



GMB TRADE UNION RESPONSE

Department for Business Innovation & Skills

Call for Evidence:

***Government review of the balance of
competences between the United Kingdom and
the European Union***

Social and Employment policy

January 2014

Introduction and Background

GMB is the UK's third largest trade union with over 620,000 members across a wide range of sectors, both public and private. We confirm that this response is on behalf of our members.

GMB affiliates to six international/European trade union federations, where we are involved in EU sectoral social dialogue, and we are actively affiliated to the ETUC via the TUC.

We understand this consultation is part of the Government's wider assessment of Britain's place in the EU and the terms of our membership.

GMB urges the Government to take into very serious consideration that trade union activists, and workers more widely, will not accept a future policy direction for the EU that does not have the principles of a Social Europe at its core.

Millions of UK workers supported the idea of a European Union on the basis of a true balance between free trade and an accompanying social dimension for jobs, equality, employment rights, collective bargaining, health and safety protections, and protection from exploitation of labour. An EU that is only there for the needs of business without these social measures will not be supported by the British public.

Below is the GMB evidence in response to the questions raised in the BIS Consultation. GMB has also worked closely with TUC on these issues and supports its separate response to this consultation.

We would be happy to provide further information, or discuss further any of the points made in this submission.

GMB Responses to questions in the BIS Call for Evidence on the Government's review of the balance of competences between the United Kingdom and the European Union

Social and Employment policy

The argument for social and employment competence

Question 1: *To what extent is EU action in this area necessary for the operation of the single market?*

The Single EU Market is not an end in itself. Part of a wider project for EU integration, it was established on the basis of an agreed consensus that there would need to be a proper balance between its economic and social dimensions for it to function fairly and effectively. GMB believes EU action in the social and employment area – including equal treatment, non-discrimination and access to secure and high-quality jobs – is therefore crucial to a successful Single Market and to upholding that balance, ensuring a level playing-field and avoiding social dumping. People in Britain and across Europe would not support a Single Market without it.

Market considerations and economic freedoms should not trump social concerns. If there is a conflict between the two, priority should always be given to employment and social considerations as it is against these criteria that the benefits of the Single Market will be judged by the British and wider-EU public (as established in the ETUC's Social Compact for Europe¹ and Social Progress Protocol²). Any attempt by the UK Government, other Member State governments or the EU institutions to move away from this accepted consensus will risk the unravelling of the EU.

The Treaty of the European Union³ and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union⁴ contain a wider commitment to protecting and improving the living and working conditions of people across the EU. They promote a Single Market based on quality goods and services, high productivity and a skilled and motivated workforce, with social protections to enhance their mobility.

Free movement of people without accompanying social and employment rights and protections for the labour market to prevent abuse and exploitation will only lead to the undercutting of domestic wages and conditions, social dumping and a

¹ A Social Compact for Europe, ETUC (June 2012)

<http://www.etuc.org/a/10024>

² ETUC Proposal for a 'Social Progress' Protocol (March 2009)

http://www.etuc.org/IMG/pdf/social_progress_protocolEN.pdf

³ Treaty of the European Union (2008)

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:115:0001:01:en:HTML>

⁴ Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2010)

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:083:0389:0403:en:PDF>

race to the bottom, from which neither UK workers, the British economy nor businesses would benefit.

In order to achieve an effective and workable Single Market and ensure a level playing-field, equal treatment and non-discrimination for all workers, a common base of employment laws and protections is needed and must be properly enforced. The Single Market cannot function effectively with 28 different sets of rules. It is in response to this demand that a body of EU social and employment rights has been put in place over a period of years.

Through this process, British people have gained many positive new statutory rights and protections which did not previously exist in the UK, though many were already in place in some form in other Member States, often even going further than subsequent EU proposals (and needing strong non-regression clauses to guarantee their continuation).

Without EU legislation therefore, British people would find themselves second-class citizens in terms of social and employment rights and protections compared to the rest of the EU. GMB believes many of these rights would never have been delivered by the UK Government unilaterally at domestic level. It is important therefore that the UK does not opt out of, or repatriate, EU social and employment policy areas. UK workers will not back a one-way street Europe that only serves the needs of business and denies them these vital rights and protections.

