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**SYNDICAT
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FOREWORD

By the General Secretary



Esther Lynch
General Secretary

Before describing the activities and achievements of their organisations, trade union activity reports often begin by noting the exceptional challenges faced during the period under review. But the years 2019-2023 really have been extraordinary for trade unions and the workers and communities we represent.

We have come through a global health crisis of a scale unmatched since the 1918 influenza pandemic. COVID-19 has killed almost seven million people worldwide, more than a quarter of them in Europe. Millions more were bereaved or remain ill with long Covid. Working people, our health and education services – indeed our entire communities – struggled heroically to cope and come through.

Economies – many of which were still recovering from the earlier financial, economic and social crisis – struggled to adapt. Millions of people lost their jobs or suffered reduced incomes and many of them have yet to bounce back. Meanwhile, all of us had to quickly adjust to heightened workplace health risks and radically new forms of work organisation – and trade union organisation – virtually overnight.

Just as the worst of the pandemic appeared to be over, Russia's invasion of Ukraine plunged Europe into its bloodiest conflict in decades. While working people and trade unions across the continent rallied to support the people and trade unions of Ukraine, stand up for democracy, and work for peace, the European and global economies again came under pressure.

In this context, it was an important moment when Ukrainian and Moldovan trade unions joined the ETUC in 2022. Our confederation now includes 93 national trade union confederations from 40 countries – plus ten European trade union federations.

As always, working people were hit hardest by economic shocks and the cost-of-living crisis remains the biggest single challenge we face as the ETUC and its affiliates head into our next four-year period of work and mobilisation.

The impact of climate change has become ever more real in Europe. Meanwhile, the march of technology and new forms of work organisation quickened pace and intensified. New business models and technological shifts – including automation, digitisation, artificial intelligence, and platform work – are changing our workplaces faster than ever before.

We continue to challenge the increased insecurity and precarious work, which are the hallmarks of many of these changes. Devastating for the workers concerned – particularly young workers, women, migrants, and minorities – these trends also threaten our very democracy as they erode hope, trust and faith in the European values and institutions that, broadly, delivered improved living standards and life chances in the decades after the Second World War. Only robust collective bargaining and social dialogue, and just transitions with quality jobs and strong worker and social protections, can address this.

For all the recent challenges – and those to come – our experience over the last four years also provides evidence that, by coming together and through trade union mobilisation at European level, we can build a better Europe for workers, their families, and their communities.

The pandemic brought wide recognition and praise for previously undervalued workers in the public service, retail, distribution, communications, and many other sectors. It was trade unions that kept workers safe in a job and on the job. But, spurred by trade unions at European and national level, the official response to COVID-19 was also a reminder of what can be achieved when governments put aside the failed austerity ideology and instead engage with social partners and trade unions and invest to support jobs, incomes and public services.

The Next Generation EU programme and the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), as well as SURE, were put forward following intense ETUC political pressure. The ETUC ran an intensive advocacy campaign to include social objectives and conditions in the RRF Regulation. Austerity-related measures of the Stability and Growth Pact were temporarily frozen, although they have not been permanently changed. Reviving and rebuilding a progressive approach will be one of our biggest challenges in the coming years.

Because of trade union mobilization and intense actions, the European Union adopted the Directive on Adequate Minimum Wages in 2022 with a focus on the adequacy of statutory minimum wages – taking into account the cost of living – and on promoting collective bargaining. The ETUC was – and remains – determined to see the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR) implanted in full, and this is central to our action plan for the months and years ahead. Without doubt, the Directive is a major step in the right direction.

Since 2019, trade union pressure has also won the adoption of important pieces of legislation including the Gender Pay Transparency Directive, which ensures that the undervaluing of work which is predominantly done by women is finally relegated to the past where it belongs. We have also won a major revision of the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive, the regulation establishing the European Labour Authority, and the Directive on Corporate Sustainability Reporting. And the ETUC is strongly engaged in discussions on ongoing legislative dossiers of high importance for trade unions and workers in Europe, including the Directive on Platform Work, the Directive on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence, and the proposal to amend the Asbestos at Work Directive. The Conference on the Future of Europe delivered its important conclusions in 2022. These included the long-standing trade union demand for a Social Progress Protocol.



The joint multiannual work programme of the European social partners (2022-2024) represented the continued commitment of trade unions and employers' organisations to develop a strong autonomous bipartite social dialogue at European level. The ETUC in ensuring the opening of negotiations on a legally-binding agreement on telework and a right to disconnect, with the aim of having the agreement adopted as an EU directive.

The actions and accomplishments set out in this Activity Report reflect the struggles, priorities and campaigns of our affiliates and the unions and workers they serve and represent.

Along with a financial report, this Activity Report groups our activities under ten headings:

- Democracy and a better future for working people;
- Fair economic and social governance;
- Wages, collective bargaining, and workers' rights;
- Just transition, digitalisation, and industrial policy;
- An effective pillar of social rights;
- Migration, solidarity, equality, and inclusion;
- Gender equality;
- Youth;
- Communications, digital trade unionism and ETUC projects, and
- Affiliates and organisation.

An appendix lists the resolutions and positions adopted by the Executive Committee between 2019 and 2023.

The range of the work described here, and the emphasis on outcomes and activity, means that the report gives a flavour of – but does not fully reflect – the amount of individual and collective effort required to do what we do well. This includes ongoing engagement with affiliates – individually and collectively through our formal democratic structures – which is essential to accountability, democracy, effectiveness, and our relevance to workers on the ground. It encompasses mobilisations, campaigns, initiatives and a huge number of engagements and meetings, which are necessary to secure wins for trade unions and working people, as we have done over this four-year period.

It depends on the engagement and work of affiliates and staff, which enables us to respond to new challenges like the rise of the far right, and to plan for long-term success through initiatives like digital trade unionism. It recognises the need always to strive to ensure that the ETUC remains a progressive organisation working to properly reflect the make-up of today's workforce. And it includes the essential but often unseen financial, organisational, IT and administrative work which, this year, included the disruption of having to move our offices and dealing with unforeseen events to protect the reputation and integrity of our organisation and our movement.

All of this is only achieved through the collective efforts of many, many people working together. We are strong because of the support of ETUC affiliates and because of their engagement with the programme of work and achievement set out in this report.

It could not be done without the commitment and hard work of our President Laurent Berger and our Vice-Presidents, the Steering Committee and Executive Committee members. It would falter without the experience and skills of our staff.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the huge contributions of Deputy General Secretary Claes-Mikael Ståhl and our Confederal Secretaries Liina Carr, Isabelle Schömann and Ludovic Voet.

This Activity Report is a record of strong trade union thought, debate and action leading to solid collective achievements over the last four years. It is a solid foundation for success in the intensifying struggles and challenges we face in the years ahead.

Esther Lynch
General Secretary



BUILDING DEMOCRACY AND A BETTER FUTURE FOR WORKING PEOPLE



Europe and democracy – the Social Progress Protocol

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) continues to press hard on its flagship demand for a Social Progress Protocol to be included in the European Union Treaties to ensure that, in cases of conflict, social, trade union and workers' rights have precedence over economic freedoms and other EU policies. Also, in view of the Conference on the Future of Europe, the ETUC updated its dedicated proposal for the inclusion of a Social Progress Protocol in the Treaties and secured a reference to the need for a Social Progress Protocol (SPP) in the official recommendations from the Conference [see below] and in the follow-up resolution of the European Parliament. We continue to press hard for the inclusion of a social progress protocol in the EU treaties to ensure that, in cases of conflict, social, trade union and workers' rights have precedence over economic freedoms and other EU policies. The ETUC also remains closely involved in the elaboration of a European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) opinion on the SPP, with the objective of making recommendations to the Spanish EU Presidency in autumn 2023.

Conference on the Future of Europe

The Conference on the Future of Europe (COFOE), which took place from June 2021 to May 2022, provided a forum for institutions, social partners, civil society organisations – along with individual citizens – to discuss and define recommendations for new policies for the EU and for changes to its institutions. The conclusions of the COFOE represent an ambitious roadmap towards a fairer and more social future of Europe. If delivered by the EU institutions, the recommendations would contribute to sustainable growth, improved living and working conditions and human progress in the framework of a renewed social contract. The Conference proposals include the following priorities:

- The full implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights;
- A review of the EU's economic governance and the European Semester to ensure that the green and digital transitions, social justice and social progress go hand-in-hand with economic competitiveness;
- A human centric approach that incorporates the 'human in control' principle;
- A just transition;
- The reinforcement of the role of trade unions at national and transnational level, as well as a reinforcement of the involvement of social partners in decision-making processes;
- A stronger investment in public and not-for profit health systems;
- A right to lifelong learning and training, and a legal ban of unpaid internships;
- Decent work standards along the global value chains.

The COFOE conclusions call for changes in the European treaties, including the incorporation of a social progress protocol "to ensure that social rights are fully protected and safeguarded in case of conflict with economic freedoms."

The ETUC engaged in the Conference process and put 'Social Europe' at the centre of the discussions following the adoption of an ETUC resolution on the COFOE. An ETUC working group on the conference was involved in defining the trade union objectives and priority actions. The trade union proposals on the Conference's online platform were either the most supported, or were amongst the most supported, in all the categories.

The ETUC was present and active in the COFOE executive board, as well as in its plenary sessions and working groups. During the plenary sessions, the trade union delegation organised meetings as well as initiatives – including in collaboration with civil society organisations – and participated in meetings of the political groups to present and seek support for our priorities.

Initiatives at the European and national level were organised by the trade union movement to present proposals for a fairer and more social future for Europe. In carrying out these activities, the ETUC worked closely and effectively with the Workers' Group of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC). We continue to be active in the European institutions to promote steps to ensure that the COFOE conclusions become a reality.

The fight against the far-right

The ETUC has put workers at the heart of its response to the rise of far-right movements and parties. The ETUC developed a roadmap of initiatives for 2021-2022 and the implementation of its actions are underway. An ETUC working group has been created, with dedicated contact people from affiliates, which enables us to share information and best practice, and counter far-right strategies and narratives. We have mainstreamed the issue in all areas of the ETUC activities as the far-right is a threat to all policy areas.

We have conducted multiple training sessions in conjunction with the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) – in areas including political education, networking, and communications, as part of the efforts to build a trade union alternative to confront the rising strength of the far-right. The ETUC Mid-Term Conference also included a dedicated event where affiliates discussed actions to strengthen the role of trade unions in protecting democratic systems against the rise of the far-right.

We have conducted an extensive consultation with affiliates on important dates to commemorate the trade union movement history and achievements, especially dates that are tied to fighting fascism and the far-right. The ETUC has amplified the messaging from affiliates on these days.

An online engagement platform was launched with petitions to garner support for specific initiatives to build a trade union alternative and to communicate with supporters about arguments against far-right rhetoric, narratives, and strategies. The ETUC 'New Frontiers in Collective Bargaining' project, has put in place the basis for a repository of collective agreement clauses with a specific section to include anti-fascist clauses to highlight the initiatives of trade unions at workplace level to fight against far-right narratives and attempts to divide working people.

Regarding policy initiatives at the EU level, we participated in the consultation on the European Democracy Action Plan and worked on issues of disinformation and hate speech in the recently adopted Digital Services Act. The ETUC has been pushing for all EU funding to be subject to an acceptance of – and compliance with – the rule of law, including the full respect for social rights, and trade union and workers' rights, social dialogue and the right to collective bargaining.



In June 2022, the ETUC executive confirmed its policy not to have relationships or contacts with far-right political groups in the European Parliament and MEPs. In view of the European elections, the ETUC has will take action to highlight anti-worker positions adopted by far-right members of the European Parliament.

The 2021-2022 roadmap in the fight against the far-right was written with considerable input from affiliates to build a comprehensive strategy that forges a trade union response to the rise of the far-right. A new roadmap, that incorporates what we have learnt from the original one and intensifies our response, is currently being drafted with the working group. This will equip the trade union movement with reinforced tools and strategies to contrast the far-right.

