

SOCIAL SUMMIT FOR FAIR JOBS AND GROWTH

GOTHENBURG, 16-17 NOVEMBER 2017

STATEMENT OF THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL PARTNERS

Europe is one of the best places to live, work and do business in the world because our social market economies combine free markets, private initiative, economic freedoms, free movement of people and welfare states designed to deliver social rights and public services. Nevertheless, Europe is still faced with many economic, social and political challenges: insufficient competitiveness and employment creation, inequalities, migration, security issues, and the need to redefine EU-UK relations. These challenges require ambitious European solutions. Together, the European Union and its member states have the means to provide common answers, show solidarity, and make a difference. United we are stronger.

Regarding the European pillar of social rights, the European social partners underline that:

- both economic and social cohesion should be improved. A particular effort is needed to improve the functioning of our labour markets in particular to give our youth prospects of a bright future;
- we want Europe to continue to have the most highly developed social systems in the world and must therefore ensure that we have high performing public services and that the European social model is made more robust and sustainable with the active support of social partners;
- a well-functioning social dialogue at EU, national, sectoral and company level is important to devise efficient policies that will increase European prosperity and ensure social fairness.

European social partners should be consulted on EU policies affecting directly or indirectly employment such as industrial, climate change, trade, digitalisation, labour market and skills policies. Their involvement should be timely, meaningful, and respect the autonomy of the social dialogue in areas of social partners' competence.

To increase prosperity, giving room for more and better employment opportunities for all generations, we need to improve Europe's attractiveness as a place to invest and create jobs, mobilising public and private resources, and paying special attention to SME needs as they play a key role for employment growth. We need to achieve a proper balance between our stabilisation and sustainability needs including, where public investment is concerned, through a smart reading of our fiscal rules. In parallel with the extension of the

so-called Juncker Plan for Investment, EU and national efforts to remove obstacles to investment, entrepreneurship and job creation in Europe must be stepped up.

To reverse the relative decline of European industry (and given the importance of manufacturing as a growth and job creation driver in all sectors of the economy, including services), we welcome the new Commission communication on industrial policy and jointly call for a structured way forward to turn it into concrete actions, involving the social partners in the strategic group to be put in place.

Concerning the follow up to the Commission white paper on the future of Europe, the European social partners stress the need for ambition in taking the EU forward to be able to cope with the challenges facing us and promote economic and social progress, improving coordination and cooperation in the Economic and Monetary Union and ensuring the proper functioning of the EU single market and its four freedoms.
