

# Consultation on the European Pillar of Social Rights

Fields marked with \* are mandatory.

Welcome to the European Commission's online public consultation on the "European Pillar of Social Rights".

Are our social rights fit for the 21st century? The Pillar will identify a number of essential principles to address the challenges in the field of employment and social policies.

We want to involve everyone in shaping the European Pillar of Social Rights. We welcome contributions from citizens, social partners, organisations and public authorities, so have your say!

Please submit your contribution below until the end of 2016.

## I. Questions for the identification of the respondent

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**\* Are you replying as an individual or as an organisation?**

- Individual
- Organisation

**What is the type of your organisation?**

- Business
- EU level organisation
- National level organisation

**Your national level organisation is a(n)**

- NGO
- Trade Union
- Employers organisation
- Think tank/academia
- National administration
- Regional/local administration
- Other

Please specify:

*500 character(s) maximum*

**\* Name of your organisation or institution:**

*500 character(s) maximum*

**\* Respondent's first name:**

**\* Respondent's surname:**

**\* Respondent's email address:**

**\* Postal address of your organisation or institution:**

*500 character(s) maximum*

## Country

For individuals: country of residence.

For organisations: country where the organisation is based or country where the organisation's headquarters are.

Italy

## Register ID number (if you/your organisation is registered in the Transparency register):

If you would like to register, please refer to the following webpage to see how to proceed : <http://ec.europa.eu/transparencyregister/info/homePage.do>

## \* Your reply:

- Can be published with your personal information** (I consent to publication of all information in my contribution and I declare that none of it is under copyright restrictions that prevent publication)
- Can be published in an anonymous way** (I consent to publication of all information in my contribution except my name/the name of my organisation and I declare that none of it is under copyright restrictions that prevent publication)
- Cannot be published - keep it confidential** (The contribution will not be published, but will be used internally within the Commission)

## II. Questions for the consultation

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The Commission invites all interested parties to reply to the questions set out in the questionnaire below, together with any additional comments, by 31 December 2016. (*See also [Commission communication "Launching a consultation on a European Pillar of Social Rights", COM\(2016\) 127 final](#)*)

### On the social situation and EU social "acquis"

## 1. What do you see as most pressing employment and social priorities?

*2000 character(s) maximum*

Mefop mainly act in the field of supplementary pensions. Therefore, from our perspective, an adequate income for old age is a priority. We believe that supplementary pensions should play an important role to achieve this objective. In many countries, pension provision from the first state pillar is being scaled back to address demographic pressures; to ensure adequate living standards in old age the role of supplementary pension is key.

Pensions are not the only concern linked to the ageing of population. Also healthcare system and, more in general, the welfare provision as a whole are under threat. As in the domain of pensions, to cope with the ageing and the effects of technological improvements on public expenditure for welfare state, an important role will be presumably played by supplementary provision of healthcare and welfare services and treatments.

## 2. How can we account for different employment and social situations across Europe?

*2000 character(s) maximum*

Since social policy falls under the remit of the Member States sharing best practices while taking into account different employment and social situations across Europe may be very important. In this respect, peer reviews on pension reforms and welfare systems could be a way to better learn from each other.

Moreover, minimum standards instead of harmonization are more appropriate ways to regulate these issues.

## 3. Is the EU "acquis" up to date and do you see scope for further EU action?

*2000 character(s) maximum*

Economic and financial crisis from 2008 so far, together with IT breakthrough and ageing, raise concerns on the EU social "acquis" to deal with new social fragilities. In this framework the initiative of EU Commission provides an opportunity to take a general view of the present acquis and existing social rights in order to review their relevance to face complex societal challenges. This approach seems to be the best way to identify possible areas for action in the context of a process of social innovation.

## On the future of work and welfare systems

**4. What trends would you see as most transformative? [Please select at most three from the list below]**

*between 1 and 3 choices*

- Demographic trends (e.g. ageing, migration)
- Changes in family structures
- New skills requirements
- Technological change
- Increasing global competition
- Participation of women in the labour market
- New ways of work
- Inequalities
- Other

**5. What would be the main risks and opportunities linked to such trends?**

*2000 character(s) maximum*

Demographic trends: two developments are important: life expectancy and lower birth rates. Both phenomenon lead to an overall change in the age structure of our societies, that has to be take into account when projecting reform of welfare systems.

Technological changes offer great opportunities to progress in efficiency, better information and services related to welfare systems. However they also seems to have e huge and not always positive impact on market labour, at least in the short term.

New ways of work: more and more people are working as self-employed or short term working contracts. This new forms of employment are posing serious challenges to individuals and welfare systems, both in terms of adequacy and sustainability.

**6. Are there policies, institutions or firm practices – existing or emerging – which you would recommend as references?**

*2000 character(s) maximum*

**7. Do you agree with the approach outlined here for the establishment of a European Pillar of Social Rights?**

- I strongly agree
- I agree
- I disagree
- I strongly disagree

Please specify:

*2000 character(s) maximum*

We welcome the initiative of the EU Commission aimed at developing the Pillar of Social Rights as a practical tool to guide policies in some key issues for well-functioning and fair labour markets and welfare systems. However, any EU initiative that will derive thereof, should carefully and adequately take into account the different social and labour laws of the Member States and the principle of subsidiarity. Member States should have sufficient leeway to adjust EU rules to their national characteristics when transposing them.