The Trade Unions Intergroup and inter-institutional relations

The ETUC has strengthened its contacts and advocacy towards the EU institutions, in particular the European Parliament, the Commission and the Council. The ETUC successfully worked to guarantee that the European Parliament 'Trade Unions Intergroup' was established in the current Parliamentary term. The group is an important forum for trade unions to raise workers' and trade union priorities with MEPs. In this term, the Trade Union Intergroup has held more than 30 meetings.

Social dialogue

The seventh joint multiannual work programme of the European social partners (2022-2024) represents the continued commitment of trade unions and employers' organisations to develop a strong autonomous bipartite social dialogue at a European level. The work programme includes social dialogue instruments to address issues affecting workers including the proposed agreement on telework and the right to disconnect, and a framework of actions on the green transition.

The ETUC was successful in getting employers' representatives to open negotiations on a legally-binding agreement on telework and a right to disconnect, with the aim of having the agreement adopted as an EU directive. The ETUC agreed its negotiating mandate and delegation in September 2022. The negotiations, which started in October 2022, come 20 years after the 2002 agreement on telework. They represent an important step in updating existing telework arrangements. This is another very important achievement in the European social dialogue.

In January 2023, the European Commission published a Communication and a proposal for a Council Recommendation to strengthen social dialogue at the national and European levels. This came after the ETUC pushed for social dialogue to be mainstreamed at the European level, across all the Commission's activity in line with resolutions it had adopted. The ETUC also called for a social dialogue coordinator in all relevant EU directorates. The ETUC continues to push for a clearer process to make European agreements legally binding, with respect for trade union prerogatives at all levels. We developed two resolutions to support this work: 'Negotiating a fair future: reinforcing the role of social dialogue' (December 2020) and 'ETUC resolution baking social dialogue into the DNA of Europe' (March 2022).

Democracy at work

In December 2021, the European Parliament adopted the report on a European framework for employees' participation rights, and the revision of the European Works Council (EWC) Directive. Whereas January 2023 saw the adoption of the legislative initiative report on the revision of the EWC Directive.

The ETUC's 'democracy at work' project has put the issue back on the European agenda. This was built on the constant support of affiliates through mobilisations, including petitions and photo actions, which continue to exert pressure on the EU institutions. As a result, democracy at work is now also a priority of the upcoming Spanish Council presidency.

For the first time in over a decade, the European Parliament adopted a report on strengthening democracy at work, based on strong cross-party support for the ETUC's demand for a new framework on information, consultation, and board level representation to prevent employers from exploiting loopholes in the EU law to dodge their obligations to workplace democracy. The report also addressed the need for a targeted revision of the EWC directive.

These demands were taken up in the legislative initiative report on the revision of the EWC directive. Adopted by a qualified majority, the report calls on the Commission to propose a targeted revision by January 2024. The report directly adopted nine of ten ETUC demands for improving the EWC directive. The tenth demand was incorporated in the resolution, as a call on the European Commission to examine how franchise companies could be legally included in the definition of a 'controlling undertaking.'

The European Parliament wants to strengthen the role of trade union representatives in EWCs by securing their participation – also in case of opposition of the management bodies. The ETUC continues to seek clarifications with regard to the possibilities for access to justice and the inclusion of effective deterrent sanctions – including the right for injunction – to strengthen the enforcement of EWCs' information and consultation rights. The EWC report is a milestone in the fight for a better EWC directive and the ETUC is working to ensure that the next steps by the European Commission and social partners leads to real improvements in information and consultation rights.



FAIRER ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL GOVERNANCE



Macroeconomic policy and governance

Against the background of low inflation and poor levels of investment, the ETUC published a 'position on the proposals for a budgetary instrument for convergence and competitiveness (BICC) and new developments of the European Stability Mechanism (ESM)' in 2019. However, the COVID-19 lockdowns started in March 2020 just as the European Commission was launching its first consultation on the reform of the European economic governance framework.

At this time, the ETUC also launched an appeal, with the support of economists and others, for extraordinary macroeconomic measures to tackle the COVID-19 emergency. The confederation also highlighted the need for the EU to act more effectively on the issue of corporate taxation and published a European position on international corporate taxation. In June 2020, the ETUC published a position on the EU economic and social governance, calling for a prompt, strong and sustained recovery. Additionally, in the ECB policy review process, it proposed a position on the European Central Bank strategy review.

In 2021, the ETUC produced several positions on a new economic architecture for the post-pandemic era. These included positions on an assessment of the regulation establishing the recovery and resilience facility, an updated response to the renewed public consultation on the economic governance review, guidelines to provide inputs in the public debate for the EU economic governance review, and a resolution on actions in the framework of the revision of the EU economic governance. It also produced resolutions on the European Union public debt, fiscal rules and EU taxation.

In 2022, the ETUC produced positions on the next generation of resources for the EU budget, on a minimum level of taxation for multinationals, on preventing the use of shell entities, on an EU social taxonomy of sustainable investments, and a resolution on a Proposal for a SURE 2.0.

The ETUC economic committee continues to work closely with the trade union semester liaison officers (TUSLO) committee on economic issues and provides relevant economic inputs to the work on the European semester. The ETUC also continues its strong cooperation with the Fiscal Matters Coalition on European economic governance related issues. The confederation published two newspaper op-eds and is organising a one-week conference with high-level panellists.

The ETUC also supported the EESC's Workers' Group work on the European fiscal framework, and provided expertise in this domain. The ETUC economic team worked in close collaboration on the ETUC cost-of-living campaign, providing many facts and figures to support their work. The ETUC remains part of the Tax Justice Europe network, which is an element of the Global Alliance for Tax Justice. We continue to fight for tax and social justice, and against tax avoidance, evasion and fraud.

The ETUC's work on macroeconomic policy, taxation and economic governance is centred around the work of the ETUC's economic committee, which meets twice a year with documents occasionally amended through written procedures.

Economic governance and the EU semester

The ETUC actions were aimed at launching a European plan for investments for job creation, reforming the EU economic governance, and providing a social leg for the European Semester. The objectives were almost all achieved, particularly through the measures in response to the COVID-19 crisis and the war in Ukraine.

The EU raised €1,000 billion on the financial market for investments and job creation. The Next Generation EU programme and the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) were put forward following the ETUC's political pressure. The ETUC ran an intensive advocacy campaign to include social objectives and conditions in the RRF Regulation. Progress was also made in private investments thanks to an EU taxonomy for sustainable investments, which the ETUC materially contributed to, including through the Platform on Sustainable Investments.

After the start of the war in Ukraine, the ETUC action was mainly directed at the monitoring and updating of national recovery and resilience plans, as well as response measures to the war including Repower EU. Measures such as the SURE, Recovery and Resilient Facility and ECB programmes have contributed to the beginning of a redesign of EU economic governance. The green deal and the EPSR (and its action plan) are operational and supported by European financed investments and other tools. However, the extent to which these instruments will become permanent in the reformed EU economic governance is not yet clear.

The austerity-related measures in the Stability and Growth Pact were temporarily frozen, although they have not been permanently changed. A European Commission proposal to reform the EU Economic governance was put forward in November 2022. A campaign and several ETUC resolutions built wide consensus and unity of intents within the ETUC on our objectives and the actions needed. This is an asset that the ETUC will use to change the current proposal that includes some of the EU longstanding demands in the fiscal and economic domains but omits many of the social and investment tools created in recent years.

The ETUC has revisited its TUSLO strategy and adopted an approach based on four blocks, which include the implementation of the EPSR. This includes 100 proposals to implement the Pillar and an Index of Sustainable Growth and Decent Work. All the relevant material is available online at est.etuc.org. As a result of the ETUC work in this area, there was more involvement of the ETUC members in the key moments of the EU Semester process and a greater number of positive social country specific recommendations.



The EU budget, economic and social cohesion, and structural funds

An ETUC training programme was developed to strengthen the capacity of trade unions to understand the functioning and aims of cohesion policy. The programme was developed over four sessions leading to the publication of a trade union guide, which drew on the combined efforts of experts and trade union experiences in the field.

The ETUC also advocated for more transparent and democratic procedures in the EU Financial Regulation, and for the extension of the partnership principle and social clauses and conditionalities, which are already present in some EU legislation, to all EU funds.

The ETUC is also advocating for greater coherence among the social objectives in the European Pillar of Social Rights and for a just transition in the use of European structural and investment funds – as well as in the coordination between funds and operational programmes.

The ETUC has also worked to reinforce the trade union role in the management and monitoring of the European structural and investment funds, and to enhance resources and actions in support of capacity building at the national and EU levels.

Escape clause and recovery and resilience facility

In a move supported by the ETUC, the general escape clause of the EU Stability and Growth Pact was activated after the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic to allow member states to support the economy, companies and workers. Since then, about 10% of EU GDP was mobilised to support the economy and mitigate the adverse economic effects of the crisis. This allowed member states to prevent massive layoffs and bankruptcies. Member states also agreed on the NextGenerationEU plan (NGEU), which allowed a satisfactory level of public investment and engagement on the socio-ecological transformation of national economies. The NGEU, with its facility for recovery and investments, was a change of paradigm in the EU integration process and now is inspiring a new approach to sustainable development and solidarity in the EU.

Support to Mitigate Unemployment Risks in the Emergency (SURE)

The EU established the 'support to mitigate unemployment risks in an emergency' (SURE) programme in April 2020. It provided financial support to member states so that they could increase public expenditure to preserve jobs. The programme has been a strong expression of solidarity across the EU, as all member states agreed to provide bilateral guarantees to the EU. In this way, the EU was able to borrow at very favourable conditions to finance SURE loans by issuing about €100 billion in social bonds up to December 2022.

This instrument was meant to finance short-time work arrangements, income compensation schemes, and similar national measures for the protection of all workers including independent workers. This initiative aimed at reducing structural unemployment by ensuring that workers could keep their jobs and that companies could survive the crisis.

The ETUC welcomed the establishment of SURE, which followed weeks of lobbying and negotiations with EU institutions. In 2020, more than 31 million people and over 2.5 million companies were covered by the programme, and, in 2021, nine million people and almost a million firms. In most countries, the protection of workers against dismissal was a requirement for accessing financial support from the state. It is estimated that €5 billion of interest was saved and allocated to workers rather than remunerating financial market players.

At the end of 2021, the ETUC reaffirmed the need to expand and prolong the emergency measures and to coordinate them with the recovery strategy. Since SURE was successful and proved to be effective in absorbing economic shocks by giving relief to member states' budgets, the ETUC has put forward a proposal for refinancing SURE and enlarging its scope.



HIGHER WAGES, STRONG COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AND WORKERS' RIGHTS



Collective bargaining and wage policy

Following a sustained campaign by the ETUC and its affiliates, and a more-than-two-year legislative process, the EU Directive on Adequate Minimum Wages was adopted in October 2022. The provisions of the directive include:

- A requirement for EU member states to promote collective bargaining and combat union-busting;
- A requirement on EU members states with collective bargaining coverage of less than 80% to develop an action plan and supporting framework to promote collective bargaining;
- A requirement on EU members states to verify the adequacy of their statutory minimum wages, taking account of purchasing power and the cost-of-living and with reference to the ETUC 'threshold of decency' (60% of the median wage and 50% of the average wage);
- A requirement for stronger trade union involvement in the setting and updating of statutory minimum wages; and
- A requirement for companies that benefit from public procurement contracts to respect the right to organise and collective bargaining in line with ILO Conventions 87 and 98.

The Directive constitutes a very important step in the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights and it constitutes a key tool to tackle the cost-of-living crisis. The ETUC continues to push for the Directives early transposition including increases to statutory minimum wages. Work is also ongoing on the development of living wage approaches.

The campaign involved detailed coordination in the ETUC's Collective Bargaining and Wage Coordination Committee and Working Group on the Directive. It also included extensive lobbying and discussion with the EU institutions, frequent media interventions that gained coverage, and the mobilisation of allies including top economists.

Also, in September 2022, the Commission adopted new guidelines which clarified that EU competition law does not prevent solo self-employed workers from collective bargaining. Removing this legal uncertainty will benefit many of the 24 million-plus self-employed and freelance workers, while reiterating that the collective bargaining process rests with trade unions at national level. The guidelines also addressed a long-standing ETUC requests that trade unions should not be treated as cartels under antitrust rules.

