Resolution on a roadmap towards a social Europe – two years after the Porto Social Summit

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The European Parliament adopted by 401 votes to 139, with 41 abstentions, a resolution on a roadmap towards a social Europe - two years after the Porto Social Summit.

At the Porto Social Summit in May 2021, the Council committed to three headline targets for 2030 on employment, training and poverty. It stated that at least 78 % of the population between 20 and 64 years old should be in employment by 2030; 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 by 2030 - 5 million of whom should be children.

The headline targets set out by the Commission have been implemented by the Member States for the past year. The additional crises since the decided targets have put additional pressure on reaching these targets with only five Member States having reached their national targets on employment, and half of the Member States have surpassed the 78 % target on employment. Projections show that not all Member States will reach the employment target by 2030.

In its resolution, Parliament reiterated the importance of the adoption of the conclusions of the 2021 Porto Social Summit, which underline that we are still living in unprecedented times. COVID-19 and the ongoing Russian war of aggression against Ukraine resulted in the cost of living and energy crises, which are hitting the most vulnerable groups the hardest, leading to increasing inequalities. It also reiterated the importance of the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR) as a guiding compass to a more social Europe.

The Commission and the Member States are called on to:

- improve the functioning of labour markets and to promote the integration of women, young people and vulnerable groups into the labour market;

- work towards a higher collective bargaining coverage of at least 80 % by 2030, with a view to improving living and working conditions in the EU;

- reinforce national social protection systems to ensure a life with dignity for all, while preserving the sustainability of these systems. Member States should promote targeted incentives to facilitate a gradual transition to retirement, by, inter alia, supporting flexible working-time arrangements and making suitable adjustments to workplaces;

- enforce the social clause in the existing Directive on public procurement(16) and to consider a revision of the Directive, based on an impact assessment, in order to further strengthen social clauses in public contracts to require economic operators and subcontractors to fully respect the right of workers, including the right to collective bargaining, to account for the recently adopted Directive on adequate minimum wages in the EU;

- ensure the EPSR’s full implementation, with a specific focus on childcare, social protection, housing and essential services.

The resolution called on the Commission to:

- put forward a legislative proposal for a European social security pass to provide national authorities, such as labour and social security inspectorates, and social partners involved in labour and social security inspections with a real-time instrument to effectively enforce national and EU law;

- develop an ambitious action plan, in line with the principle of subsidiarity, to achieve accessible, green and affordable social housing to meet the housing needs of all EU citizens, and to eradicate homelessness by 2030;

- revise the Directive on temporary agency work to establish a legal framework to ensure decent working conditions and equal treatment for intra-EU seasonal workers and mobile workers on fixed-term contracts with temporary work agencies or any other type of labour market intermediary, including recruitment agencies;

- present a legal framework to anticipate and manage changes related to the green and digital transitions in the world of work.

Parliament is highly concerned about the overall erosion of middle-income groups in the EU, which are the backbone of economies, key contributors to national social protection systems and essential for the stability of democracies. In this context, it called for an EU action plan to increase the size of and consolidate middle-income groups.

Lastly, Parliament reiterated the importance of a well-functioning and efficient **European Labour Authority** (ELA) and called on the Commission to make use of the opportunity presented by the evaluation due 1 August 2024 to submit a legislative proposal to review the scope of the ELA's founding regulation and realise its full potential, especially concerning the ELA's inquiry powers.