GMB is concerned that the European Commission's recently published 'Regulatory Fitness and Performance Programme' (REFIT⁵) may risk undermining workers' rights and protections, and that it attempts to weaken social dialogue and collective agreements. We urge EU governments and the institutions not to pursue this dangerous path.

Effective labour market regulation has helped create a more level playing-field and a more effective Single Market for businesses and workers alike, and should be seen as a positive dimension of the Single Market, to be protected and developed. It has created more trust, helped motivate workers towards higher productivity and improving their skills, and provides a more sound and sustainable base for economic growth.

GMB believes the UK Government, European Commission and other Member States must step up efforts to ensure these issues are integrated more effectively in Single Market policy, and move away from attempts to deregulate this vital cornerstone of the EU Single Market.

⁵ *Regulatory Fitness and Performance Programme (REFIT)*, European Commission
http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/refit/index_en.htm

Question2: *To what extent are social and employment goals a desirable function of the EU in their own right?*

GMB believes that social and employment rights and protection from exploitation, discrimination and social exclusion are not just a cornerstone of the EU Single Market but a fundamental part of any civilised society and the result of years of social progress in which the EU has played a key role.

These rights and protections have helped keep workers, workplaces and the wider public safe, have improved workers' trust and motivation, and have promoted a more highly skilled and productive workforce. EU safeguards have also helped limit unfair competition, social dumping and a race to the bottom based on unfair wage competition, which would have a negative impact on businesses, workers and the economy alike.

The UK and EU governments need to be clear – is their aim to support and promote responsible businesses that invest in and value their workforce, or do they want to encourage unscrupulous 'cowboy' operators, driving down wages, terms and conditions, and standards to the lowest common denominator? We sense they will say the former. If this is the case, they will want to promote further development of social and employment policy in the EU. If it is the latter, they should be honest about this with the electorate.

The wider importance of EU social and employment rights has also been specifically recognised and included in the EU Treaty as one of its core objectives and fundamental values – achieving a social market economy and helping to attain full employment and social progress at the same time as sustainable and long-term growth.

The EU's Social Model has also been an influential benchmark of reference outside the EU in the global economy, and we would urge it to be more effectively used in influencing EU trade and development policy.

Question 3: *What domestic legislation would the UK need in the absence of EU legislation?*

GMB has grave concerns about what is behind the wording of this question. In light of the current Government debate on the UK's future in Europe, it would appear the Government is attempting to encourage responses seeking to deregulate or repatriate aspects of EU employment and social laws. The Government should be clearer about its intentions.

Over the past 60 years, the EU has introduced new laws and provisions which better promote and protect our fundamental rights, in direct response to

economic and social needs and demands. There is no justification for reducing or reviewing this body of rights.

In the absence of EU legislation, GMB believes UK workers would need the same body of employment, equality and social rights at national level. It is clear that the EU would remain a vital trading partner and market whether the UK is in or out of the EU, and these rights would therefore remain part of a wider requirement.

It is clear that re-legislating and revising UK legislation to embody EU laws in a domestic context would be a lengthy and complex process, and begs the question why would the Government – with resources already stretched – wish to create unnecessary and avoidable problems for itself in this policy field. Furthermore, a solid base of social and employment rights actually helps to protect good, respectable companies and employers against unscrupulous operators who compete unfairly, bringing down wages, conditions, and labour and health and safety standards.

Impact on the national interest

Question 4: *What evidence is there that EU action in social policy advantages the UK?*

EU social policy has had a major impact in improving employment and social rights and protections and promoting equality and social inclusion for people across the UK. For many British people, it is seen as Europe's proudest achievement.

BIS refers to the 'national interest' in this consultation's background paper but fails to define what it means by this term. The Government's emphasis seems to be that what is good for business is good for the UK. GMB would argue that the genuine national interest is that which benefits the wider British public, workers and the unemployed and those facing social exclusion, not just the business elite. The Government cannot continue to define our relationship with the EU purely according to how it might advantage business, but must ask itself instead how its plans for Britain's future in Europe will affect people across the country.