In line with its demands for the Pay Transparency Directive, the ETUC published its report 'New frontiers for collective bargaining: equal pay' in liaison with the Women's Committee. The report features 11 country specific studies that highlight good trade union practice and union-led strategies to achieve equal pay and equal pay for work of equal value, including through collective bargaining. A checklist was produced to help unions place equal pay on their bargaining agendas.

The ETUC also developed guidelines and checklists to support negotiators tackling emerging issues in the changing world of work including working time reduction, privacy and surveillance, and the fight against the far right. These tools are based on collective agreements and trade union policies at national level.

Trade union rights

The ETUC continued to campaign and lobby for an official EU Communication calling for a legally binding instrument on the right to effective enforcement of workers' and trade union rights. As the EU institutions have not yet put forward concrete proposals on these important measures, the ETUC continues its work and has increased its research in this area in cooperation with the ETUI. In order to help protect trade unions from intimidation, the ETUC is also working to ensure that the proposal for a Directive on the use of 'strategic lawsuits against public participation' (or SLAPPs) protects also trade unions from such lawsuits when they campaign or represent workers whose rights have been violated.

Advances in the defence of trade union rights have also been gained or advocated by the ETUC amongst others in its work on the Directive on Adequate Minimum Wages, in the proposal for a Directive on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence and on the Directive on Corporate Sustainability Reporting. The longstanding call for a labour chamber in the European Court of Justice was among the priorities in the ETUC demands for the follow-up to the Conference on the Future of Europe.

At the beginning of the 2019-2023 mandate, the ETUC work in this area was reinforced and reoriented to provide enhanced legal and human rights expertise and support to affiliates, including through the creation of its new human rights, legal and strategic litigation network called ETUCLEX. In this context, the ETUC also continued its activities in the supervisory procedures of the Council of Europe, European Convention of Human Rights and European Social Charter, and invested in dedicated litigation webinars and training, targeted research and project work on competition law, and the creation of a dedicated ETUCLEX interactive website.

In the area of litigation work, the ETUC has been admitted and successfully submitted third-party interventions in three cases on the protection of trade union rights in the European Court of Human Rights in consultation and cooperation with affiliates. A fourth intervention is being prepared in a case on protection against dismissal during pregnancy.

Under the collective complaint procedure, the ETUC has also filed two collective complaints jointly with its relevant affiliates: one against the Netherlands on the right to strike, and another against Belgium on interference in collective bargaining through a 1996 wage law. The ETUC submitted observations on five other collective complaints made by affiliates or international non-governmental organisations against different countries on various fundamental social rights issues.

We have also intensified our contributions to the standard reporting system under the European Social Charter by submitting own ETUC observations on the respect for labour rights for the first time, as well as by joining or providing expert input to observations by the European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU) and EUROCCOP.

In addition, the ETUC has actively contributed to the work of the Council of Europe Steering Committee on Human Rights (CDDH) on the protection of social rights in Europe, where two comprehensive reports currently form a basis for ongoing reform of European Social Charter monitoring procedures and bodies. In this framework, the ETUC also actively participated in the work of task forces and working groups like GT-Charte and the ad hoc working group to the Governmental Committee to the European Social Charter/European Code of Social Security.

The ETUC also continued its campaign for increased ratification of Council of Europe instruments by both the EU and member states, including via the ETUC resolution on the 60th anniversary of the European Social Charter and the 25th anniversary of the revised Social Charter.

The ETUC was recently accepted as an observer with rights to sit on, and contribute to, the work of the new Council of Europe Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAI).

Labour law

The Whistle-blower Directive, which offers protection to workers when they report breaches of EU law in the public interest, came into force in December 2021 following a substantial ETUC campaign. The ETUC continues to work on the issue as the directive is transposed into national law, cooperating with Eurocadres in the development of toolkits on whistleblowing and the trade union role in internal reporting channels.

The ETUC is also following up on the April 2022 proposal for a Directive on strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPP), which is needed to ensure that workers and trade unions are not targeted by abusive court proceedings when exercising their fundamental rights to freedom of expression, assembly and association.

We continue our efforts to prevent 'better regulation' measures being used to further a deregulation agenda, in particular following the 2019 Commission announcement of a 'one-in, one-out' mechanism. The ETUC's pursuit of a positive narrative on quality regulation, as a long-term investment in the general interest, was key in mobilising civil society and the European Parliament against the 'one-in, one-out' approach to EU law-making. The ETUC continues to question the relevance of a burden and cost calculator based on 'one-in, one-out' as part of the Commission's impact assessments. In parallel, we have actively defended social interest and sustainability within the 'fit for future' platform' – aimed at simplifying EU law and regulation – put in place to replace the REFIT platform in 2020.

Negotiations with European employers' organisations on a legally-binding agreement on telework and a right to disconnect, with the aim of having the agreement adopted as an EU directive [see above] is underway.

Together with affiliates, the ETUC is engaging in the Commission expert group on the transposition of the directive on transparent and predictable working conditions. The work of the expert group, which also includes representatives of the Commission, member states and European employers' organisations, has led to a comprehensive report aimed at supporting the legislative work leading to the transposition of the directive by the member states and EEA and EFTA countries.

The ETUC is working with national affiliates to identify areas where member states can be encouraged to use the transposition of the EU directives as opportunities to ratify relevant ILO conventions, articles of the revised European Social Charter, and the European Code of Social Security – as well giving legal force to principles enshrined in the European Pillar of Social Rights, which safeguard and improve social rights.

Health and safety

The ETUC is working to lead the political voice of the European trade union movement on occupational safety and health, by increasing the involvement of the ETUC Standing Committee on Occupational Safety and Health, by coordinating the activities of the workers' group in the European agency for health and safety at work (EU-OSHA), and by taking steps towards the work of the Advisory Committee on Occupational Safety and Health.

To commemorate the 2022 Workers' Memorial Day, the ETUC launched its campaign on 'zero death at work.' This called on the EU and member states to take action to end workplace fatalities by 2030. The initiative has since been supported by 11 employment ministers, MEPs from all democratic political groups, trade union general secretaries and editors of specialised occupational safety and health (OSH) journals. These are calling for action at an EU, national and company level to end death at work.

As a direct result of the ETUC and broader union advocacy, the European Commission's EU strategic framework on occupational safety and health (2021–2027), which was announced in June 2021, included a 'zero vision' on fatal accidents at work.

The Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive was reviewed in 2022 to extend its scope to include substances toxic for reproduction and new substances including acrylonitrile, nickel compounds, and benzene. It also produced guidelines for the use of hazardous medicinal products and studies the possibility of a new coherent, transparent and risk-based system of setting exposure limits. A fifth revision of the directive – proposing enhanced measures on lead and di-isocyanates, as requested by the European trade union movement – is ongoing. Consultation with social partners on a potential sixth revision has begun. This discussion includes the issues of protection against welding fumes, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, isoprene, 1,4-dioxane, and cobalt and inorganic cobalt compounds.

The European Commission recognised COVID-19 as an occupational disease in the health and care sectors and possibly in other sectors if it is followed by a peak of contagion.

The Machinery Directive was reviewed to include a regulation on machinery products including mandatory third-party safety checks for machines using AI and six other categories of machinery. This is an important step since mandatory third-party safety checks on high-risk machinery were scrapped in 2006 as part of 'better regulation.'

Following advocacy by the ETUC and European Federation of Building and Woodworkers (EFBWW), the European Parliament backed a report on the protection against asbestos in October 2021. The report called for a new limit of exposure of 0,001 fibres/cm³ to be set. The European Commission published its proposal for a revision of the directive on asbestos at work in September 2022. However, the Commission proposal included a disappointing limit of only 0,01 fibres/cm³. The ETUC and EFBWW are working to improve this in discussions with the co-legislators.

On work-related cancers – which kill 100,000 people every year across Europe, as well as causing fertility problems – new exposure limits were adopted within the fourth revision of the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive. This will affect over a million workers, who will benefit from new protections against cancer. An ambitious revision of the directive on the exposure to asbestos at work could save 90,000 lives a year.



The ETUC continues to coordinate with Eurocadres on the EndStress.EU initiative, which aims to establish a platform working for a Directive to fight the stress epidemic, address psychosocial risks and improve the organisational and relational work environment.

Corporate social responsibility

The ETUC initiated several actions in pursuit of its campaign for a strong and ambitious EU Directive on human rights due diligence. This included participation in the open public consultation and dedicated European social partners hearings organised by the Commission at the beginning of 2021. In the run up to that consultation, we joined forces with several international NGOs in a public campaign called #HoldBizAccountable!, which triggered over 150,000 submissions to the Commission consultation by trade union organisations, NGOs and individuals. After a significant delay, the Commission finally proposed a disappointing proposal for a directive on corporate sustainability due diligence in February 2022. The ETUC immediately engaged with affiliates in a thorough analysis of the proposal and put forward amendments to strengthen the proposed directive, widen its scope, and maximise the involvement of trade unions and workers' representatives in the due diligence process. In cooperation with progressive European Parliament political groups, these proposals were fed into the work of the different parliamentary committees. Building upon the success of the first campaign, a new joint initiative called 'Justice is everybody's business' was launched with international NGOs.

In cooperation with affiliates, the ETUC has worked intensively to ensure a revision of the Non-Financial Reporting Directive, which led to the adoption of the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) in January 2023. The ETUC and ETUI also contributed to the work of the European Financial Reporting Advisory Group (EFRAG), at board-level and through different expert groups, with the aim of ensuring that corporate reporting standards are obliged to take account of trade union, workers and social rights.

JUST TRANSITION, FAIRER DIGITALISATION AND STRONGER INDUSTRIAL POLICY



Industrial policy

The ETUC has long advocated an ambitious EU industrial policy to underpin largescale quality job creation as an essential tool for supporting sustainable and inclusive recovery and just transitions.

The European Commission's 2020 industrial strategy for Europe was updated in May 2021, taking account of some recommendations made by the ETUC. In February 2023, the Commission published its 'green deal industrial plan', which was a response to the US Inflation Reduction Act, while the European Parliament adopted a resolution on a European Union strategy to boost industrial competitiveness, trade, and quality jobs.

The ETUC position is reflected in the European Parliament resolution but concerns about the approach of the Commission and the Council with regard to industrial policy remain. The ETUC continues to campaign for greater progress on the social dimension of industrial policy and has called for support to industry to include social conditionalities, i.e. to be conditional on the provision of secure, well-paid jobs, respect for collective agreements, and quality training opportunities. The ETUC also argued that companies in receipt of public funds should be forbidden to pay extraordinary dividends to shareholders.

Climate and energy policy

The ETUC is advocating for a just transition framework to accompany the European Commission's 'green deal industrial plan' and for a strong social dialogue dimension to the Green Deal. We have participated in the Just Transition Platform and engaged with NGOs through various coalitions with this aim. We have also been raising trade union proposals and concerns in regular meetings with different Commission directorate generals with the 'green deal industrial plan' responsibilities.

The ETUC has engaged in the framework of the Conference on the Future of Europe and has ensured the inclusion of the objective of just transition in its recommendations.

Together with the relevant European trade union federations, the ETUC engaged in the work on the legislative initiatives included in the Fit for 55 package. These included the revision of the ETS system, the Efforts Sharing Regulation, the LULUCF and the Social Climate Fund. The main objective was to include measures and principles of just transition in all the relevant pieces of legislation. Thanks to the efforts of the European trade union movement principles and references to just transition were included in some of these legislative initiatives.

The ETUC has engaged, together with the ITUC, in the COP 25, 26 and 27 to push for just transition principles and objectives. The 2020 ETUC 'European project on adaptation to climate change' has enhanced regional and sectoral understanding of the consequences of climate change in the world of work, and has assisted in raising the challenge at the company, regional, sectoral, national and European level.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine fuelled the cost-of-living crisis and exposed the overdependence of European and international energy markets on fossil fuels. The ETUC proposals to mitigate the energy element of the cost-of-living crisis were reflected in the policies adopted at European and national levels, albeit with far less ambition and speed than we had advocated for. The ETUC has argued that energy price caps and taxation of windfall profits are temporary solutions that need to be enshrined in a just and clean energy transition and ambitious reform of the electricity market.

