timeslots. If called in vain, these workers will have the right to compensation and if they can no longer be dismissed if they refuse to work at very short notice.
- (4) Mandatory training will have to be free.
- (5) Finally, Member States will have to put place in systems to prevent abuse and make it possible for workers to seek redress.

These changes will benefit both workers and employers by raising social standards across the EU.

Ladies and gentlemen,

This new Directive makes me proud. Together with the Pillar of Social Rights, posting of workers, better protection against cancer at work, access to social protection for all, the accessibility act, the skills agenda, a more social European Semester and not to forget work-life balance, this Directive shows once more what this Commission has done during its mandate: bringing Social Europe back at the centre of Union action. For the people and felt by the people.

Thank you.