If the Government is in any doubt about public opinion regarding the 'national interest', it need only look at the public outcry in response to bank bailouts and bankers' bonuses, tax-dodging multinationals, and worker exploitation fuelling increases in zero-hour contracts. People across Britain are facing growing inequalities and seeing their salaries and working and living conditions decline in a cost of living crisis whilst the rich just get richer. Whilst the Government has dragged its feet or sought to block solutions to these issues, the EU has been pushing measures to curb bankers' bonuses, introduce a financial transaction tax and put an end to tax dodging, evasion and havens.

The protection and development of our living and working conditions guaranteed in the EU Treaties and its body of social and employment law is a vital buffer for UK workers to the impact of market opening. These laws have been indispensable in creating a level playing-field, promoting a highly skilled and productive workforce, of mutual benefit to workers and companies alike.

British people have gained from a range of EU social and employment policy action:

Tackling Restructuring

In response to the challenges of restructuring, the EU has delivered a range of worker protections which British workers previously did not enjoy. Collective redundancy rights together with acquired rights (TUPE) and information and consultation rights at national level and via European Works Councils have been beneficial to both workers and employers in dealing with the challenges of restructuring and outsourcing in a more socially acceptable manner. These rights have helped minimise disputes, reduced damage to local and regional economies and given trade unions a crucial voice in the company restructuring process and a central role in ensuring these rights are implemented.

Health and Safety

British people enjoy a raft of health and safety rights and protections thanks to strong EU legislation in this area, including protection from exposure to chemical agents and rules on manual handling, operating machinery, and display screen equipment and other work equipment.

EU rules have clarified requirements, created a level playing-field, and helped to reduce sick leave and accidents and injuries both at work and beyond the workplace. The benefits of these health and safety protections are clear to workers and businesses alike. They have saved lives, and reduced costs for companies.

Working Time

The EU's Working Time Directive provides UK and EU workers with safeguards against the health and safety risks of working excessive hours and guarantees proper rest breaks, as well as rights to four weeks paid annual leave and a better work/life balance. GMB has major concerns that the Government sees Working Time rights as a target for reform. Reducing or removing these rights will have a major negative impact not only on the health and safety and quality of working life of British workers and their families, but will also be a major financial blow to them as well as causing further pressure on balancing work and family life. We would urge the Government to drop its opposition to these vital and beneficial protections.

Equality

The EU has long been committed to tackling discrimination on a number of levels and promoting equal treatment. Women in particular have benefitted from EU action to close the gender pay-gap and guarantee equal pay for equal work. EU legislation has also tackled labour market segmentation and exclusion, and banned discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, belief, gender, disability and sexual orientation. Court of Justice of the European Union jurisprudence has provided further progress in giving clarity and strengthening the scope to help combat discrimination, including indirect discrimination, giving protection for transgender people, and rebalancing the burden of proof. EU equality rules have also guaranteed better rights and protections for vulnerable and socially excluded groups, too often victims of the market.

Atypical workers

Part-time workers

EU part-time workers' rights have provided major progress in achieving equal treatment for predominantly female part-time workers. Studies show that almost half a million workers have seen the benefits in improved pay and GMB has led many successful cases for amendments enforcing these rights.

Fixed-term workers

EU legislation has significantly improved pay and conditions for fixed-term workers – giving them more job security and access to occupational pensions.

Agency workers

Agency workers have benefitted from increased pay, conditions and holiday entitlements thanks to the EU Directive. However, implementation of the 'Swedish Derogation' in the UK has not been a positive development. Trade unions warned that it could be a route to avoidance of equal treatment and it means that many agency workers in the UK are still being paid less than directly employed staff doing the same job. We wish to see this derogation removed from UK legislation.

There is no evidence that giving equal rights to atypical workers (such as agency or fixed-term workers) has led to a loss of employment or reduced workforce flexibility. However, GMB is concerned about the trends revealed in TUC research of higher levels of under-employment and an increase in temporary insecure employment and involuntary part-time work in the UK, with British workers becoming less well paid, less secure and more exploited in their jobs.⁶

⁶ *Involuntary temporary jobs driving rising employment*, TUC (August 2013)
<http://www.tuc.org.uk/economic-issues/labour-market/labour-market-and-economic-reports/involuntary-temporary-jobs-driving>

Balancing work and family life

Pregnant worker and maternity and parental leave rights have helped reconcile work and family life for both men and women (EU Working Time rules also have also assisted in this area), and allowed women to gain access to and integrate and remain in the EU workforce, extending a rich skills base. Specific health and safety laws in the EU's Pregnant Workers Directive also ensure protection for pregnant women as well as those who have recently given birth or who are breastfeeding.