Although the ETUC has engaged directly with the European Commission since 2019, urging it to tackle the climate transition with ambition, official support for a just transition remains little more than a declaration of intent.

Internal market

In October 2020, the European Commission withdrew its proposal for a 'services e-card,' which would have undermined the enforcement of workers' rights, following an ETUC campaign. The proposal, which would have benefitted private cross-border service providers at the expense of workers' rights, had been blocked by both the European Parliament and Council after union representations.

The ETUC continues to work for socially responsible policies in the fields of antitrust, mergers, state aid and public procurement, following the Commission's 2019 announcement of a review of the EU legal framework on competition in the light of the digital and green transitions. As a result, the adoption of Commission guidelines on the application of Article 101 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) ensured that antitrust rules do not prevent collective bargaining for self-employed workers.

The ETUC has also advocated for stronger social considerations in the EU rules on the state aid, horizontal and vertical block exemption regulations, market definition notice, digital services and markets acts, and regulations of foreign subsidies and international procurement. During 2021 and 2022, we also organised workshops and commissioned an expert study on competition and labour to build trade union capacity on competition law.

Building on the lessons learnt from the pandemic, the ETUC continues to advocate for strong protection of workers' rights, social dialogue and collective bargaining as part of the solution to future crises. We raised concerns about the Single Market Emergency Instrument proposed by the Commission in September 2022, and we are pushing for the inclusion of a 'Monti clause' in the regulation to ensure that the fundamental right to collective bargaining and collective action is fully respected even in times of crisis.

To strengthen its demands for an EU legal framework on subcontracting, the ETUC carried out a project on workers' rights in subcontracting and supply chain between 2019 and 2021. The findings helped the ETUC make the case for increased EU-level focus on abusive subcontracting, feeding into the multiannual work programme of the European Labour Authority and the Commission assessment undertaken under the review clause of the 2018 Posting of Workers Directive.

Public services

During the past four years the ETUC has worked to ensure that the EU institutions develop effective strategies for member states to provide high quality public services that are a major part of social protection. Public services are important in delivering care services, enabling services for labour market access, education, training and skills development. The ETUC has advocated for sufficient public investment to guarantee that all the provision of transport, water, waste disposal, energy, housing, information, social services and other public services can be delivered in environmentally sustainable ways. The ETUC has set its demands towards the development of essential services as a contribution to the implementation of the European pillar of social rights.

Standardisation

Over the last four years, the ETUC standardisation team has:

- Concluded a new framework partnership agreement (2020-2024) with the European Commission and European Free Trade Association (EFTA);
- Organised eight national awareness events on standardisation with national affiliates;
- Contributed to the different components of the EU standardisation strategy and achieved an explicit reference to workers in the EU regulation 1025/2012 on standardisation;
- Provided trainings to the ETUC affiliates, building capacity to defend workers' rights in the standardisation system and its standard drafting process;
- Increased the ETUC presence in specific standard-setting activities at European and international level, and shaped the content of these standards so that worker and trade union issues are better addressed. We have been actively involved in the standards on artificial intelligence, human resource management, services, ladders, cabin air quality in civil aircraft, and psycho-social health and safety risks;
- Pushed for a clear reference to trade unions and workers in policy documents related to standardisation; and
- Contracted a study on the access conditions of trade unions in national standardisation bodies to facilitate future trade union access to the decision-making processes.

The ETUC continued to oppose the development of new standardisation projects that encroach collective agreements/collective bargaining and labour law (for example compensation systems, management system standard on social responsibility).

Our involvement, as the sole organisation representing trade unions and workers in the European standardisation system, remains essential to ensure the effective impact of the ETUC and its affiliates in standardisation matters.

AN EFFECTIVE PILLAR OF SOCIAL RIGHTS



European Pillar of Social Rights

The ETUC work was directed at delivering an action plan to implement the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR). The EPSR action plan was endorsed by the European Commission, European Parliament, and European Social Partners during the Porto social summit in May 2021, and subsequently by the European Council.

This action plan outlined a vision for a social Europe, with legislative initiatives and other actions to enhance people's wellbeing, social progress, quality jobs and adequate working conditions, decent living standards and social protection.

The action plan also proposed three headline targets – on employment, training, and skills, and combating poverty – to be reached by 2030. These are based on a 'social scoreboard', which allows the Commission to monitor progress in converting the 20 principles of the Pillar into concrete actions to benefit citizens, and help to focus policy efforts on reaching results, offering an incentive for reforms and targeted investments in the member states.

The endorsement of the action plan was the culmination of two years of ETUC activities aimed at transforming EPSR principles in effective actions. These included several formal and informal meetings with EU Institutions informed by consultations with affiliates. The ETUC also responded to the Commission's public consultation in 2020. In advance of the Porto summit, we launched a website containing 100 trade union proposals and flagship initiatives for the implementation of the EPSR.

As part of our continuing assessment of the implementation of the pillar's action plan, in 2022 the ETUC began a review of the EPSR principles to monitor the progress and outstanding actions. We regularly update the website dedicated to the ETUC's proposals to implement the EPSR, principle by principle, with new or revised policy proposals.

At the end of 2021, the Belgian and Spanish governments proposed a procedure to tackle social imbalances in EU. This meets the ETUC's longstanding demand to rebalance the European semester with a more effective social arm. After several advocacy meetings with the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO) advisory committees and EU permanent representatives, a procedure for social convergence that detects and removes the social imbalances is currently under discussion at the EU Council. A pilot study launched in January 2023 will lead to a final endorsement later in the year.

Employment and labour market

The ETUC has consistently advocated for an inclusive recovery, providing for quality jobs, in the European semester process, with specific reference to the joint employment report and guidelines for the employment policies of the member states.

In March 2021, the European Commission published its 2021-2030 strategy for the rights of people with disabilities, which aims to improve the lives of persons with disabilities in the EU and beyond. An employment package in the strategy includes some of the priorities of the European trade union movement. These include active policies to include people with disabilities in the labour market, measures to enable them to perform in an ordinary work environment, health and safety protections, the adaptation of workplace and anti-discrimination measures.

The ETUC contributed to the new European strategy for people with a disability, including advocacy actions towards the European institutions and hearings with the European social partners, as well as strengthening its collaboration with the European Disability Forum.

The ETUC welcomed the January 2023 publication of 'Harnessing talent in Europe's regions', a European Commission document that addresses several challenges identified by the ETUC – although it focused on retaining highly-skilled workers rather than providing opportunities across the workforce.

COVID-19

With the support of the ETUI and affiliates, in March 2020 the ETUC launched a series of COVID-19 watch reports to provide information on the impact of the pandemic on labour markets, workers and citizens across Europe. Preserving jobs and protecting workers was a top priority of the ETUC strategy to mitigate the negative social impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Across Europe, trade unions concluded agreements with employers and governments to put in place measures and resources to keep workers safe and protect jobs and incomes during the coronavirus crisis. The pandemic also contributed to a tightening labour market, which provided opportunities for trade unions to organise workers and to bargain collectively.

Working with affiliates at a national level, the ETUC was at the forefront of the battle against coronavirus. Millions of workers experienced health and safety issues due to the epidemic, which demonstrated the importance of protecting working people from the virus.

Trade unions reported problems such as lack of personal protective equipment (PPE) in the health sector, non-compliance with social distancing rules in the construction and retail sector, and derogations to health and safety rules in the transport sector. In this context, social dialogue and collective bargaining played an effective role in identifying a range of measures at both the national and workplace levels in sectors that continued operating throughout the crisis. These included the healthcare, elderly care, education, transport, manufacturing, construction, cleaning, retail, agriculture and food manufacturing industries. Unions also facilitated the return-to-work strategy after the successive waves of contagion. Meanwhile, the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) issued guidance on returning to work and protecting the health and safety of workers. The guidance was prepared by the EU-OSHA in cooperation with the European Commission and with input from the tripartite Advisory Committee on Safety and Health at Work (ACSH).



Platform and non-standard work

The rights of workers working through digital platforms continue to be a priority for the ETUC, which spearheaded a campaign by unions and other stakeholders aimed at achieving an EU Directive to stop the exploitation of workers, protect self-employed workers, and establish a level playing field by abolishing the third status of workers in Europe. As a result, the Commission presented a draft Directive on platform work at the end of 2021. Further efforts were made by the ETUC to improve the draft Directive through the European Parliament. An ETUC ad-hoc group on non-standard work was established to coordinate our actions on the directive.

The ETUC provided opportunities for affiliates to build capacity and develop strategies to organise platform workers and bargain collectively. Pending the next step of the European legislative process the ETUC continues to call for:

- Employment contracts for workers on digital platforms subject to subordination;
- The protection of the independence of the genuine self-employed workers;
- Fair competition in the economy; and
- Strong collective bargaining rights for workers and their unions, as well as representation at the national, sectorial, and company levels.

An annual ETUC forum to discuss organising strategies in the sector, launched in September 2022 in Vienna, aims at gathering hundreds of trade unionists. Between 2018 and 2022, the ETUC ran a project on establishing workers representation and social dialogue in the platform and app economy, which included the establishment of the digital platform observatory website. A separate 2021-2023 project on strengthening workers' representation in digital labour platforms has enhanced trade union strategies towards the EU directive and national legislation.

Despite the hostility of many digital labour platforms towards the organisation of workers, a model of collective representation has emerged in Europe and unions continue to improve platform workers' rights through mobilisations, legal victories, collective organising and negotiations.

Education and training

The ETUC successfully lobbied to include the right to quality and inclusive vocational education and training (VET) in all relevant EU policy documents, including the Osnabruck Communiqué (2020), which defined the EU's VET objectives for 2021- 25 and the opinion of the tripartite Advisory Council on Vocational Training on individual learning accounts (2021).

The ETUC successfully advocated for equal access to quality employee training for all workers irrespective of the employment status or size of company. The ETUC lobbied to support access to upskilling and reskilling, including for low-qualified workers, within the implementation of the Council recommendations on Upskilling Pathways and Validation for Non-formal and Informal Learning.

The ETUC Executive Committee has adopted several position papers to influence the European Commission and to achieve the objectives of the Action plan, namely in relation to: European Skills Agenda, Renewing the European Alliance for Apprenticeship, Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning, Digital Education Action Plan, Graduate Tracking, Micro-credentials, Individual Learning Accounts, and on skill needs for workers in the green transition. The ETUC have been successfully cooperating with ETUFs, in particular with ETUCE, the Workers' Group of the Economic and Social Committee, CEDEFOP and the European Training Foundation (ETF) to achieve the objectives of the Action Plan.

The ETUC continues to advocate for the effective implementation of the 2018 Council recommendation on a European framework for quality and effective apprenticeships to ensure that apprentices are not misused as cheap labour, and that social partners are effectively involved in shaping apprenticeship systems.

Between 2019 and 2021, the ETUC worked with employers on a skills and innovation project. The project's recommendations on skills, innovation, training provision, and access to training underlined the importance of social partners' governance of training funds and paid educational leave.

The ETUC continues to put pressure on policymakers and agencies, including the European Commission, Parliament, Council, CEDEFOP, ETF and Eurofound, to ensure that employers invest adequately in workers' training and that this investment is frequently monitored and measured as a proportion of total labour costs.

Social protection and social inclusion

The ETUC has fought for the strengthening of the social protection system throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and cost-of-living crisis. This included participation in social partner consultations and intensive lobbying of EU institutions to promote effective steps to improve access to effective social protection supports, strengthening existing rights, and fight poverty, social exclusion, and inequality.

A series of European Council recommendations addressed aspects of the complex dimensions of social investment and social protection. These contained recommendations on social protection for all including the self-employed, adequate minimum income, the European care strategy, and a high-level group report on the future of social protection and of the welfare state.