**8. Do you agree with the scope of the Pillar, domains and principles proposed here? (If you wish to provide detailed comments on any of the 20 domains, please see the section "Detailed comments by domain" below)**

	I strongly agree	I agree	I disagree	I strongly disagree
1. Skills, education and life-long learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Flexible and secure labour contracts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Secure professional transitions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Active support for employment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. Gender equality and work-life balance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Equal opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Conditions of employment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Wages	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Health and safety at work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Social dialogue and involvement of workers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Integrated social benefits and services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Health care and sickness benefits	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. Pensions	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. Unemployment benefits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. Minimum income	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. Disability benefits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. Long-term care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18. Childcare	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

19. Housing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20. Access to essential services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Are there aspects which are not adequately expressed or covered so far?**

*2000 character(s) maximum*

**9. What domains and principles would be most important as part of a renewed convergence for the euro area? (Please select maximum 5)**

*between 1 and 5 choices*

- 1. Skills, education and life-long learning
- 2. Flexible and secure labour contracts
- 3. Secure professional transitions
- 4. Active support for employment
- 5. Gender equality and work-life balance
- 6. Equal opportunities
- 7. Conditions of employment
- 8. Wages
- 9. Health and safety at work
- 10. Social dialogue and involvement of workers
- 11. Integrated social benefits and services
- 12. Health care and sickness benefits
- 13. Pensions
- 14. Unemployment benefits
- 15. Minimum income
- 16. Disability benefits
- 17. Long-term care
- 18. Childcare
- 19. Housing
- 20. Access to essential services

*Comments:*

*2000 character(s) maximum*

**10. How should these be expressed and made operational? In particular, do you see the scope and added value of minimum standards or reference benchmarks in certain areas and if so, which ones?**

*2000 character(s) maximum*

EU Commission should promote the share of best practices between the Member States. In such a framework, countries should cooperate to strengthen the sharing of experiences and national best practices.

**Detailed comments by domain**

If you wish to provide detailed comments on any of the domains, please select one or more from the list below and fill the table(s) and comment box(es) underneath. (A detailed description of the domains and principles is available in the [Annex "A European Pillar of Social Rights - Preliminary Outline"](#) to the [Commission communication "Launching a consultation on a European Pillar of Social Rights"](#), COM(2016) 127 final).

- 1. Skills, education and life-long learning
- 2. Flexible and secure labour contracts
- 3. Secure professional transitions
- 4. Active support for employment
- 5. Gender equality and work-life balance
- 6. Equal opportunities
- 7. Conditions of employment
- 8. Wages
- 9. Health and safety at work
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- 13. Pensions
- 14. Unemployment benefits
- 15. Minimum income
- 16. Disability benefits
- 17. Long-term care
- 18. Childcare
- 19. Housing
- 20. Access to essential services

**12. Health care and sickness benefits**

	I strongly agree	I agree	I disagree	I strongly disagree
Do you agree with the challenges described?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is the principle addressing those challenges in the right way?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Should the EU act to put in reality this principle?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you have other comments or additional suggestions? For instance: how to address these challenges in the right way? How should the EU act to put in reality this principle?

*2000 character(s) maximum*

Mefop shares the common values and principles outlined in the Pillar such as universality of healthcare, access to high quality care, cost-effectiveness and sustainability, health promotion and prevention. However the support for these common principles is based on the consideration that the organization of healthcare remains subject to the subsidiarity principle and is therefore within the competences of the EU Member States.

EU Commission should promote initiatives to increase coverage of supplementary healthcare schemes to deal with the effects of ageing and technologic evolution on healthcare sustainability and adequacy. A supportive, stable, simple and modern tax treatment is key to encourage people to continue saving up more. Mefop also strongly believes that information to members and beneficiaries and the governance of the schemes are effective means to achieve healthcare adequacy and encourage people to be involved. We call on the EU to take a comprehensive approach to healthcare and to create an enabling environment for healthcare provision in the current challenging economic and demographic conditions.

### 13. Pensions

	I strongly agree	I agree	I disagree	I strongly disagree
Do you agree with the challenges described?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is the principle addressing those challenges in the right way?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Should the EU act to put in reality this principle?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you have other comments or additional suggestions? For instance: how to address these challenges in the right way? How should the EU act to put in reality this principle?

*2000 character(s) maximum*

EU Commission should promote initiatives to increase coverage of supplementary pension schemes to deal with the effects of ageing on public pension sustainability and adequacy.

A supportive, stable, simple and modern tax treatment is key to encourage people to continue saving up more. Mefop also strongly believes that information to members and beneficiaries and the governance of the schemes are effective means to achieve pension adequacy and encourage people to be involved in retirement savings. We call on the EU to take a comprehensive approach to pensions and to create an enabling environment for supplementary pensions in the current challenging economic and demographic conditions.

However, for any EU actions, Mefop recommends caution by reminding that a one size fits all approach does not exist, considering the diversity between existing pensions systems across member states.

## Contact

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