Social Protection

The EU Social Model had also helped develop rights and protections in the field of social security and social protection, which have helped give people security when contemplating moving from one country to another to work, reduce inequalities and discrimination, promote high standards of employment, prevent social dumping and the undercutting of wages and conditions, and introduce minimum social security levels (including for migrant workers).

Question 5: What evidence is there that EU action in social policy disadvantages the UK?

GMB firmly believes that there is no evidence that EU action in employment and social policy has disadvantaged the UK – quite the opposite. Attempts to undermine the value of social and employment rights have been discredited and have failed to be substantiated. The benefits of a wide range of rights and protections listed in our response to Question 4 are as apparent to good employers as workers and have had a positive rather than negative effect on the labour market.

There is no substantiated evidence that labour market regulation increases unemployment or that increased flexibility helps employment, as country comparisons with the US and Germany show. Whilst the US, with a flexible and weakly regulated labour market, saw significant increases to unemployment levels following the crisis, Germany, with higher levels of employment regulation, actually experienced falling unemployment and increased job opportunities in the same period. This is due not only to its strong industrial strategy and export levels, but also to State-funded schemes to protect and maintain jobs and a strong collective bargaining system.

Question 6: *Are there any other impacts of EU action in social policy that should be noted?*

EU action in social policy has not only benefitted working people in the UK and across the EU, but the creation of a level playing-field has helped lift skills levels, motivation and trust in workplaces and has generally helped progress in living standards through tackling social exclusion and discrimination and promoting equality.

As mentioned previously, many see the EU Social Model as Europe's proudest achievement and if support for or commitment to it wains, so too will public support for the EU. As the Social Model has faced consistent challenge and attacks in recent years and little new progress has been made, workers and citizens across the EU have already begun to question Member State governments' and EU institutions' commitment to the Social Dimension. This has been further fuelled by EU Court rulings hampering Member States' ability to determine higher levels of employment policy and protection, and collective bargaining structures. This needs to be reversed.

Further worrying developments in the EU's response to dealing with the economic and financial crisis have seen a clear attack on trade unions' collective bargaining rights and workers' pay and conditions as well as an erosion of social benefits and employment protections. Crushing austerity measures are widening inequalities across Europe and punishing workers, the unemployed and the most vulnerable for a crisis they did not cause. Cuts to spending and rising unemployment, particularly youth unemployment, which tops 50% in many EU countries, are a scandal. These pressures are fuelling racism and xenophobia as well as euro-scepticism. This cannot be left unaddressed.

Question 7: *What evidence is there about the impact of EU action on the UK economy? How far can this be separated from any domestic legislation you would need in the absence of EU action?*

Again, the tone and formulation of this question is worrying and unclear in its motivation. There is no evidence of EU action in social and employment policy having a negative impact – but rather a positive one, helping to ensure a level playing-field (of quality goods and services provided by a skilled and productive workforce) and balance between social and economic dimensions of the Single Market.

Arguments that the UK is over-burdened by EU regulation do not bear scrutiny. The UK still has one of the least regulated labour markets in the developed world.

Abandoning employment and equality rights would further reduce economic stimulus through reduced economic activity, and would fuel an increase in social tensions and poverty.

EU health and safety laws have significantly reduced workplace accidents, injuries and sickness, reducing costs, boosting productivity, performance standards and helping the economy to grow. Without EU policy in this area, similar measures are highly unlikely to have been introduced at the national level on a unilateral basis. According to IOSH (Institute for Occupational Safety and Health), the UK alone already loses £13.4bn a year to health and safety failures and non-compliance with existing laws.⁷ If the UK abandoned its health and safety framework, it is doubtful that less regulation and enforcement could turn this figure upside down into a profit.

It is therefore hard to see any benefit to the British public from the UK separating itself from EU action in the social and employment field.

