



## PRESS RELEASE

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*EU Social Summit for fair jobs and growth, 17 November 2017*

### **Proclaiming a European Pillar of Social Rights: towards an ambitious EU Social Agenda to promote equality and social justice for all?**

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**On the eve of the EU Social Summit for fair jobs and growth, AGE sheds light on the growing pressure on people, and women in particular, to accumulate years in employment to enjoy a dignified standard of living in old age while age discrimination in the workplace remains a major obstacle to longer working lives. To overcome this, a resolute action plan is needed to translate the principles of the Pillar of Social Rights into real outcomes.**

Although the scope of the European Pillar of Social Rights – to be officially proclaimed tomorrow at the [2017 Social Summit](#) in Gothenburg – goes far beyond the area of employment and growth, the exceptional summit will address some key issues which impact on older persons, older workers and their families, namely the access to the labour market, fair employment and working conditions, and the support to transitions in between jobs.

Perceived as the major ground of discrimination on the labour market by most Europeans (54% - Eurostat, 2012), age discrimination is the main barrier to active ageing and longer working careers. Only about one in two people between 55 and 64 are in employment. Yet, the progressive delay of retirement age across Europe raises a challenge for older workers to be able to remain in employment for longer in order to secure a full pension. ***“This increased pressure on people to accumulate additional years in employment to enjoy a dignified standard of living in old age is even higher for women, many of whom with scattered, non-linear career paths or part-time employment due to caring responsibilities. Moreover the persisting age discrimination in employment – based on purely ageist prejudices linked to chronological age – gives no consideration to older workers’ skills, expertise or ability to further grow professionally”***, stressed Anne-Sophie Parent, AGE Secretary General.

AGE Platform Europe’s members reiterate their call to national governments and the EU – presented in [our contribution to the EU consultation on the EU Pillar on Social Rights](#) – to combat age discrimination and promote age diversity in the workplace. Improving older workers’ access to lifelong learning, facilitating work-life balance, improving occupational health and safety, and allowing for flexible pathways from work into retirement without

losing out on pension rights should be all part of the planned measures under the framework of the Pillar of Social Rights.

***“We also hope that the EU heads of state or government, the social partners and the civil society who will meet at the Social Summit will seize the opportunity to launch an ambitious EU social agenda going beyond employment. While economic growth is a basis for our societies to further develop, yet it has to go hand-in-hand with social justice, and together underpin the fundamental values the European Union stands on: democracy, human rights, dignity, equality and the rule of law”***, concluded Ebbe Johansen, AGE President.

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### **Note to the editor**

#### **About AGE Platform Europe:**



AGE is a European network of organisations of and for people aged 50+ aiming to voice and promote the interests of the 190 million citizens aged 50+ in the European Union and to raise awareness of the issues that concern them most. [www.age-platform.eu](http://www.age-platform.eu)

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