



## Social Europe is not a slogan. The social pillar must bring concrete solutions to our citizens, say S&Ds

HÉLIN-VILLES, Solange | 15/11/2017 | [Employment, social affairs & gender equality](#) | [Share it](#)



Thanks to the relentless efforts of the Socialists and Democrats over many years and pressure on the Juncker Commission, social Europe is back on top of the European Union's agenda. S&D Euro MPs welcome the declaration on the European Pillar of Social Rights to be proclaimed in Gothenburg this Friday but urged the Commission and EU leaders to deliver concrete solutions for citizens.

The S&D Group are hosting a special **#EuropeTogether event**, which is dedicated to the social pillar, with many stakeholders, experts and representatives of trade unions and civil society, on the eve of the summit in Gothenburg.

### Ahead of the summit S&D Group leader, Gianni Pittella, said:

"For several years, social Europe has completely disappeared from the European agenda. For the first time, the EU has put social rights at the core of its present and future agenda. The proclamation of a common European Pillar of Social Rights ensures the satisfaction of the social needs of all European citizens and in particular the least protected workers and the less better-off.

"But let's be clear. This is a step forward but still not the breakthrough we would have wanted. Social Europe cannot remain an empty shell or just a slogan. The Gothenburg summit on social Europe must not be a single act. The declaration on social rights must deliver concrete measures to give strength to the social pillar.

"We want to update our social model so that everyone has access to social protection. We want measures that set up a new legal framework to protect new forms of atypical work resulting from digitalisation. We must reduce inequalities, guarantee high social standards, decent wages and strong collective bargaining. We expect the declaration to be put into force as soon as possible right after the proclamation. Failing to act will only further fuel the mistrust of our citizens towards the EU institutions."

### S&D Group vice-president responsible for economic and monetary affairs, Udo Bullmann MEP, added:

"In order to make social fundamental rights in Europe more powerful, we urgently need their anchoring in the European Semester and in the country-specific recommendations. It is unacceptable that Europe cares only about the functioning of the economy, but not about the living conditions of the people. We need a social progress protocol that makes the development of social policy in the European member states visible.

"The European Pillar of Social Rights will not provide stable support if we do not underpin it with funds from the Multiannual Financial Framework 2020-2026. That means investing in growth and employment that reaches our citizens. It has to be said that social security, educational opportunities for all, basic medical care and rights in the workplace are part of the basic understanding of Europe."

### S&D Group vice-president and European Parliament's rapporteur on the social pillar, Maria João Rodrigues MEP, said:

"After years of austerity when social rights have been ignored, the proclamation of the European Pillar of Social Rights is a commitment at the highest level between the European Parliament, Commission and the European Council. Once again, Socialists & Democrats put social rights back on the European agenda. This proclamation is just a first fundamental step. Now it must be translated without delay into legislation, concrete measures and financial resources in order to change the direction of Europe and update social rights to cope with new challenges and increasing inequalities.

"We will continue pushing and working hard to make sure EU leaders signing the proclamation are held accountable and respect their commitments, but we regret that Chancellor Merkel will not be present. Our report in the European Parliament has set a high-level of ambition to respond with real means to citizens' aspirations in order to improve their working and living conditions."

The S&D Group's #EuropeTogether event 'For Social Justice & Sustainable Growth' will take place on Thursday 16 November 2017 in Kajsksjöl 8, Packhusplatsen 11, in Gothenburg, from 19.00 to 21.30 in the presence of Ann-Sofie Hermansson, Mayor of Gothenburg, Annika Strandhäll, minister for health and social affairs, Ann Linde, minister for EU affairs and trade, and the head of the socialist Swedish delegation in the European Parliament S&D MEP Marita Ulvskog.

[The full programme is available here](#)

[Find out more about the S&D achievements on the social pillar:](#)

S&D's social rights website:

<http://www.socialistsanddemocrats.eu/socialrights>

European Parliament's resolution of 19 January 2017 on a European Pillar of Social Rights:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P8-TA-2017-0010&language=EN&ring=A8-2016-0391>

### MEPs INVOLVED



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