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Commission proposal welcome but falls short on ambition to fight poverty & inequality

European minimum wage

Today (28 October 2020), the European Commission has just released its draft directive on a European minimum wage. The proposal sets out minimum standards and uniform criteria for the level of EU-wide minimum wages. The European Commission is calling on EU governments to involve social partners and trade unions in negotiations on minimum wages and to close gaps where collective agreements do not apply. For the Greens/EFA group, the European Commission's proposal falls short of its stated ambition to fight poverty and inequality.

Kira Peter-Hansen MEP, Greens/EFA Coordinator in the Employment and Social Affairs Committee in the European Parliament, comments:

"Too many Europeans earn a wage they cannot live on and the number of 'working poor' is likely to grow during the current COVID-19 crisis. That's why it's welcome that the Commission is attempting to tackle the issue of in-work poverty, but unfortunately this proposal fails to tackle the issue. If a European framework on minimum wages is to make a real difference then this proposal is not up to the job. As it stands, this Directive will still see workers on as little as two euros an hour. Wages must be enough to live on across the whole of the EU.

"We welcome the proposal to guarantee wages based on collective agreements in public procurement. However, more needs to be done to give social partners the means to strengthen collective bargaining and we need to secure that the proposal do not harm well-functioning collective bargaining models European workers need access to poverty-proof wages and for the eradication of discrimination of any kind, and for all EU citizens to have a minimum income - that's what a true Social Europe is about."

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