

THE FUTURE OF youth



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CONFEDERATION
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TRADE UNION
youth

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INTRODUCTION

The economic and financial crisis in 2008-2009 hit the young people of Europe worse than other generations. As we stated in our previous European Youth Employment Policy Paper in 2015, the austerity measures implemented at national levels in the years that followed have had a disproportionately negative impact on the working and living conditions of young people in Europe. There was a dramatic rise in youth unemployment rates, in some countries resulting in more young people without a job than employed. Many reforms which de-regulate the working conditions of young people were boosted after the crisis. These measures aimed at making young workers “more attractive” to employers by decreasing their wage and social security costs, which have propelled precariousness in youth employment as well as downward convergence for the total workforce and the risk of substitution and social dumping.

This was mainly because they were the ones laid off first or not even hired. They were the ones who had to postpone entering the labour market and getting their own life, house and family. Many of them were forced to go abroad, because they could not find employment in their own country.

Those who stayed were often stuck in temporary jobs, precarious contracts, unpaid and unlawful traineeships, and bogus self-employment, lacking basic social protection and often being subject to discriminatory practices on the basis of age.

While the number of young people in the EU working with a temporary contractual arrangement is increasing, the number of permanent jobs is constantly falling. This means that for the new generations a permanent contract or an 8-hour working day remains something unreachable before their 30's.

Even though there has been a decrease in youth unemployment in Europe in recent years, the numbers remains far too high. The average level is 16,1%, having two extremes: Greece at 43,7% and Czech Republic at 5,8% in January 2018, which means the unemployment

rate among young people is still nearly two and a half times higher than the rate of people who are 25 and older.

Also, young people are over-represented in gig-work, especially in labour platforms which so far fail to guarantee labour and social protection standards. That said, trade unions are not opposed to digitalisation: We are well aware of the potential presented by new technologies and new digital business models in terms of business and employment. However, we are concerned about the risks carried by digitalisation as regards, for example, workplace working conditions, surveillance of workers, work intensification, work-life balance, new types of work-related strain or job losses caused by automatization and computerisation.

Inequality in European societies fuels the rise of extreme right-wing populist parties. The bad quality jobs and life prospects which resulted from the economic crisis and the wrong policies implemented since then are fuelling support to such movements. In 2016, 18% of people aged 25–29 were neither in employment nor in education or training (“NEET”) in the EU. Besides the impact on young people’s lives in the form of poverty or social exclusion, there is a societal cost for not integrating NEET population into society as they may be likely to be disengaged from politics and therefore supportive of extremist and xenophobic ideologies.

This paper intends to propose answers for the BIG QUESTION OF THE FUTURE OF YOUTH from the ETUC Youth Committee point of view and reflect not only on employment issues but also the aspects related to society as a whole and trade unions themselves.

Viktória Nagy
ETUC Youth president



01.

FUTURE OF WORK



DIGITALIZATION AND TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

Currently the world is facing the fourth industrial revolution, for this reason, Unions have to foresee technological changes that will impact young people and their workplace. Digitalisation means opportunities as well as risks. Studies currently available on the future of work suggest that there will be winners and losers amongst workers. One of the risks is that digitalisation might become an additional driver of social and territorial inequalities¹. Another question is to what extent digitalisation in general (and the robotization/automation linked to it) and online platforms in particular actually contribute to the creation of more employment or whether they mainly contribute to outsourcing and replacement of quality jobs by precarious jobs, an externalisation of (employers') responsibility, a decrease of accountability, higher societal costs through a decrease of tax income and social security contributions, and increased circumvention of labour law².

Gig sector companies and platforms based on digital technology frequently avoid their responsibilities as employers, presenting their models as new or innovating partnership among the platforms and the workers, while often in fact this is not true. Workers are still in a dependency relationship, under the control of the platforms, delivering work for them and with this the relationship between platforms and service providers is not much different from regular relationship between employers and employees. Although their economy models are shifting towards an "on-demand" approach, they should not be excused from providing decent working and social standards and should recognise their status as employers and because of this acknowledge all their responsibilities towards workers and their work places.

