

The European Pillar of Social Rights

An EU roadmap to fight poverty and reduce inequalities?

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Caritas Europa

- 49 member organisations in 46 countries across the European continent
- Supported by a secretariat in Brussels
- Capacity building and advocacy
- Advocacy themes: social policy, migration, development cooperation, humanitarian aid
- Advocacy targets: EU and Council of Europe Institutions

EU Social Policy making

- A complex context: legal competence, subsidiarity
- EU Social policy making? Yes, but...

Read (all) the small letters!

- the Union shall support and complement the activities of the Member States in the following fields: improvement in particular of the working environment to protect workers' health and safety; working conditions; social security and social protection of workers; protection of workers where their employment contract is terminated; the information and consultation of workers; representation and collective defence of the interests of workers and employers; conditions of employment for third-country nationals legally residing in Union territory; the integration of persons excluded from the labour market, without prejudice to Article 166; equality between men and women with regard to labour market opportunities and treatment at work; the combating of social exclusion; the modernisation of social protection systems without prejudice to point (c).
- To this end, the European Parliament and the Council: may adopt measures designed to encourage cooperation between Member States through initiatives aimed at improving knowledge, developing exchanges of information and best practices, promoting innovative approaches and evaluating experiences, excluding any harmonisation of the laws and regulations of the Member States; may adopt, in the fields referred to in paragraph 1(a) to (i), by means of directives, minimum requirements for gradual implementation, having regard to the conditions and technical rules obtaining in each of the Member States. Such directives shall avoid imposing administrative, financial and legal constraints in a way which would hold back the creation and development of small and medium-sized undertakings. The European Parliament and the Council shall act in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure after consulting the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.
- In the fields referred to in paragraph 1(c), (d), (f) and (g), the Council shall act unanimously,
- The Council, acting unanimously on a proposal from the Commission, after consulting the European Parliament, may decide to render the ordinary legislative procedure applicable to paragraph 1(d), (f) and (g).
- 4. The provisions adopted pursuant to this Article:
 - - shall not affect the right of Member States to define the fundamental principles of their social security systems and must not significantly affect the financial equilibrium thereof,
 - - shall not prevent any Member State from maintaining or introducing more stringent protective measures compatible with the Treaties.
- 5. The provisions of this Article shall not apply to pay, the right of association, the right to strike or the right to impose lock-outs.

The EU's compass for achieving better living and working conditions



The European Pillar of Social Rights

- jointly proclaimed by EP, Council and EC in November 2017.
- [20 principles](#) aimed at *'delivering new and effective rights for citizens'*.
- 3 categories:
 - equal opportunities and access to the labour market (principles 1 to 4);
 - fair working conditions (principles 5 to 10);
 - social protection and inclusion (principles 11 to 20).

The Pillar

- Builds on the EU's *social acquis*

= the body of laws (Treaty provisions, regulations, directives, decisions, ECJ case-law and other EU legal measures), principles, policy objectives, declarations, resolutions and international agreements defining the social policy of the EU.

- Scope covers individual employment, collective labour relations and policy areas that are unique to the EU

What's in it for families?

- Income protection: fair wages, minimum income, unemployment benefits
- Access to services: health care, long term care, housing
- Family protection: childcare and support to children; work-life balance → EU directive

Caritas Europa advocacy

- The basics: Caritas Europa's [roadmap](#) for a sustainable European Social Model
 - Family protection
 - Inclusive labour markets
 - Adequate social protection systems

Caritas Europa advocacy

- **Work-life balance:** EC public consultation; EP report and amendments; Council decision
- **Minimum income:** advocacy for a framework directive
- **Child Poverty:** Child Guarantee – a long story

Next steps





More advocacy work to come!

- On the table: minimum wages directive
- Next week: EC Action Plan for the EPSR
- Soon: EC proposal for Child Guarantee
- Who knows when: directive minimum income

BUT...

Europe's best hidden secret

- Europe has a social constitution!

