

# Best be leaving now

The European Commission has launched a public consultation to gather views of the broader public on setting up a European Labour Authority and the introduction of a European Social Security Number.

*"The European Labour Authority should ensure that EU rules on labour mobility are enforced in a fair, simple and effective way. Concretely, building on existing structures, the Authority would support national administrations, businesses, and mobile workers by strengthening cooperation at EU level on matters such as cross-border mobility and social security coordination. It would also improve access to information for public authorities and mobile workers and enhance transparency regarding their rights and obligations.*

*The European Social Security Number (ESSN) aims at simplifying and modernising citizens' interaction with administrations in a range of policy areas. An EU Social Security Number would facilitate the identification of persons across borders for the purposes of social security coordination and allow the quick and accurate verification of their social security insurance status. It would facilitate administrative procedures for citizens by optimising the use of digital tools".*

Both initiatives were announced by President Juncker in his 2017 State of the Union address. Legislative proposals for both initiatives are announced in the European Commission's Work Programme for 2018 and planned to be tabled by spring 2018.

There are two ways to look at this. This could be viewed as the EU steaming ahead to do all that which it could not do with the UK as a member, much like PESCO. The other way to look at it is that this was always the direction of travel. UK

membership only really governs the pace of integration and a “public consultation” means they are going to do it regardless of what anyone thinks.

Either way, this is not the domain of a mere trade bloc. This is an instrument of an emerging supreme government, to which the UK would otherwise be subordinate. It is the foundation of Juncker’s “Social Europe” meaning that social and welfare policy will gradually drift toward Brussels and far out of the reach of democracy. Of course, this would follow that much vaunted Brussels subsidiarity principle. You are free to have any have any policy you like, just so long as it stays within the parameters defined by the Commission and the ECJ.

And this is the thing with the EU. Once consent is established for the basic foundation, the ossification process begins to the point where you no longer have the power, reform is impossible and like trade and agriculture, it simply drops out of public discourse. Why debate that which cannot be influenced? This is how we drift from democracy to technocracy – and subsequently stagnation and disaffection. That is why I would vote to leave every single time.