Trade unions across Europe need to ensure that young people have an inclusive transition towards good and fair digital work based on good working conditions, a safe and secure working environment and a fair employment relationship with their employer. The fundamental right to organise and to bargain collectively should be granted to workers in the digital economy. Collective bargaining must ensure that in the coming years, employers need to help up-skill the workforce by upgrading initial and continuous occupational training programs for the digital era, thereby enabling access to higher education and lifelong learning, in which digital skills will become an important leitmotiv for good and fair digital work.

1 ETUC resolution "Towards fair digital work". Brussels, 2016. Available at: <https://www.etuc.org/en/document/etuc-resolution-digitalisation-towards-fair-digital-work>

2 ETUC Resolution on tackling new digital challenges to the world of labour, in particular crowdwork. Brussels, 2017. Available at: <https://www.etuc.org/en/document/etuc-resolution-tackling-new-digital-challenges-world-labour-particular-crowdwork>

To bring about a sustainable digital future, a set of standards is required which will contribute to the social, economic and environmental scenarios that will come with such changes in the labour market. In this respect, Unions have to maintain a decent work-life balance by introducing measures and using collective bargaining to implement new rights related to digitalisation (such as the right to disconnect)

Digitalisation and technology developments must lead to the improvement of lives of workers and citizens, bringing development and prosperity and not making the situation worse for the workers.

LIFELONG LEARNING

A skilled workforce is one of the main assets of the European social and economic model. Education contributes to boosting economic growth, reducing inequality and increasing productivity and wages to promote active citizenship and employability for young people. However, the EU and all European countries have to seek productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including a focus on high value-added and labour-intensive sectors which create quality and sustainable jobs. Moreover, lifelong learning opportunities must not only focus on economic growth and demands at the labour market but should seek for holistic progress in society. The EU and all European countries must support lifelong learning programmes that will go beyond the needs of the labour market and will recognise the importance of learning and ensure everyone's right to education

The European Pillar of Social Rights adopted on 17 November 2017 is an essential achievement for a social Europe and for the trade union movement. Its first principle states that "Everyone has the right to quality and inclusive education, training and life-long learning in order to maintain and acquire skills that enable them to participate fully in society and manage successfully transitions in the labour market." As part of the implementation of the 1st principle of the European Pillar of Social Rights, a European-level initiative establishing a right to training for all workers should be a target to be reached.

The move towards lifelong learning must accompany a successful transition to a knowledge-based economy and society. Therefore, education and training systems should equip young workers with relevant knowledge, skills and competences to be active members in a democratic society while understanding democratic values and critical thinking and be ready to adapt to continuous labour market changes caused by energy transition, digitalisation, technological change, climate change, demographic change and migration.

The changes and transitions in the labour market require effective upskilling and re-skilling by the employers, according to identified needs of labour market intelligence tools and social partner involvement.-

Employee training should be high quality, effective and equally relevant for young workers. It should respond to the need for improving professional, soft and transversal skills and contribute to workplace and industry-related career development. Employee training offers should also respond to new and emerging developments in labour markets and enterprises. These offers should be tailor-made to the young workers, innovative in terms of new training methods, take into account work organisation and be delivered online, and in a work-based environment. Training provisions must be designed in a way that fosters and supports mobility of young workers between and within sectors.

Lifelong learning is no longer just one aspect of education and training; it must become the guiding principle for provision and participation across the full period of learning contexts. Lifelong learning should not just be regarded as a separated strand of the education system, but it should be embedded in its overall strategy. All people, especially young ones, should have equal opportunities to adjust to the demands of social and economic change and to participate actively in the shaping of their future. Acknowledging the right to education and the positive effects of learning opportunities in general, various options must be available for young people, addressing learning opportunities related to the labour market, but also beyond that, on topics such as climate change, solidarity, tolerance and global citizenship. This will not only equip young people with competences needed for the current demands, but also prepare them for life in a changing society.

The implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights is essential to achieve an inclusive society which offers equal opportunities for access to quality lifelong learning, in which education and training provision is more reflective of individual and social needs. Employee training should support work-life balance of young workers, so it should take part during working hours. Paid time off for work-relevant training and a right to training should be ensured to young workers so that they support their career development within and beyond their industry sectors.

It is essential to support the upskilling and qualification of low-skilled and low-qualified young workers. In order to support career and wage progression of young workers, their employee training and continuous education and training must be recognised by their employer as a higher level of qualification

TRANSITIONS

For most young people, moving from the education system into the world of work is an essential step in the life cycle. It is associated with increasing financial and personal independence, as well as for making choices for a better future.

Education is a fundamental human right. Effective social dialogue at all levels (European, national, sectorial & local) should produce the proper environment for youth, prospects of employment, and personal & professional development. Trade unions should be involved in a meaningful way in the design, implementation and assessment of these transition schemes. Education and training is a fundamental right. It should be obligatory until the age of 18 in EU member states.

The independence of every young person is a key step in the process of self-realization and transformation into an equal and active stakeholder in a society. Employment is often the first step towards achieving financial and social independence and as such is one of the main determinants of transition to the adult world, closely related to the quality of life of young people, their self-confidence, paving the way for future professional and career development. Taking into account the impact that this issue has on the overall quality of life of young people, youth (un)employment is undoubtedly one of the key priorities and determinants of the level of development of a society. At the same time, to overcome the situation with high youth unemployment requires a systematic, complementary and coordinated approach in various fields and policies (education, labour, economics and social protection) due to the complexity of the factors that influence its creation. The main aspects of youth (un)employment are the time needed for transition from education to work, the usage of the young people as a work force - not only in terms of their inclusion in the active population, but also their placement in jobs that are in line with their qualifications (in order to fully use their potential), as well as the characteristics of the jobs where young people are employed (definite/ indefinite period of time, self-employment, full / part time work, , etc.). The general economic situation is a key challenge that affects youth unemployment, which primarily results in the lack of adequate job offer in scope and quality.

We need more effective measures at European and national level which aim to combat youth unemployment through further education, quality apprenticeships and traineeships and job opportunities. One of the reasons that young people have been so adversely affected by unemployment since the crisis is that they have a much more precarious position on the labour market. They are more likely to have temporary contracts, and, in many cases, they find themselves excluded from jobs that require a highly specific set of skills which cannot be matched by a person newly entering the labour market. Young people overwhelmingly

absorb the flexibility of the labour market and this flexibility often results in them being unemployed during economic stagnation and recession. This flexibility should provide the social protection & rights at work and the proper work conditions for youth development, not a tool/reason to create precarious jobs. Young people's work and also apprenticeships and traineeships should not be seen by employers as a tool to reduce labour costs in the companies and public sectors, claiming lack of experience of young employees.

A formal first job experience will ensure quality youth employment and positive long-term prospects. We need more effective measures to facilitate a good start for young people, we need growth and job creation policies, which foster an enabling environment for investment and innovation, together with strategic partnerships with production sectors that have large potential for youth employment creation.

We need to promote well founded and continuous improvement of basic skills and key competences to recognize the competencies acquired through the system of informal and nonformal education. Motivating young people to participate in learning mobility via the Erasmus Programme, and in international cooperation projects is essential to improve their sense of belonging to the EU, improve knowledge of fundamental principles and values of the EU, and be responsible democratic citizens.

Apprenticeships and traineeships should not be a substitute for regular (entry level) jobs. Apprenticeships and traineeships must present a quality opportunity for young people to enter the labour market, that aims to provide practical learning experience for young people and ensure transition from schools to employment. The EU institutions and the Member States should put more effort into ensuring, in the framework of effective social dialogue, the implementation of the *Council Recommendations on a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships* (2018)³, *Council Recommendation on a Quality Framework for Traineeships* (2014)⁴ and the Council Recommendation of 20 December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning⁵ In achieving this, the European Apprentices Network plays a key role in raising awareness among apprentices and trainees/interns about their rights.