The ETUC has consistently demanded a holistic, life-cycle approach with the amalgamation of different elements to ensure societal wellbeing for all. The recently published report on the future of the welfare state and social protection in the EU reflected many trade union demands, including high quality public service provision, universal and efficient social protection, and pension systems that are effective and provide adequate benefits. It also called for minimum income schemes, the fight against poverty and child poverty and combating undeclared work, tax evasion, tax avoidance and wage dumping.

Through the European semester process, the ETUC demanded that EU recovery and resilience instruments must meet social protection needs through increased financing and special attention to people's needs in times of crisis.

Fair mobility, free movement and posting of workers

The European Labour Authority (ELA) was established in October 2019 following the adoption of its founding regulation in June that same year. Tasked with the enforcement of labour mobility rules, it is expected to reach full capacity by 2024. Its tasks include the support and coordination of cross-border inspections and cooperation, analysis, risk assessment mediation, and the provision of information to mobile workers and employers. Sectoral strategies have so far been elaborated for agriculture, road transport and construction. Since the start, the ETUC has been pushing for operational activities on the ground, involving social partners with full respect for their autonomy. The ETUC has promoted the possibility for national trade union organisations to bring cases to ELA, pushing for their effective follow-up.



The revised Directive on Posting of Workers entered into force in July 2020. It enshrined the principle of equal pay for the same work in the same place into EU law. The ETUC has provided guidance and support to affiliates and has pushed for the correct and ambitious implementation of the Directive through an active engagement in the Commission's expert committee on the posting of workers.

As an important complement, the directive on the posting of drivers in road transport came into force in February 2022 as part of the mobility package adopted in July 2020. The ETUC has supported the European Transport Workers' Federation during its implementation by ensuring that the ELA plays an active role in the application and enforcement of the new rules.

The ETUC continues to follow the dialogues regarding the revision of the Social Security Coordination Regulations. We are pushing for improvements in social security rights of mobile workers, posted workers, seasonal workers and frontier workers, as well as for improved measures and stronger cooperation between authorities to tackle social fraud. In parallel, the ETUC continues to advocate for a European social security pass as a contribution to improved cross-border enforcement.

COVID-19 highlighted the vulnerable yet essential place that mobile workers occupy in the EU labour market. The ETUC Taskforce on Fair Mobility mapped and alerted EU institutions and member states about the challenges faced by mobile workers. In the aftermath of the pandemic, the ETUC has continued to underline the importance of social partner involvement, improved coordination, and digital enforcement tools to ensure mobile worker's rights are protected.

Interregional trade union councils, regional policy and EURES

The interregional trade union councils (IRTUCs) bring together the regional trade union organisations of the national confederations affiliated to the ETUC in cross-border regions. They help cross-border mobile workers to defend and pursue their social and economic interests and promote direct cross-border links between sectorial structures and companies. The IRTUCs coordinating committee meetings are hosted biannually by the ETUC.

The ETUC worked to improve and update the knowledge of the European jobs mobility portal (EURES) trade union advisers through the organisation of seminars during 2020 and 2022. We also organised an online seminar on youth mobility in cooperation with the ETUC Youth Committee and updated the ETUC 'guide for mobile workers in Europe.' Two working groups were set up to improve the IRTUCs' internal and external communication and enhance the functioning and financing of current and future IRTUCs. The working groups are carrying on their work. Amongst others, an infographic video was produced to explain the work of the IRTUCs.

MIGRATION, SOLIDARITY, EQUALITY, INCLUSION



Migration

While the EU policy on asylum and migration still lacks a rights-based approach and focusses on deportation rather than safe legal channels for labour migration, some progress was made for refugees in the labour market. In 2020, the EU published an action plan on integration and inclusion, which complements the pact on migration and asylum, released earlier the same year. The action plan provided for the implementation of the European Partnership for Integration, which became relevant for promoting labour market integration of migrants following the ETUC's lead through its LABOUR-INT initiative. As a result of the ETUC lobby, the Economic Pillar of Social Rights action plan included a reference to equal treatment for migrants. The partnership was further strengthened in 2022 to support the labour market integration of refugees, including those fleeing Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

UnionMigrantNet, the trade union networks of contacts providing services to migrants, was reinforced by various ETUC activities that involved cooperation with local and regional authorities. This included the development of a new action plan in support of Ukrainian refugees. The UnionMigrantNet portal was updated as a tool to assist and provide information and this network reached almost 200 contact points across the EU.

The ETUC continues to lobby to improve the legislative framework covering migration and reinforce the equal treatment and protection of migrant workers, particularly in light of the Commission's proposal to revise the Single Permit Directive. Based on the ETUC Resolution on Fair Labour Mobility and Migration, we pushed for improved rights and protections for migrant workers to tackle labour exploitation.

We are engaged in a structured dialogue with the Commission to improve the effective implementation of the Employers' Sanctions Directive (ESD). This achieved positive results including a communication report recommendation on safe reporting for undocumented migrant workers by member states.

The ETUC continues to advocate for a comprehensive European migration and asylum policy based on solidarity, responsibility, and respect of human rights, including the revision of the Dublin regulations and the support for search and rescue at sea.

Equality and non-discrimination

In 2020, the ETUC established an online working group to strengthen work against all kinds of discrimination in the workplace. It meets twice a year, and its discussions were structured around topics proposed by affiliates. The agenda included an exchange of best practices, expert inputs, and discussion about ETUC documents including a resolution on LGBTIQ rights. The working group also creates a space where affiliates can exchange information between formal meetings.

We continued to build alliances with EU-level partners and policymakers to bring the world of work perspective to their activities. As a part of its forward-looking strategy, the ETUC participates in a consortium of a large EU research project focusing on the prevention of discrimination in the online recruitment process and the use of artificial intelligence.

In 2023, a European project will include a series of face-to-face meetings to build the capacity of unions to prevent, detect and act upon discrimination at the workplace, particularly in case of intersectional discrimination.

External relations

In 2020 the EU and the UK agreed a trade and cooperation agreement, which regulates the new trading relationship after the UK's exit from the European Union. The trade deal includes, for the first time, a non-regression clause and a commitment to maintain a level playing field on workers' rights and other areas. It also subjects these commitments to a dispute settlement mechanism and to the oversight of the Domestic Advisory Group, which monitors the whole deal, and of a specialised committee on the level playing field.

The ETUC met with chief EU negotiator Michel Barnier and national governments regularly during the negotiations. We also created a task force on the EU-UK TCA to monitor the implementation of the agreement. Throughout, the ETUC has sought to maintain a united front with its affiliates from both sides of the Channel, as a race to the bottom in the UK would constitute an unfair competitive advantage to the detriment of working people.

In October 2021, the OECD agreed on a plan setting a global minimum effective corporate tax rate of 15% for large multinational enterprises, which has important implications for the use of tax incentives around the world and for states' ability to raise revenues for the adequate financing of public goods. The ETUC, in cooperation with TUAC, has been campaigning for several years on taxation issues, and to limit the ability of corporations to shift their profit and minimise their tax liability to the detriment of public finances.

The ETUC has continued to assist trade unions in candidate countries with initiatives helping them to successfully influence the accession process, particularly in the western Balkans, including through a capacity building project for the regional cooperation network Solidarnost.

The ETUC condemned Russia's invasion of Ukraine and called for all Russian forces to leave Ukraine. We also helped raise funds for practical solidarity with Ukraine. We called on governments outside Ukraine to provide safe haven for refugees fleeing the conflict, and urged countries with the most resources to shoulder the greatest burden of the sanctions. The ETUC has supported unions in Ukraine and Moldova who are sheltering thousands of displaced people and refugees, and we have started work to help these unions participate in the accession process so that social considerations are at the core of EU enlargement to these countries. Unions from Ukraine and Moldova joined the ETUC in October 2023.

Following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the ETUC also developed a series of 'Peace Watch' briefing notes to share information about trade union solidarity actions, agreements, and social dialogue outcomes. These briefing notes address the rights, treatment and inclusion in Europe of people fleeing the conflict, as well as the impact of the war and sanctions on working people in the EU.

The ETUC and other social partners in the Euromed region – BusinessMed, BusinessEurope, and the Asean Trade Union Confederation (ATUC) – have gradually imposed themselves in the intergovernmental Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) including its high-level thematic groups, regional councils, social dialogue fora and ministerial meetings. The successful completion of Solid 1 social dialogue programme led DG Near (European Neighborhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations) to support Solid 2, a new capacity building project of national social partners in Tunisia, Morocco, Jordan, Algeria, Libya, and Palestine. Like its predecessor, this project relies on the exchange of experiences with EU national social partners.

The ETUC organised a capacity building project for Turkish social partners in June 2022 and we intervened on several occasions to support one or more of our Turkish members, with the European institutions or the Turkish embassy, companies and presidency, on issues like: conflicts in company or sectoral negotiations, the arrest and detention of workers or union representatives, the non-functioning of the Commission responsible for the reintegration and compensation of workers suspended and dismissed after the 2016 coup attempt, protests against the rise in the cost-of-living, the currency crisis and the lack of wage compensation, and Turkey's withdrawal from the 2011 Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. After the devastating earthquakes in eleven cities of South-East Turkey in early 2023, the ETUC called for contributions to a joint ITUC/AP/ETUC solidarity fund.

In May 2021, extreme violence broke out for 11 days in Jerusalem, resulting in the deaths of 230 people, including 130 civilians. The ETUC welcomed the ceasefire signed on 21st May and urged the EU Commission, Council and Parliament to act decisively, together with the Quartet, in favour of Peace in the region. With the peace process between Israel and Palestine stalled, the ETUC supported an international campaign of European, Palestinian and Israeli trade unions and NGOs, which was launched in July 2021 in view of the recognition of the State of Palestine by most of the so-called 'old EU member states' as an essential step towards peace for workers in the region. The Executive Committee also adopted a resolution on a 'Roadmap on Palestine,' which develops further actions to be taken based on the ETUC's 2019-2023 Action Programme.

Trade

In 2020, the European Commission has stepped up on the enforcement of Trade and Sustainable (TSD) chapters by creating a chief trade enforcement officer who will also be responsible for TSD commitments. The following year, the Commission reviewed its trade policy with a communication 'Trade Policy Review: An Open, Sustainable and Assertive Trade Policy,' which adopted a more assertive approach towards the implementation and enforcement of EU trade agreements, fighting unfair trade and addressing sustainability concerns. The EU is thus stepping up its efforts to ensure that trade agreements deliver the negotiated benefits for workers, farmers and citizens.

For the first time, trade unions would be able to submit complaints about non-EU countries not meeting the commitments they have made in trade agreements in areas like workers' rights, tackling climate change, and the environment.

The ETUC contributed by submitting responses to the relevant consultations. In its resolution for an EU progressive trade and investment policy the ETUC has been pushing for a new EU trade agenda that would include enforceable labour provisions and sanctions for violations of labour rights in trade agreements.



In 2022 the US–EU Trade and Technology Council (TTC) was for the first time flanked by a formal transatlantic tripartite trade and labour dialogue (TALD), a formal channel for trade unions and businesses on both sides of the Atlantic to inform the TTC process and shape transatlantic trade and investment relations, as called for by the ETUC and AFL-CIO in a joint statement.

The ETUC, together with the AFL-CIO, has engaged with the US Government and the EU on a range of issues with concrete recommendations on creating more secure supply chains, safeguarding sensitive worker and consumer data, ensuring the green energy transition supports the creation of good jobs, and eliminating forced labour from global supply chains.

Sustainable development goals

The ETUC action in this area was focussed on raising trade union awareness about the United Nations' sustainable development goals (SDGs) for 2030 and ensuring that they became established as one of the main frameworks for EU policymaking. The ETUC political pressure resulted in the incorporation of monitoring of the EU progress towards the SDGs in the European Semester of Economic Governance and placing sustainable growth and decent work as elements in the post-COVID recovery phase and EU policymaking.

The ETUC continues to advocate for a holistic approach to the SDGs. We work to build interconnections and synergies among all goals while pushing the EU to take a leading role in the SDGs implementation and make the SDGs the blueprint of the post-2020 EU strategy.