Future options and challenges

Question 8: *How might the UK benefit from the EU taking more action in social policy?*

Considerable progress has been made through EU action in social policy but more EU action could benefit people in the UK still further:

Enforcement of Posted Workers rights

GMB believes that urgent action needs to be taken to strengthen the EU Posted Workers Enforcement Directive, closing loopholes that are proliferating the use of post-box companies and bogus self-employment, ending exploitation, guaranteeing Member States the right to determine their own control measures, strengthening joint and several liability provisions across all sectors, and ensuring trade unions are given the platform to negotiate higher and more effective rights, protections, pay and conditions.

Full implementation of Working Time rules

Full implementation and enforcement of the EU Working Time Directive would also help UK workers gain a better work/life balance, healthier workplace and additional protections from working dangerously long hours. Working time is a basic health and safety measure, and the UK's individual opt-out from the EU maximum 48-hour working week must be ended. Proper enforcement is also needed of EU Court decisions confirming that on-call time in the workplace is working time and must therefore be followed by compensatory rest.

⁷ According to the Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH)
http://www.iosh.co.uk/news/latest_news_releases/62_red_tape_report_wrong.aspx

More progress on gender equality

Although the development of EU laws over several decades has brought us positive progress, the culture of gender inequality in pay remains. Shamefully, the UK is even going backwards on this issue – and actually has a gender pay gap (20.1%) well in excess of the EU average (16.2%)⁸. More needs to be done at the UK and EU level to tackle this damaging and persistent culture of inequality.

Recent EU proposals for equal representation of women in the boardroom need to be progressed.

The European Parliament has pushed to improve EU rules for pregnant workers and give them the support needed to return to work at the same level as before the birth – disappointingly, the UK Government is stalling the debate in Council.

More anti-discrimination measures

Draft EU rules against discrimination on the basis of religion, belief, disability, age and sexual orientation in the provision of goods and services should also be adopted, which would benefit British people at home and abroad. Again, these currently remain stalled.

Protection of trade union collective bargaining rights

Damaging attacks on the rights of trade unions to collectively bargain urgently need reversing at EU level. The unjustified and negative impact of the EU Court Viking/Laval cases has still not been resolved and a social progress clause is needed to protect workers and trade unions from other EU Court challenges.

Stronger information and consultation rights

Although GMB does not believe there is a need to consolidate the three national level information and consultation directives, as is currently being proposed, if these rules were to be revised we would like to see stronger information and consultation rights, with more stringent sanctions for non-compliant employers, adopted at both national and EU level.

Stronger worker safeguards in revised Data Protection rules

Data protection rules need to be revised and strengthened to include stronger safeguards protecting workers' personal data, particularly trade union membership and activities, to prevent the victimisation of trade unionists. GMB

⁸ In 2011 – latest Eurostat figures
http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Gender_pay_gap_statistics

has been pushing for a ban on the blacklisting of trade unionists to be specifically included in data protection laws.

More action on precarious work

Tighter EU definitions of self-employment are needed to eliminate bogus self-employment, as well as stricter enforcement of protections against growing precarious working practices, including zero-hour contracts.

Better enforcement of health and safety protections

The EU has an impressive record of legislating on health and safety protections, however GMB regrets that more was not done to ensure proper monitoring and enforcement of the rules. GMB has long campaigned for this. UK statistics of £13.4bn a year being lost through health and safety failures is a compelling example of the need to do more in this area. Yet instead, the UK and several other Member States are cutting enforcement and inspection services as part of swingeing austerity cuts. This does not make economic sense.

GMB also has concerns about the delay of the European Commission in issuing an already overdue updated EU Health and Safety Framework, and urges it to be brought forward as soon as possible.

Question 9: How might the UK benefit from the EU taking less action in social policy, or from more action being taken at the national rather than EU level?

Again, this is another question which seems divisive and questionable in its motivation.

EU social and employment laws were introduced in direct response to economic and social needs and demands, and they play a vital role in the smooth running of the Single Market, including for anyone wanting to trade with that market.

GMB does not believe that the UK would benefit from the EU taking less action in social and employment policy. The UK still remains one of the EU Member States with the weakest employment and workplace rights. And as our response to Question 8 illustrates, there is still much work to be done.

Strong EU legislation must remain the minimum standard for Member States, but strong non-regression clauses are also needed to ensure that where national standards are higher than those proposed by the EU, they are not compromised. Member States must also be allowed to retain their right to promote, enforce and protect higher standards through legislation or collective bargaining if they wish to go beyond EU minimum levels.