3 Council recommendation on a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships. Brussels, 2018. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32018H0502%2801%29>

4 [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32014H0327\(01\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32014H0327(01))

5 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32012H1222%2801%29>

Traineeships

Lack of work experience is often seen as one of the obstacles to a quick labour market integration of young people. Work experience allows work-related but also transversal and general skills to be gained which are positively assessed by employers at the moment of hiring. One way in which young people can gain work experience is via internships. In 2013, 46% of young Europeans aged between 18 and 35 did an internship and the majority of them did more than two. Traineeships are, therefore, now fully part of the school-to-work transition system. However, in spite of being a potential stepping stone into the labour market, internships do not always rhyme with good quality and working conditions.

For these reasons, the ETUC Youth Committee believes that traineeships should never lead to job replacement, i.e. permanent or temporary jobs should not be filled by trainees. In fact this would inject further precariousness in the labour market and weaken further the entry position of young people.

Despite some exceptions, national regulations and industrial relation practices all over Europe fail in creating a proper floor of rights for traineeships at company level. The ETUC supports the proposal of the European Youth Forum for a Quality Charter for Apprenticeships and Traineeships (available at <https://www.youthforum.org/european-quality-charter-internships-and-apprenticeships>) and we call upon the social partners to undertake actions for a binding framework for traineeships in Europe. We were disappointed by the negative response from the European employers' organisations to start negotiations in this regard, as well as of the Quality Framework for Traineeships adopted in 2014 by the European Council, which basically calls upon member states to encourage the signature of contracts between companies, education institutions and trainees, regardless of the rights and conditions to be applicable to the scheme. The ETUC - Youth Committee and its member organisations will continue working on the improvement of this European framework at national level. Additionally, other lines of action to defend the rights of trainees will be explored, such as the development of a European standard on this matter or support for specific campaigns on this issue.

The traineeships we want:

1. Guarantee good quality working conditions, social protection, agreed duration, decent compensation, within an improved legal and binding agreement at national and European level, including the possibility of a Directive;
2. Set clear learning objectives and recognition of skills and knowledge acquired;
3. Ensure guidance in the work place;
4. Inform interns of their labour and social rights including the right to be represented by trade union reps;

5. Involve all relevant stakeholders in order to monitor, support and improve the outcomes of the internship.
6. Fight against the replacement of jobs by traineeships;
7. Explore the possibility of traineeships being part of training curricula.
8. Guarantee that traineeships lead to long-term job retention
9. Enhance intergenerational solidarity and develop mentoring schemes

With regards to the Quality Framework for Traineeships (QFT), the ETUC - Youth Committee believes that a major drawback is the non-binding nature of this measure. Implementing the complete set of guidelines provided in the QFT is not mandatory, and therefore may further contribute to the poor quality of traineeships, seeing as traineeships are made legal without ensuring the rights of trainees. The above-mentioned points should guide the improvements of the QFT at national level. We call upon national authorities to develop legislation or other binding documents that will define quality traineeships and provide a framework that will protect the working and social rights of the trainees

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships, in contrast with internships, are integrated into broader education and training policies linked to labour market issues.

For many years, this combination of work and learning has been attracting considerable attention at European and national level because it is perceived to ease the entry of young people into the labour market and contribute to keeping youth unemployment low. The ETUC recognises the high potential of apprenticeships, but also the need for apprenticeship systems to be developed together with sound broader macroeconomic policies as they take place in company-based settings. Apprenticeship should be seen from a broader perspective, as a contribution to provision of basic skills and key competences including citizenship, beyond providing professional practical learning to apprentices.

The Council Recommendations on a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships⁶ (2018) was the result of the joint efforts of the ETUC and the European employers' organisations. This is largely based on proposals made by the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) <https://www.etuc.org/press/trade-union-contribution-quality-apprenticeships-europe> in 2016 - the culmination of work by trade unions, including through European social dialogue with employers.

