
Positions and demands of the Presidium

In view of the presented White paper on the future of Europe

Reflections and scenarios for the EU27 by 2025

COM (2017) 2025, 1 March 2017

and

Reflection papers on the

Social dimension of Europe – COM (2017) 206, April 26 2017

Harnessing of globalisation – COM (2017) 240, May 10 2017

Deepening of the EMU – COM (2017) 291, May 31 2017

Future of European defence – COM (2017) 315, June 7 2017

Future of EU finances – COM (2017) 358, June 28 2017

CESI welcomes

1. the opening to a discussion process concerning the future of the EU thanks to the White paper and the Reflection papers, most especially regarding its social dimension, which CESI is participating in on both the European and national levels;
2. the recognition of the fundamental significance of a strong social dimension for the future of the EU, which is the result of the Union's goals for full employment and social progress;
3. the objective to achieve the highest possible standards in terms of a work-life balance in as many fields as possible on the level of European social policy, in view of an upwards convergence;
4. the goal to make greater state investments in Europe and launch a reform of EU finances, as well as striving for new income sources for the EU, so that the Union's goals as reflected in the treaties may be reached;
5. further steps towards a financial and tax union, which focuses more than ever on sustainable progress;
6. the step-by-step set-up of a European Security and Defence Union with more joint rules and rights for military personnel.

CESI is critical of

1. to a certain degree, a lack of orientation and coordination difficulties in EU institutions as well as tensions between the member states regarding the future of the EU;
2. scenarios presented in the Reflection papers that lead to a weakening of the social dimension of European policy, e.g. the limitation of the social dimension to the free movement of people;
3. the insufficient presentation of treaty-based foundations and goals in the papers that could lead to greater EU competence for social-political action – bearing in mind that said foundations and goals are the basis of the competencies of the Union towards this aim;
4. reflections in the papers that follow the so-called flexicurity approach for labour market policies and social policies, which often leads to a reduction of individual and collective labour protection standards and consequently to precarious jobs;
5. the lack of recognition of the fact that investments, mainly in the field of early childhood upbringing, education, health and active labour market policies promote revenue in the long term, both in a social and economic respect, without which the economy cannot be planned in a sustainable fashion and social cohesion will suffer;
6. unjustified hardship in the field of the stability policy and the dogmatic priority granted to austerity measures and budgetary discipline above the investment and innovation capabilities of the member states, preventing or making it harder to reach the Union's goals in both the labour and social-political areas.

For the future of the EU, CESI demands

1. the deeper involvement of civil society and all social partners in the discussion regarding the future goals and pathways of European integration such as in the European Semester, and generally speaking, more transparency in EU decision-making processes and plurality in the social dialogue;
2. a greater ability to reach compromises and more solidarity from the member states, as well as greater loyalty and compliance with laws and treaties in order to secure the EU's ability to act;
3. greater legal certainty and clarity in the legislative, executive and judicial arms when it comes to the application and enforcement of EU legislation;
4. that individuals be placed at the heart of the legal systems, with their intrinsic dignity and right to freedom to develop;
5. the recognition of the equal value of social-political goals of the EU compared to the Single Market and its fundamental freedoms;
6. the understanding of subsidiarity, especially in terms of social policy, which should not only require member states' competence or action on the lowest levels, but should focus on solving problems in an increasingly-integrated EU;
7. the recognition of the fact that as long as the Single Market rules remain the exclusive responsibility of the EU, but that social policies are primarily the responsibility of the member states, it will be

difficult to achieve a balance between Single Market freedoms and social-political goals on an EU level;

8. the assessment of the social-political competencies of the EU including on the basis of its goals and values, its cohesion, the sustainability of its policies and the provisions of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights;
9. the realisation that social-political competencies and the ensuing requirements for action of the EU are not only the result of social policy, but also based on the principle of a fair Single Market, a ban on discrimination, social-political fundamental rights, socially-fair economic management and coordination obligations in the fields of employment, the fight against poverty and social security;
10. cohesive scoreboards that apply to all political areas to evaluate social-political progress and coherence with the social aims within the EU;
11. the design of the future of work and new forms of work via the establishment of socially-fair policies tailored to the digital age, especially by means of a clear definition of the concept of “employee”, as the basis for social and labour regulations applying to atypical forms of work, e.g. measures for social security of all employees and freelancers;
12. the deepening of the European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), with the inclusion of fiscal policy buffer measures in order to make up for the national adaptation instruments lost by states when adhering to the EMU;
13. a move away from “a slim state at any cost”, towards public services that are sufficiently financed and staffed, without which social policies cannot be implemented for the benefit of the citizens, employees and consumers;
14. a more effective prevention of tax evasion and the fight against tax crime, which would open the path to greater financial room for manoeuvre in terms of a policy for social justice;
15. greater consideration for social and labour-law-related aspects of trade policies and cooperation with third states in order to make the social dimension of the EU credible to non-members too;
16. the clear commitment to investment in people.