The ETUC-led project 'Raising awareness on SDGs among workers and trade union leaders: decent work, environment and rule of law' provided tools to intensify trade union commitment and action on achieving a sustainable Europe by 2030. It aimed at spreading information and raising awareness on how the SDGs impact the main European and international policy programmes. The project, which reached out to some 10,000 workers over two years, has also helped build ownership of the UN 2030 agenda among union officials and members at shop-floor level.

We have emphasised the eighth strategic development goal, which covers decent work and economic growth, which can help in the realisation of all the other SDGs by facilitating a transition in an efficient, socially fair and inclusive economy. This approach is also key to address the social and economic consequences of the COVID-19 and the cost-of-living crisis.

The ETUC developed a 'sustainable growth and decent work index,' which assesses the implementation of SDG8 in Europe, contributing to policy proposals at both European and national levels. The index monitors and ranks member states' performance according to three composite indicators: economic well-being, quality employment, and labour vulnerability. These indicators are also correlated to other SDGs and other important policy areas including trade union rights, digitalisation, and the green deal industrial plan.

Development cooperation

Working in close cooperation with the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the Trade Union Development Cooperation Network (TUDCN), the ETUC has campaigned to give voice to the global south trade unions priorities in relevant EU legislative and non-legislative processes.

In 2020 the European Commission adopted the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), which became the main tool for EU cooperation and development with external countries. It is also the EU's main financing tool for the eradication of poverty and promotion of sustainable development, prosperity, peace and stability.

In cooperation with the TUDCN, several meetings were convened with the EU institutions, and we were able to ensure that SDGs were included in the NDICI-Global Europe. This means that decent work, ILO standards, due diligence in development cooperation priorities, and more inclusive and transparent impact assessment mechanisms are included in the EU instrument.

The ETUC demanded accountability and transparency among European institutions with due diligence for human rights, labour rights and environmental standards for private sector actors receiving public funding for development cooperation – along with a policy framework for engagement in contributing to the achievement of SDGs. We have also sought the promotion of social dialogue and the social partners' role in the NDICI and other financing programmes.



GENDER EQUALITY



The negotiations on the EU Pay Transparency Directive concluded in December 2022. The directive will mean better enforcement of equal pay for work of equal value, a ban of pay secrecy clauses, and improved rules on pay transparency. It also covers workers' rights to information from their employer with the support of their trade union, and trade union rights to collectively bargain to tackle pay discrimination and the undervaluation of work done by women.

The ETUC Women's Committee mobilised in support of a strong directive prior to its publication and throughout the legislative process. We organised two demonstrations, a model directive, social media campaigns, awareness-raising campaigns on important concepts, two resolutions, two briefing notes and regular meetings of a dedicated working group.

In the fight against gender-based violence and harassment in the world of work and beyond, the ETUC actively supported the ratification by all European countries of the ILO's 2019 violence and harassment convention (C190). We did this by conducting surveys and organising webinars, social media actions, statements and letters to decision-makers. The ETUC also adopted a resolution on the draft directive combatting violence against women and domestic violence, and we continue to advocate for provisions to make the workplace safe from all forms of violence and harassment including cyber-violence.

The ETUC condemned Turkey's withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention - the Council of Europe convention on combating violence against women – and pushed for EU accession to the convention. A new project was launched to explore trade union-led strategies against violence and harassment in the world of work, online and offline. A code of conduct for ETUC meetings, events and courses was adopted by the Executive Committee.

On work-life balance, the ETUC implemented a project to push and support key demands, including a toolkit for transposition of the EU's directive. The transposition was monitored closely through a survey and a webinar.

In 2020, the ETUC adopted a resolution on women's representation at board level. The ETUC also sent letters to decision-makers prior to the 2022 adoption of the EU's Women on Boards Directive. Disappointingly our demand for member states to ensure that boards include women from diverse backgrounds was not included.

In response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the ETUC Women's Committee contributed to a 'peace watch,' underlining the gender dimension of the war. Following an extraordinary meeting of the Women's Committee, a statement was adopted and a letter was sent to the Commissioner for Equality Helena Dalli.

The Women's Committee also underlined the gendered dimension of the cost-of living crisis on Equal Pay Day 2022, raising awareness on menstruation and menopause as workplace issues, and supporting sexual and reproductive health and rights of women and girls. The committee adopted the Women Workers Manifesto for equality in the recovery.



The ETUC Youth Committee continues to work hard to increase youth involvement in trade unions at all levels. To help achieve this goal the committee:

- Published a guide on engaging young people in trade unions, including recommendations to strengthen and empower youth in trade unions and youth structures on the national/federation level. The guide is available in 13 languages;
- Organised a video campaign to break the myths about trade unions and attract young people to our movement. This is available in eight languages;
- Proposed a statutory amendment about youth quotas, which was approved by the ETUC's mid-term conference in Lisbon and will be proposed to the 2023 Congress. Through this process, the Youth Committee is seeking a balanced youth representation, and to discuss and raise awareness of the lack of youth representation in our movement at the national and European levels in general; and
- Strengthened cooperation with the Friedrich Ebert (FES) competence centre to organise events and learning seminars to build the capacity of young representatives in different fields of trade union action.

The Youth Committee has made the fight for fair working conditions and quality jobs for young people a longstanding priority for the ETUC. The European Year of Youth provided excellent political momentum to advocate for our demands. Within the European project we have analysed the EU action plan for Implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights from a youth perspective.

The ongoing campaign to ban unpaid Internships remains a flagship action of the Youth Committee. It brought together a large pool of stakeholders at the EU and national levels and has built and maintained successful cooperation on the issue. The goal of the campaign is:

- To have a European directive establishing quality criteria for traineeships in the open labour market, including remuneration at least at the level of minimum wage;
- To ban precarious contracts and loopholes that allow for the replacement of entry-level workers by interns;
- To build on the successful ECSR ruling in the collective complaint on unpaid internships that the European Youth Forum and ETUC brought against Belgium.

The EU project on quality jobs, which started in 2023, promises to deliver country-specific policy recommendations and to provide training and finance for member organisations to develop campaigns that meet country or sector-specific needs.

COMMUNICATIONS, DIGITAL TRADE UNIONISM, AND THE ETUC PROJECTS



Communication

Communication plays a central role in achieving the ETUC objectives and promoting trade unionism and union actions and achievements. The ETUC communicates with the EU institutions directly and via the media and enable affiliates to communicate the ETUC demands to national policymakers and show members how unions are working at an EU level and national level, for a better deal for working people.

Since the Vienna Congress the ETUC's communication department has:

- Substantially increased the number of followers on Twitter – from 20,000 to 35,000;
- Doubled the number of likes of the ETUC Facebook page – from 5,400 to 8,700;
- Powered an Instagram account, which currently has 1,500 followers;
- Developed a LinkedIn page with 2,500 followers;
- Proactively created positive media coverage in Europe's largest newspapers and broadcasters, particularly through data analysis on the cost-of-living crisis and health and safety at work;
- Made the ETUC website more attractive, effective and current, while making it easier to find documents and other information;
- Wrote and edited several original articles in the name of the ETUC leaders for publication in trade union and external publications;
- Promoted the six common dates on which affiliates communicate a common message, with many affiliates using the slogans and visuals provided in advance by the ETUC;
- Improved group and individual photo actions at the Executive Committee with more compelling images and the use of slogans in more languages, whenever possible;
- Held twice-yearly meetings with national affiliates' communicators – online or in-person – and met with European Trade Union Federation (ETUF) communicators three-to-four times a year;
- Continued the publication of the ETUC monthly newsletter and quarterly 'National UPdates' newsletter to share information about national and European sectoral trade union successes and innovative actions;
- Actively contributed and assisted the colleagues in the communication development of EU-funded projects promoted by the organisation;
- Expanded the preparation and recording of video messages – especially during the Covid period – facilitating participation in events and congresses when it was impossible to travel in person; and
- Created a network of cyber activists on MS Teams to help communication experts spread common messages and solidarity among trade unions across Europe.

The ETUC communication department also played a major role in planning and running campaigns and online actions on key issues, including minimum wage and collective bargaining, equal pay and gender equality, platform work, due diligence, health and safety, and the cost-of-living crisis.

Digital trade unionism

The ETUC communication department led the implementation of the ETUC's digital trade unionism project and its action-Europe petition platform. The ETUC launched a centralised online platform in 2022, which places positive worker engagement at its core. Action-Europe is a community of trade union supporters coming together from many different countries in Europe to win a fairer deal for all working people and for better working lives.

The ETUC has worked with national affiliates to achieve significant progress in digital trade unionism. We have:

- Planned and implemented solid GDPR compliance on the collection of data for all trade union actions;
- Established the Action-Europe platform, which engages with decision-makers on trade union topics through petitions at European level or in support of affiliates in their national campaigns to retain, recruit and organise members;
- Organised petition campaigns on 'zero death at work,' human rights violations in supply chains, gender-based violence and the cost-of-living crisis;
- Used the cost-of-living petition to augment affiliates' campaigns for a trade union alternative to combat inaction by European and national governments as prices skyrocketed;
- Launched the Capacity-building for digital trade unionism, which includes: communications, mobilising a membership recruitment project, and seminars across Europe to help build capacity for digital competencies;
- Facilitated project seminars on sharing best practices, learning about GDPR gold standards, outreaching to specific worker profiles, and using digital tools to combat the strength of the far-right movements and parties;
- Cascaded funds to national trade union confederations to help them build platforms and become digital unions as part of the 'trade unions for a fair recovery' project; and
- Established an online repository of collective bargaining clauses as a reference point for affiliates building strong collective agreements.

The ETUC also organised a brainstorming workshop in February 2022, which explored various approaches to using digital tools to support activists and unions and reach and support workers. These included campaigns and strategies using social media and mobile applications and engagement platforms at the workplace, at a sectoral and national level.



Organising

The ETUC ad-hoc organising committee continues to bring together affiliates' organising officers to assess organising efforts and exchange recruitment and organising practices in the trade union movement. Training programmes have been developed, in cooperation with the ETUI, to build expertise in analytic and strategic thinking and renewal and organising. A 2019 event explored data science techniques, which can enhance the effectiveness of mobilising, organising and representing workers, in organising.

ETUC projects

The ETUC has promoted several EU-funded projects, involving all national member organisations. The European Projects carried-out between 2019-2023 were as follows:

- Social dialogue including capacity-building projects and thematic projects on skills and the circular economy, the implementation of the framework agreement on digitalisation, and new frontiers for collective bargaining;
- Democracy at work including strengthening workers' information, consultation and participation rights at company level and securing workers' rights in subcontracting chain;
- Youth including quality jobs and young workers and the European Pillar of Social Right
- Migration including the UnionMigrantNet, cities together for integration, and Labour INT, which promotes employment as part of the integration process of third country nationals;
- Platform work including establishing and strengthening workers' representation and social dialogue in the platform and app economy;
- Fundamental rights and litigation including ETUC LEX, human rights, legal and strategic litigation support for national affiliates, meetings of the ETUC Fundamental Rights and Litigation Ad Hoc Group, an annual NETLEX conference of trade union legal advisors and a dedicated project strand including an expert study and workshops on competition law ;
- Adaptation to climate change to prepare trade unions for an active role in the design and implementation of national strategies;
- Gender-based violence including tackling violence and harassment against women at work;
- Economic governance including strengthening trade union input in the European semester;
- Trade unions for a fair post-COVID recovery, including capacity building in the recovery process and in national social dialogue institutions;
- Digital trade unionism including developing and strengthening membership in the digital age;
- Social protection including the ETUC 'SociALL Social protection for all' project, which empowers unions to participate in the implementation of the Council recommendations on access to social protection, enhancing social protection for all through the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights, structural funds and cohesion, and raising awareness of UN strategic development goals;
- Standardisation including strengthening trade union influence in the EU standardisation processes; and
- The European network of employment services.

AFFILIATES AND ORGANISATIONS



Statutory meetings

Since its last Congress, the ETUC held 23 and 31 Executive Committee and Steering Committee meetings respectively. The documents adopted by the Executive Committee are available on the ETUC website, and there is an overview of the resolutions and positions adopted by the Executive Committee in the appendix to this report. The ETUC held its mid-term conference in Lisbon in November 2021.

