

Appendix: Notes from the discussions with our keynote speakers

European Pillar of social rights

Barbara introduced the keynote speaker **Ms. Raquel Cortes-Herrera**, Deputy Head of Unit, DG Employment and Social Affairs, European Commission (EC).

Raquel can finally tell about the pillar that was adopted yesterday. There has been a record long public consultations, 9 months. That is because the Commission wanted to engage the civil society.

The pillar is a bit of a strange animal of the Commission. The Pillar is intended to be a framework of that the COM thinks about the European Social Model. Junker wanted to look at this model and see what we are doing good, what we need to change and so on. It builds a new framework and image of this, but it doesn't create new rights. It is a declaration of a vision. It builds on current Acquis; it does not change the constitutional distribution of competences.

The main responsibility to achieve the vision of the pillar lies on the member states. What the Commission wants is to stop a race to the bottom, it is a complement of the internal market. The national governments need to decide whether they want to adhere to this, and it will depend a lot on the pressure from civil society.

The model consists of 20 goals in 3 categories. Goal number 19 is about housing. That should be seen as a strong political signal from the commission that there cannot be a social model that does not say anything about housing.

A discussion follows where some of the board members expressed a plea of the change in formulation since the last proposal. The Commission have removed the bias towards House ownership. But there is also a worry that the current formulations might lead to a lowering of the ambitions in some of the member countries if the pillar is used wrongly in the European Semester.

Ms. Agnes Jongerius MEP, Vice President EP Committee for Employment and Social Affairs also visited the board meeting. She said that the history of the Social pillar started in late 2014, when the president of the Commission said that the EU needs to be complemented by a social dimension. Junker choose to have a different approach to the social issues. This was welcomed by the parliament, and especially by the S&D group. It is more part of the Roman-Catholic way of thinking, Ms. Jongerius said.

For the first time there is a new legislative proposal put forward on Work/life-balance. It's the first time in 10 years that the commission wants to move forward on the social area, Ms. Jongerius said.

As Agnes understand, the committee EPSCO of social rights will discuss this on the 12 of June. And the issues should be settled in the December council. EPSCO is the meeting of all EU member states ministers for social affairs.

So this is a good period to start lobby the EPSCO. The big discussion will probably come after that, and will lie between the EP and the Council where some member countries are sceptical to the pillar.

Reflections after the meetings:

Barbara

- Important to table amendments, broader scope, affordable housing

- Pressure on member states, to opt in to the pillar. So far we know that Sweden, Denmark will opt in, maybe also the Czech Republic.
- Country reports, 19 of them are dealing with housing. Definitely Sweden, The Netherlands, Germany, France.
- We should therefore make national positions to our governments.

Mariell

- From our point of view, the SUT has been meeting with the Commission and there are some significant improvements. We are though afraid of a worst case scenario is that DG ECFIN and DG Employment will join up through.
- The SUT is well on its way to lobby the Swedish government on the issues.

EU clean energy package

Barbara introduced the keynote speaker **Niels Ladefoegd**, Policy Officer of the Directorate-General for Energy, Energy Efficiency Unit.

Mr. Ladefoegd spoke about the new energy package from the Commission, that is the most extensive so far. In his talk Mr. Ladefoegd focused on:

- Buildings
- Efficiency
- Governance
- Energy Market & ETS

The commission has prioritised consumers in this package. It is a progressive agenda on efficiency and being no 1 in the world on renewables. Efficiency and climate also saves money for consumers, and drives the job growth, Mr. Ladefoegd said.

The Commission is trying to strengthen the weaknesses in the current packages. Therefore, smartness in terms of efficiency and interacting with consumers (tenants amongst) and the outside world is an important part.

For housing it will be a requirement on electric charging points for both non-residential and residential housing, especially new houses.

Funding for energy efficiency measures and renovations are actually hard to find. So one strategy here is to build capacity to come together as landlords (and perhaps tenants) so that making renovation more interesting for the financial sector. To make investments more interesting the sector should aggregate the projects more. The Commission also works with the financial sector in de-risking investments in the energy sector. So the main strategies in this area, according to Mr. Ladefoegd, are:

- Better use of public money
- Better aggregation
- De-risking

The Commission is also looking to work on the take back on renovations, that needs to be balanced. The cost of the renovation should be balanced to the possible savings. Sometimes this is not the case, the cost can be too high.

Energy efficiency directive

Three things

- 30% target for 2030 (EP is pushing for 40%)
- On Article 7, every member must ensure a saving of at least 1,5%, of the total energy sales, every year.
- IMD

Barbara brought up that the energy certificates are hard to compare between the countries. There's also a problem for tenants that they are not always allowed to see the certificate before they sign a contract. This is a problem for tenants in most EU countries, where the heating is not included in the rent.

On IMD, Individual Metering and debiting, the Commission is making this a mandatory requirement, unless it's not feasible or cost-effective. The Commission is also making a special solution of Sweden and Finland because we have the Gross-rent/Warm-rent system. This is an ongoing dialogue.

The Commission is also proposing a transition to remote reading of meters, and also to provide the information to the end-consumers. This is a requirement when you put in or replace meters.

