



PRESS RELEASE

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Full access to social protection for all and a punchy European Labour Authority to protect workers' rights, demand S&Ds

The Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament welcome today the Commission's Package for Social Fairness and proposal for a European Labour Authority, for whom the S&Ds have headed calls since 2013. The push for social protection for all and a European Labour Authority is part of a broader progressive campaign for a Social Europe.

Maria João Rodrigues, acting S&D Group leader and European Parliament rapporteur on the social pillar, said on the Commission proposal for social protection:

"We Socialists and Democrats have, for many years, campaigned relentlessly for a Social Europe and put pressure on the Juncker Commission to deliver concrete solutions for citizens. After years of austerity, in which social rights were ignored, it is high time the European Union proves that it is serious about improving the working and living conditions of its citizens.

"The proclamation of the Social Pillar in Gothenburg was a first fundamental step in the right direction. Now the pledge must immediately be translated into laws and concrete measures backed-up by sufficient resources. The Socialists and Democrats welcome the Commission's proposals to generalise access to social protection for all people in employment, including the self-employed. This is a major step to update our welfare systems in an era of digital revolution. These new social standards now need to be enforced. We welcome the Commission's proposals, but we are sceptical that these goals can be attained with just recommendations. We will continue our fight for better and stronger social rights to cope with new challenges and to combat growing inequalities."

Udo Bullmann, S&D vice-president responsible for social and economic affairs, said on the Commission proposal for a European Labour Authority:

"We welcome the Commission's proposal to establish a much needed



RODRIGUES
MARIA JOÃO



European Labour Authority to deal with problems arising from cross-border labour mobility such as social dumping, letterbox companies or bogus self-employment. With 17 million Europeans now working and living in another EU country and an additional 1.4 million crossing a border every day for work, it's a question of fairness that the EU rules to protect workers are policed in the same way as are rules for banks or companies.

"To be punchy, the future European Labour Authority must be a real agency like Europol and not a mere platform to exchange best practices. Only as an independent body, with sufficient financial resources and a robust mandate will the new Labour Authority be able to inspect, in co-operation with national competent authorities, work sites and to investigate breaches of rules, impose penalties and thus really enforce workers' rights.

"Together with the new rules on the posting of workers that will ensure same pay for the same work at the same place, this new Labour agency can bring about a real breakthrough in cracking down on the abuse of workers and enforcing workers' rights."

Agnes Jongerius, MEP and S&D spokesperson on employment, added:

"We want a strong European Labour Authority with a robust mandate to protect European workers. Therefore, we must ensure that the agency can make a real difference for workers; for instance through investigating problems in 'high-risk' sectors such as transport and construction.

"To ensure that the autonomy of social partners and the involvement of trade unions in national inspection and enforcement systems are respected, the social partners must be part of a tripartite supervisory body of the new European Labour Authority.

**BULLMANN
UDO**



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About the S&D Group:

The Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (the S&D Group) is the second largest political group in the European Parliament with 189 members from all 28 EU member states.

We stand for an inclusive European society based on principles of solidarity, equality, diversity, freedom and fairness. We promote social justice, jobs and growth, consumer rights, sustainable development, financial market reforms and human rights to create a stronger and more democratic Europe and a better future for all citizens.



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