Affiliations

As this report was finalised in March 2023, 93 national trade union confederations in 40 countries – plus ten European Trade Union Federations – were affiliated to the ETUC.

The Executive Committee approved the affiliation of four new organisations: Matica (Croatia), CNSM (Moldova), FPU (Ukraine) and KVPU (Ukraine).

Cooperation with the European Trade Union Federations

The ETUC has continued and reinforced its cooperation with the European Trade Union Federations over the last four years. There were regular meetings between the ETUFs General Secretaries and the ETUC Deputy General Secretary to ensure effective coordination especially on legislative dossiers. The members of the ETUC Secretariat regularly consulted on strategies and actions linked to files of particular interest to the ETUFs concerned. This included – for example – the trade union work on the Directive on Adequate Minimum Wages in the EU, on the Directive on improving the working conditions in platform work, on the proposal to amend the Asbestos at Work Directive, on democracy at work, and European works councils. European Trade Union Federations participated and contributed to the development of ETUC policies and priorities in the permanent committees and in the Executive Committee. They continued to participate actively in the meetings of the national officers' network and were involved in the ETUC work in the Conference on the Future of Europe. Also, the European Trade Union Federations were particularly involved in the development and implementation of campaigns and mobilisation, including the campaign on the cost-of-living crisis.

Cooperation with the EESC Workers' Group

The ETUC has continued and reinforced its cooperation with the Workers' Group in the European Economic and Social Committee over the last four years. A cooperation agreement between the ETUC and Workers' Group was adopted by the ETUC Executive Committee in December 2019, and the President of the Workers' Group actively participated in the ETUC Executive and Steering Committee meetings. The Workers' Group continued to support ETUC activities in the EESC premises while respecting the internal and budgetary rules of the EU institutions. The ETUC and the Worker's Group also cooperated effectively also on specific opinions and dossiers and ETUC advisors acted as group's or rapporteur's experts in several EESC opinions. The ETUC Secretariat was regularly invited as speakers to the EESC Workers' Group meetings, section meetings and plenary sessions.

The Workers' Group was also represented in the meetings of the ETUC national officers' network. The ETUC cooperated very closely with the Workers' Group in the framework of the Conference on the Future of Europe. The plenary members of the Workers' Group were included in the ETUC working group, joint initiatives were organised, and there were coordinated actions on trade union priorities.

European Trade Union Institute (ETUI)

As the independent research and training centre serving the ETUC and its national and European affiliated organisations, the central mission of the ETUI is to contribute to the strengthening of the social dimension of European integration through research, training, information, events and technical assistance. The ETUI's expertise and experience was placed at the service of the ETUC and its affiliates to assess and address the implications of events in a period characterised by unprecedented developments like the COVID-19 pandemic, lockdowns, a temporary shutdown of a large part of Europe's economies, renewed inflationary pressures, and war. The ETUI structured its activities around five main priorities:

- The social-ecological transition and the digital revolution;
- The search for a new economic model, reducing inequalities and fostering upward convergence within planetary boundaries;
- The need for a renewed social contract;
- Reinforced industrial democracy at all levels;
- Stronger actors: trade union renewal.

The Institute adapted to the challenges posed by the pandemic by accelerating the shift of its educational and training activities online and renewing its website and communication tools. ETUI also refocused some of its research on the impact of the accelerated digitalisation processes affecting societies and workers during the lockdown, with a distinct focus on occupational health and safety and psychosocial risks. Its work contributed to the understanding of the impact of various income support and income replacement measures adopted during the pandemic.

The Institute consolidated its role as the leading centre for the analysis of the effects of the ecological transition on the world of work, focussing extensively on those sectors disproportionately affected by the transition and empowering unions in those sectors with innovative training and educational tools. The Institute's work reinforced a new public discourse in favour of a reformed, post-austerity, macroeconomic governance framework at European level, and a narrative extolling the social and economic benefits of greater equality and sustainability.

ETUI activities and publications underpinned arguments for greater industrial democracy and worker participation, and collective bargaining as an essential and quantifiable contribution to social Europe. Its work also explored innovative ways to accelerate the process of trade union renewal, including through actions and activities that empower unions in the fulfilment of their role as representatives of the interests of working people.

Eurocadres

After a six-year campaign, Eurocadres secured a directive that delivers EU-wide whistle-blower protection in 2019. Through its WhistleblowerProtection platform, which has 87 members, Eurocadres was active in the development and transposition of the directive. Eurocadres project work also focused on the implementation of the directive in the workplace and provided trade unionists with extensive training in whistle-blower protection. Although some member states are yet to transpose the directive, it represents an important victory in securing minimum standards and protection for millions of European citizens, and Eurocadres continues to campaign for guaranteed rights for all citizens.

Following this victory, the Eurocadres focused primarily on work-related psychosocial risks, and the need to protect workers' mental health. The EndStress campaign has, to date, built consensus on the need for action with two reports from the European Parliament, a report from the European Economic and Social Committee and 50 organisations calling on the Commission to propose legislation. Through extensive work with member states, our campaign is pushing to ensure that this issue is at the forefront of the Commission agenda in 2024–2029, with support in various national governments secured.

Project work was essential to the achievements in Eurocadres campaigns. Since 2019, Eurocadres has been involved in six additional projects covering issues like whistle-blower protection, psychosocial risks, digitalisation, social dialogue, telework, the right to disconnect, and flexibility at work. Work on corporate sustainability, just transition, skills, research and other issues is also underway.

A new dedicated project officer empowered Eurocadres to oversee and participate in projects that have tangible impacts on European workplaces, and a number of new projects are in the pipeline.

One significant project outcome was the 2020 Autonomous Framework Agreement on Digitalisation, which was negotiated by social partners including Eurocadres, and was closely linked to its European-funded project on digitalisation. Social partner negotiations continue to support workers and there are ongoing discussions on a directive on telework and the right to disconnect.

Eurocadres' sixth congress took place in Madrid in 2021. Under the banner 'leading responsibly for a fair and sustainable recovery,' it focused on promoting the role of professionals and managers in Europe's digital and green transitions, and it adopted a policy programme for 2021-2025. This congress also saw the election of Nayla Glaise as the first female president of Eurocadres, along with a new presidium and executive committee.

FERPA

FERPA (Fédération Européenne des Retraités et des Personnes Agées) has continued to make its demands for the protection of millions of elderly and retired people known to the European institutions. In April 2019, FERPA actively participated in the ETUC demonstration and sent petition cards containing his demands to all European election candidates. This initiative had positive feedback from the candidates and from the President of the European Parliament, who also participated with a recorded video in his executive meeting, in full agreement with the FERPA demands.

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed flaws in national health systems, with thousands of deaths particularly among the elderly population, hosts and health care workers who were often left without clear guidelines and equipment to defend themselves against the virus. Together with the ETUC and EPSU, FERPA reported what was happening to the European institutions. When the first vaccines were approved, FERPA and the ETUC demanded that the vaccination campaign should start with the most fragile and elderly people, and this happened in many countries.



FERPA affiliates unanimously approved its European Manifesto of Demands, which includes demands for the right to dignified and increased pensions, the implementation of the European minimum pension, the right to quality public health services, the right to decent and adequate housing, the right to access energy and essential services, and the right to social inclusion. FERPA sent the manifesto to the European institutions and sought meetings, which led to positive discussions with officials from the cabinet of the President of the European Council and the President of the European Parliament. We received the full support of the President of the European Commission.

In recent years, FERPA has also been working on the 'green paper on demographic change in an ageing Europe,' responding to the questions posed by the Commission and working to build understanding about the impact of demographic change – especially aging – on Europe and its countries while challenging the unacceptable idea that the ageing population is primarily an economic cost. FERPA also addresses these issues in the Civil Society Liaison Group, a body of the European Economic and Social Committee, which FERPA joined in 2021.

PERC

The ETUC continued supporting the activities of the ITUC's Pan-European Regional Council (PERC), focusing on implementing the priorities of the international trade union movement in Europe, mobilizing for workers and trade union rights, and promoting the achievements and benefits of the EU to workers and unions. This included:

- Developing united trade union positions on COVID-19 including vaccination policies and coordinating a regional trade union contribution to the ILO Forums;
- Facilitating solidarity support to Ukrainian unions and workers affected by Russian aggression;
- Localising the 'Europe needs pay rise' campaign that resulted in significant minimum wage increases in several countries;
- Promoting occupational health and safety as fundamental worker's rights and campaigning for the recognition of COVID-19 as an occupational disease;
- Fighting gender-based violence in the workplace and promoting ratification of the ILO Convention 190;
- Launching international solidarity campaigns with countries, like Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine, where workers' and trade union rights are under attack. This included the ITUC-ETUC leadership mission in February 2020, statements against change in Ukrainian labour legislation, campaigning for the release of jailed unionists in Belarus, and protest and solidarity letters;
- Opposing systematic coordinated attacks on International Labour Standards by governments and business, including ILO freedom of association conventions 87 and 98, and convention 81 on labour inspections. This was done through ILO supervisory mechanisms (in particular the Committee on Application of Standards) and the within context of the EU trade association and international architecture;

- Engaging in dialogue with IFIs, whether on specific national economic advice and policies (eg, IMF Ukraine), on identified patterns of interference on labour market institutions (eg, the World Bank in Moldova), or on building due diligence checks (eg, the environment and social guidelines of International Finance Corporation, European Investment Bank or European Bank for Reconstruction and Development projects);
- Promoting the international and European trade union agenda within regional sustainable development goals fora, including UNECE, but also specifically in the central Asia region
- Strengthening trade union capacities in SEE and NIS regions by coordinating and providing expert's participation in networks of economic, legal, health and safety and communications specialists;
- Building east-west trade union dialogue to contribute to the new social contract agenda, particularly on fair taxation and financing social protection, just transition, protection of vulnerable groups, telework, digitalization, multinational enterprises, peace and democracy, and the fight against the far-right.



FINANCIAL REPORT 2019-2023



This financial report covers the 2019-2023 financial trends of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC).

The auditors appointed by the XIVth Statutory Congress of the ETUC performed their annual audits. The ETUC also called upon the services of registered auditors.

As set out in article 31 of the ETUC Constitution, the annual accounts for 2019, 2020 and 2021, together with the auditors' reports were adopted each year by the Executive Committee, which granted discharge to the General Secretary. The annual accounts for year 2022 will be presented to the Executive Committee during the October 2023 meeting.

The basis of calculation of the affiliation fees changed from year 2016. The affiliation fees fixed for the period 2019-2023 were as follows (per 1,000 members):

For group I:

Number of members	2019 FEES	2020 FEES	2021 FEES	2022 FEES	2023 FEES
up to 1,000,000	€ 187.25	€ 191.00	€ 193.00	€ 194.50	€ 210.25
from 1,000,001 to 3,000,000	€ 179.50	€ 183.00	€ 184.75	€ 186.25	€ 201.50
from 3,000,001 to 5,000,000	€ 175.25	€ 178.75	€ 180.50	€ 182.00	€ 196.75
from 5,000,001 to 7,000,000	€ 167.50	€ 170.75	€ 172.50	€ 173.75	€ 188.00
above 7,000,000	€ 161.25	€ 164.50	€ 166.25	€ 167.50	€ 181.25

For group II:

Number of members	2019 FEES	2020 FEES	2021 FEES	2022 FEES	2023 FEES
up to 1,000,000	€ 75.00	€ 76.50	€ 77.25	€ 77.75	€ 84.00
from 1,000,001 to 3,000,000	€ 71.75	€ 73.25	€ 74.00	€ 74.50	€ 80.50
from 3,000,001 to 5,000,000	€ 70.00	€ 71.50	€ 72.25	€ 72.75	€ 78.75
from 5,000,001 to 7,000,000	€ 67.00	€ 68.25	€ 69.00	€ 69.50	€ 75.25
above 7,000,000	€ 64.50	€ 65.75	€ 66.50	€ 67.00	€ 72.50

For group III:

Number of members	2019 FEES	2020 FEES	2021 FEES	2022 FEES	2023 FEES
up to 1,000,000	€ 46.75	€ 47.75	€ 48.25	€ 48.75	€ 52.50
from 1,000,001 to 3,000,000	€ 45.00	€ 45.75	€ 46.25	€ 46.50	€ 50.50
from 3,000,001 to 5,000,000	€ 43.75	€ 44.75	€ 45.25	€ 45.50	€ 49.25
from 5,000,001 to 7,000,000	€ 42.00	€ 42.75	€ 43.25	€ 43.50	€ 47.00
above 7,000,000	€ 40.25	€ 41.25	€ 41.50	€ 42.00	€ 45.25

Extract annual accounts:

Year	Balance total	Expenses	Receipts	Result	Investment fund	Final result
2019	10,767,989.59	7,882,931.43	8,464,935.39	582,003.96	95,726.55	677,730.51
2020	11,527,089.65	7,913,519.01	8,438,417.14	524,898.13	95,933.17	620,831.30
2021	12,107,041.57	8,444,937.61	8,529,225.90	84,288.29	96,199.02	180,487.31

During this period, the funds of the ETUC raised, thanks to the yield of investments made by the Foundation ETUC Fund ("Stichting EVV Fonds"), from 8,458,655 EUR (01/01/2019) to 9,937,704 EUR (01/01/2022).

