



## A Quality Jobs Package for a Europe that works

*Declaration of PES Employment and Social Affairs Ministers – Adopted on 19 February 2025*

The European economy's success rests on the quality, knowledge, training and know-how of its workforce. Good living and working conditions are strengths of the European Social Model. Quality jobs are the key to mobilizing workers, filling vacancies, attracting and retaining talent, and sustaining continued economic success. They are also essential to workers' wellbeing. Confronted with great challenges, the European economy must make the best use of all its forces.

Ensuring quality jobs is a way to reflect and encourage the personal investment everyone makes for the prosperity of our economy and society. It is a way to ensure that climate action and social justice go hand in hand and that technology profits are shared more equally.

Working conditions, especially in essential sectors remain too harsh. Meanwhile, the demands placed on workers by the digital and green transitions are growing. Workers must be treated fairly and rewarded for their efforts.

We, PES Ministers of Employment and Social Affairs, welcome Executive Vice-President Roxana Mînzatu's announcement of a Quality Jobs Package and we will support her in delivering all the needed legislative initiatives. We strongly count on social partners' contribution in shaping this Quality Jobs Package.

To us, "quality jobs" means:

### 1. Jobs that are safe

To achieve zero deaths at work and because of work, the EU must continue updating the list of chemical agents, carcinogens and other harmful substances, and their limit values. The EU must adapt health and safety regulation to climate change, including maximum working temperatures. For the greater wellbeing of all workers, it must further strengthen protections against psychosocial risks with a dedicated directive and introduce a directive on telework and the right to disconnect.

### 2. Jobs that provide and protect

We fought hard for the adoption of the platform work directive, and we will push until it's fully implemented. We will build on it to expand protections to all forms of bogus self-employment. Access to trade unions is an essential right. Quality jobs must be a source of regular income and life stability. They must provide access to strong social security and fair pensions.

### 3. Jobs that pay

Good wages are essential to boost workers' purchasing power and strengthen the economy. We will monitor the full implementation of the directive on adequate minimum wages, including its strong collective bargaining provisions. We will insist on addressing wage gaps within companies and support trade unions in negotiating better wages.



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#### **4. Jobs that bring greater gender equality**

We will continue fighting for equal pay and equal opportunities. We will tackle the gender pay gap and gender pension gap. We will eradicate all kinds of discriminations within the labour market. To increase women's participation in the labour market, we must ensure they are on equal footing with men. Improving conditions in women-dominated sectors like healthcare, care, and domestic work is a necessity for both equality and addressing the needs of an ageing society. The Commission has announced that it will publish a framework for addressing long-term care workforce challenges, it must tackle both working conditions and remuneration.

#### **5. Jobs that ensure equal rights between workers**

All workers, whether mobile or local, deserve equal rights. It is a matter of fairness between workers and fair competition between companies. We are determined to reach a compromise on the revision of the coordination of social security, to strengthen the European Labour Authority to regulate the posting of third country nationals, to simplify both social security and labour inspections with a digital social security pass and to set up a permanent EU-wide advisory network for posted workers. We call for action to regulate the role of labour intermediaries, limit subcontracting and ensure joint and several liability through the subcontracting chain.

#### **6. Jobs that are human-centred**

To keep the pace of innovation, companies must make the best use of technologies. This means that workers learn to use AI, instead of being bossed by AI. A human-centred use of algorithms is at the core of the platform work directive, we are determined to extend its protection to all workers. Technology and innovation should improve both working conditions and productivity. A directive on AI at the workplace must guarantee the human in control principle.

#### **7. Jobs that provide training and new skills**

Work must provide stability and help build a career. To strengthen workforce resilience and support innovation, we are convinced that workers must benefit from a right to training – without cost and during working time - that enables them to improve their qualification levels and progress within their company. Reinforcing skills portability is also crucial to help workers from one job to the other. Besides, the traineeships directive shall be reviewed in order to better protect trainees on the workplace.

#### **8. Jobs that guarantee collective rights**

Trade unions are the ones effectively monitoring and improving the quality of jobs in every company. It is essential for all workers to have trade union access. Workers' involvement in decision-making makes companies more agile. We are convinced of the benefits of collective bargaining, democracy at work and social dialogue and will support workers' and their trade unions' involvement in the anticipation and management of change with a Directive on Just Transition in the world of work, and a new framework for information, consultation and board-level representation.

#### **9. Public investment for quality jobs**

Public procurement policies should be leveraged to promote collective bargaining and ensure quality jobs. Public contracts should be awarded only to companies that respect workers' rights, provide stable employment, and ensure fair wages through collective bargaining. Quality jobs must be pushed through the European Semester as well, with the support of the Social Convergence Framework.

#### **10. A strong European Social Fund for quality jobs**

EU cohesion funds, the European Social Fund, are essential to the pursuit of sustainable and inclusive growth across all EU regions and should reflect emphasis on quality jobs. A strong

European Social Fund is key to finance initiatives for better skills within the Quality Jobs Package.

These principles are key to an ambitious Quality Jobs Package, which includes the necessary investments and legislative proposals to ensure quality jobs. We look forward to the publication of the European Commission's proposal, a crucial step for levelling up the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights. Quality jobs benefit workers individually and society collectively. They are the only fair way to recognise the contribution that workers make to their companies, to national economies and to our continent.

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