It is therefore crucial that action be taken at EU level to counter the negative impact created by the EU Court judgements in the Viking, Laval, Rüffert and Luxembourg cases, which are restricting Member States from determining appropriate levels of employment and social rights and protections for migrant workers – and posted workers in particular – leading to worker exploitation, unfair competition, social dumping, undercutting of terms and conditions and the undermining of the role of trade unions and of collective bargaining.

GMB has experienced first-hand the impact this has in the labour market and industrial relations, as witnessed during the 2009 East Lindsey and other oil refinery disputes.

GMB supports ETUC's campaign for a social progress clause to be included in the EU Treaty, confirming that fundamental social and employment rights, including the right to strike and the right to collectively bargain, will not take second place to economic freedoms and market considerations.

Question 10: *How could action in social policy be undertaken differently? For example, are there ways of improving how EU legislation is made e.g. through greater adherence to the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality or the ways social partners are engaged?*

GMB believes a combination of further binding legislation in parallel with the more effective and consistent use of social dialogue (as provided for in the EU Treaty) is needed to guarantee acceptable minimum employment and social standards and conformity towards a level playing-field.

The role of social partners (whose role in negotiating agreements is officially recognised in the EU Treaty) and importance of sectoral negotiations must be protected and strengthened. They have already proven an effective way of regulating and addressing specific social and employment policy areas such as part-time workers' rights.

The UK has often been criticised at EU level for its weak social partner engagement. If, as the question suggests, the Government sees further scope for their engagement, it must do more to give recognition to the actors and their role to this process.

GMB has major concerns about the current attacks on the right of trade unions and employers to negotiate. UK Government action that led to the unprecedented blocking of the EU social dialogue agreement for health and safety in the hairdressing sector (already reached between employers and trade unions) must be stopped. GMB understands similar moves are also being reported in the transport sector and wider economic/growth policy framework. This is unacceptable interference in the social dialogue process.

The EU Treaty affirms the role of collective bargaining and GMB wishes to see this respected and used more widely across policy making in the employment and social field as well as in the economic growth and stability policy arena. Currently, the role and freedom of trade unions to organise and collectively bargain is being undermined in this influential policy area, which is unacceptable and must be remedied.

Question 11: *How else could the UK implement its current obligations in this area?*

The UK has limited options for implementing social and employment policy obligations, lacking the national or sectoral collective bargaining arrangements several other EU Member States have for implementing EU rules.

As we highlighted in our response to Question 10, the UK has often drawn criticism from the EU institutions on its failure to promote active and structured social partner involvement in EU policy development and implementation, which seems to have been largely ignored.

The UK Government has endless scope to promote collective bargaining and more consistent social partner involvement in policy making in the UK. The question is – does it have the will?

Question 12: *What future challenge/opportunities might the UK face in this area and what impact might these have on the national interest?*

We are not out of the crisis – indeed people across Britain and the rest of Europe are still in the thick of its negative impact, with unemployment at record highs and a growing cost of living crisis as wages and the economy continue to stagnate, and with the prospect of things getting still worse. The public needs to feel it is being listened to and its concerns addressed, but workers' and trade union voices are not being sufficiently heeded.

There is a growing sense of scepticism and lack of trust about the level of commitment to maintaining a balance between the social and economic dimensions of the Single Market. As GMB has warned many times, a failure to promote and strengthen the Social Dimension will result in support for the EU dissolving. We sense that areas of the EU institutions and some Member States recognise this, though not enough is being done to stem the tide of disillusionment. Yet, at this increasingly sensitive time, the UK Government appears to be actively challenging the basis of the EU Social Model – effectively pouring fuel on the fire.

Tensions are becoming very visible in the current debates on EU migration to the UK, and the growth in populist and xenophobic parties and movements in the UK and across the EU is alarming. The UK Government and EU must wake up to the seriousness of the threats we currently face of growing intolerance and the destabilising of society.

GMB believes that Member State governments and the EU institutions need to unite in reinforcing a strong Social Dimension at the heart of all EU policies and which ensures sustainable job creation with social and employment safeguards, tackles growing inequalities and gives people across Europe clear evidence that the EU is there for their benefit.