A part of ETUC activities is also financed using extrabudgetary resources in the form of grant agreements concluded with the European Commission. The accounting relating to these activities is separate from the normal management of ETUC finances. These accounts are submitted for verification to the statutory auditors and the registered auditors.

During the period 2019-2022, most affiliated organisations have strictly met the obligations set out in the constitution regarding the payment of affiliation fees. We like to congratulate them for this effort.

Esther Lynch, General Secretary



ANNEX

DOCUMENTS ADOPTED BY THE ETUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (2019 – 2023)

2019

- Draft Integrated National Energy and Climate Plans, ETUC assessment **EN FR**
- Position on the Commissions' initiative for the enhanced use of Qualified Majority Voting (QMV) in the social field (the 'Passerelle clause') **EN FR**
- Position: WTO Reform to promote sustainable development, social justice and decent work **EN FR**
- Statement on Albania and North Macedonia accession to the **EU EN**
- Position for an inclusive European Green Deal **EN FR**
- Resolution on Gender Pay Transparency Directive **EN FR**
- Position on the EU-Vietnam Free Trade and Investment Protection Agreements **EN FR**
- Position on the Proposals for a Budgetary Instrument for Convergence and Competitiveness (BICC) and new developments of the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) **EN**
- Resolution on avenues of work for the ETUC in migration and asylum fields (2019-2023) **EN FR**
- Resolution on avenues of work for the ETUC in migration and asylum fields (2019-2023) **EN FR**
- Position for a European directive on mandatory Human Rights due diligence and responsible business conduct **EN FR**
- Statement on the lack of Social Dialogue on Labour Law reform in Ukraine **EN**

2020

- Statement on the draft EU negotiating mandate for a new partnership with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland **EN FR**
- Reply to the First Phase Consultation of Social Partners under Article 154 TFEU on a possible action addressing the challenges related to fair minimum wages **EN**
- Code of Conduct for Meetings, Events and Courses **EN**

- Declaration on the COVID-19 Outbreak **EN**
- Position on the plurilateral negotiations on e-commerce **EN FR**
- Road Map of the ETUC on Negotiations on a New Partnership with the UK **EN FR**
- Position on the 2020 European Semester - Autumn Package adopted at the EXCO 9-10 March 2020 **EN**
- Position on International corporate taxation - A European view **EN**
- Reply to the Second Phase Consultation of Social Partners under Article 154 TFEU on a possible action addressing the challenges related to fair minimum wages **EN**
- Resolution on European Green Deal initiatives: Climate Law, EU Sustainable Investment Plan, Just Transition Fund Regulation and new EU Industrial Strategy **EN FR**
- Position on the proposal for revision of the Employment Guidelines **EN FR**
- Resolution on the EU recovery strategy after the COVID-19 outbreak **EN FR**
- Position: An EU Economic and Social Governance for a prompt, strong and sustained recovery **EN**
- Statement - Social Europe should be at the centre of the Conference on the Future of Europe **EN FR**
- Joint ETUC – ETUCE Position on a European-level graduate tracking system of VET learners and tertiary education students **EN FR**
- Joint ETUC – ETUCE Position on Micro-credentials in VET and tertiary education **EN FR**
- Position on the New Industrial Strategy for Europe **EN FR**
- Resolution for the integration of migrants and the consolidation of the UnionMigrantNet **EN FR**
- Resolution on Reinforced Youth Guarantee; The revisited fight against youth unemployment **EN FR**
- Resolution on the European strategies on artificial intelligence and data **EN FR**
- Resolution Input on the right to adequate, accessible and effective minimum income schemes **EN FR**
- Resolution on Enhancing gender balance in company boardrooms **EN FR**
- Statement: ETUC's assessment of the EU Recovery Plan and MFF **EN FR**
- Statement on Youth **EN FR**
- Position on EU Trade Policy Review **EN FR**
- Resolution on ETUC human rights legal and strategic litigation – ETUCLEX **EN FR**
- Position on renewing the European Alliance for Apprenticeship **EN FR**
- Position on the European Skills Agenda and future skills strategies **EN FR**
- Position on Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027 **EN FR**
- Resolution A new EU adaptation to climate change strategy for the world of work **EN FR**



- Position on the Assessment of the Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy 2021 **EN FR**
- Resolution on the protection of the rights of non-standard workers and workers in platform companies (including the self-employed) **EN FR**
- Resolution EU 'Better Regulation' for All **EN FR**
- Revised Statement on the second Covid-19 wave: Emergency measures and Recovery strategy **EN FR**
- Position on the European Central Bank Strategy Review **EN**
- Statement - ETUC supports Belgian trade unionists condemned for using right to strike **EN**
- Resolution - Negotiating a fair future: reinforcing the role of Social Dialogue **EN FR**
- Assessment of the European Semester Autumn Package **EN**
- Position on a new EU framework on information, consultation and board-level representation for European company forms and for companies making use of EU company law instruments enabling company mobility **EN FR**

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- Statement on the New Pact on Migration and Asylum **EN FR**
- Response to the first stage consultation with the social partners under Article 154 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, on the protection of workers from risks related to exposure to chemical agents at work and to asbestos **EN FR**
- Statement on Myanmar's coup **EN FR**
- Statement on EU-China Comprehensive Agreement on Investment **EN FR**
- Position on the assessment of the Regulation establishing the Recovery and Resilience Facility. A first step toward a People's Recovery (adopted) **EN**
- Resolution - Political roadmap of the upcoming European initiative on "Improving the working conditions of platform workers" **EN FR**
- Resolution on EU taxation and own resources **EN**
- Resolution on Fair Labour Mobility and Migration **EN FR**
- Statement in response to Turkey's withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention **EN**
- Resolution on the 60th Anniversary of the Council of Europe European Social Charter and the 25th Anniversary of the Revised European Social Charter **EN FR**
- Resolution on the Roadmap for the ETUC work on the Conference on the Future of Europe **EN**
- Position on the Right to Disconnect **EN FR**

- Resolution: Response to the EU Commission Proposal for a Directive to Strengthen the application of the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value between men and women through pay transparency and enforcement mechanisms **EN FR**
- Position on enhancing validation of non-formal and informal learning **EN FR**
- Resolution on 2021 – Year for More Democracy at Work **EN FR**
- Resolution on “Fit for 55” package **EN FR**
- Position on the Assessment of the Action Plan implementing the EPSR + Roadmap to the EU Social Summit in Porto **EN**
- Position in reply to the public consultation on Green Paper on Ageing **EN**
- Reply to the First phase consultation of social partners under Article 154 TFEU on possible action addressing the challenges related to working conditions in platform work **EN FR**
- Resolution for a More Sustainable and Inclusive Competition Policy **EN FR**
- Resolution on a new EU Economic and Social Governance (adopted) **EN**
- Position on an EU initiative on Individual Learning Accounts **EN FR**
- Political roadmap for the upcoming Second phase consultation of social partners on possible action addressing the challenges related to working conditions in platform work **EN FR**
- Resolution on a Child Guarantee (adopted) **EN**
- LGBTIQ rights are trade union rights! ETUC position on the EU Strategy for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, non-binary, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ) equality 2020-2025 **EN FR**
- Resolution on the European Trade Union Democracy Action Plan (adopted) **EN**
- Statement on Russia **EN FR**
- Reply to the Second phase consultation of social partners under Article 154 TFEU on possible action addressing the challenges related to working conditions in platform work **EN FR**
- Statement on Afghanistan **EN FR**
- Reply to the 2nd phase consultation of social partners under Article 154 TFEU on the protection of workers from risks related to chemical agents at work and to asbestos at work **EN**
- Resolution on Implementing the EPSR: Ageing with Dignity **EN**
- Resolution for Recovery and Social Progress 2022 **EN**
- Position on the Energy Charter Treaty **EN FR**
- Position on the EU strategic framework on health and safety at work 2021-2027 **EN FR**
- Resolution on the European Union public debt issue and the fiscal rules **EN**
- Position on the Implementation of the Employers Sanctions' Directive **EN FR**



- Assessment of Autumn Package and ETUC Priorities for the European Semester 2022 **EN**
- Resolution on actions in the framework of the revision of the EU Economic Governance **EN**
- Guidelines to provide inputs in the Public debate for the EU Economic Governance Review **EN**
- Updated answers to the renewed public consultation on the Economic Governance Review **EN**
- Statement on Belarus-EU border: Border guards, walls and razor wire cannot be the response to a humanitarian emergency **EN FR**
- Position on the creation of a second ETS on road transport and building and of a new Social Climate Fund **EN FR**
- Statement on the CONTROL Hungarian ATC **EN**
- Position for A Just Transition Legal Framework to complement the Fit for 55 package **EN FR**

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- Resolution on Ukraine **EN FR**
- Position for an EU Social Taxonomy of Sustainable Investments **EN**
- Resolution on the Social Imbalances Procedure for the **EU EN**
- Resolution on an Updated Proposal for a Social Progress Protocol **EN FR**
- Position on a minimum level of taxation for multinationals **EN**
- Resolution on vaccination schemes **EN FR**
- Initial analysis of the Commission's proposal for a Directive on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence and updated roadmap for ETUC actions in 2022- 2023 **EN FR**
- Resolution on the proposal of the European Commission of a Directive on improving working conditions in platform work and way forward ahead of the ordinary legislative procedure **EN FR**
- Resolution European Year of Youth – Empowering young workers through actions **EN FR**
- Position on the next generation of own resources for the EU Budget **EN**
- Position on preventing the use of Shell Entities **EN**
- Position on Equipping workers with necessary skills for the green transition **EN FR**
- Resolution European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan, the Future of Social Protection **EN**
- Position on the conclusions of the Conference on the Future of Europe and the follow-up, including a Convention **EN**
- Position for an EU open strategic autonomy with a strong social agenda **EN FR**
- Resolution in light of the Energy price Crisis **EN FR**

- Position on the European Commission 'Skills and Talent Package' **EN FR**
- Position on EU proposals to mitigate the energy crisis **EN FR**
- Position on Safeguarding the Right to Strike against Emergency Measures in the Single Market **EN FR**
- Resolution – ETUC Proposal for a SURE 2.0 **EN**
- Resolution ETUC for Sustainable Growth and Social Progress **EN**
- Position The role and involvement of Social Partners in the European Semester and EU economic governance **EN**
- Position on the recast of the Single Permit Directive (SPD) **EN FR**
- Position – Towards more social and democratic rules for the EU funds **EN FR**
- Resolution calling for an EU Directive on Algorithmic Systems at Work **EN FR**

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- Position on the Social Dialogue Initiative **EN FR**
- Resolution – ETUC proposals for the Revision of the EU's electricity market design **EN FR**
- Resolution on Quality Traineeships **EN FR**
- Position – The ETUC response to the High-Level Group report on the Future of Social Protection and of the Welfare State **EN**
- Position on the Reform of the economic governance (toward an EU pact for employment and investments) **EN**



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