6 Council recommendation on a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships. Brussels, 2018. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32018H0502%2801%29>

The ETUC - Youth Committee backs the principles on quality apprenticeships adopted by the ETUC - Executive Committee, these being:

1. Apprenticeship schemes should be clearly defined on the basis of the proposal made by Cedefop, as 'systematic, long-term training alternating periods at the workplace and in an educational institution or training institutions. The trainee is contractually linked to the employer and receives remuneration (wage or allowance). The employer assumes responsibility for providing the trainee with training leading to a specific occupation'.
2. Apprenticeship schemes should be built on stable foundations – on the basis of national law, regulations and/or collective bargaining agreements
3. Apprenticeship schemes should be governed at all levels by a partnership between the social partners (trade unions and employers' organisations), together with public authorities and training institutions
4. Apprenticeship schemes should cover a wide range of different occupations and thus provide employment opportunities for all, men and women alike
5. Apprenticeship schemes should be properly funded, with equitable cost-sharing between employers and public authorities at regional and/or national and European levels
6. Apprenticeship schemes should cater for the real employment and skills needs of employers within the framework of sectoral and/or national priorities
7. Apprenticeship schemes should require employers to enter into formal employment contracts with apprentices describing the rights and obligations of both parties
8. Apprenticeship schemes should support the personal development and career opportunities of apprentices
9. Apprenticeship schemes should ensure that apprentices are paid by the employer, according to collective agreements, or a national and/or sectoral minimum legal wage, for the period of training
10. Apprenticeship schemes should guarantee high quality and safe working environments, and the social partners (trade unions and employers' organisations) should be given responsibility for monitoring the suitability of workplaces and for accrediting interested companies
11. Apprenticeship schemes should provide appropriate guidance and counselling for apprentices, both before and during the training process
12. Apprenticeship schemes should have robust quality assurance procedures
13. Apprenticeship schemes should be built on a solid base of knowledge, skills and competence acquired in the primary and secondary school system
14. Apprenticeship schemes should include a strong training component, with a clear majority of learning provided in the workplace and a clear commitment to forward-looking developments within the labour market and society

15. Apprenticeship schemes should provide good quality training in the workplace, with in-company mentors trained for this purpose, and also within training institutions employing trainers that have up-to-date and appropriate skills. Both mentors and trainers should enjoy good working conditions so that they are able to do their job properly
16. Apprenticeship schemes should be competence-based and have a duration which enables apprentices to attain the appropriate standards to work competently and safely
17. Apprenticeship schemes should be certified by competent tri-partite bodies to ensure that the knowledge, skills and competences acquired are recognised within the labour market and throughout the education and training system
18. Apprenticeship schemes should offer qualifications which are clearly placed within National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs), thus ensuring progression pathways to other NQF levels and programmes
19. Apprenticeship schemes should ensure the recognition of knowledge, skills and competence acquired by means of non-formal and informal learning
20. Apprenticeship schemes should include provision for the mobility of apprentices at the national and European levels

The Youth Guarantee

At European level several initiatives have been launched for tackling the dramatically high level of youth unemployment, including the Youth Guarantee (YG). The Council of the European Union formally adopted a Recommendation on Establishing a Youth Guarantee in April 2013 on the basis of the proposal from the European Commission. The Youth Guarantee shall 'ensure that all young people under the age of 25 years receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education'.

The ETUC and its member organisations are strong supporters of the Youth Guarantee.

We support many of the findings of the European Commission and the European Court of Auditors reports on the implementation of the Youth Guarantee, especially those appertaining to the low quality of the offers provided, the challenges to provide a timely offer within the 4 months established by the Council recommendations and the outreach strategies to offer the Youth Guarantee to those young people who are further from the labour market.

The YG targets the NEETs population which include both unemployed and inactive youth who are not in education and training. Most of the countries are experiencing funding difficulties in reaching out to these populations and more needs to be done for adapting

services and creating or improving the available data that would allow better monitoring of this population.

The early intervention ‘within four months’, recommended by the YG — is another central element as it aims at preventing the scarring effect that unemployment and inactivity have on young people’s future careers. However, this timeframe might be difficult to put into place when deep institutional settings are to be changed.

The Youth Guarantee we want:

1. Support a sustainable and inclusive recovery together with the implementation of an investment plan for jobs which is a necessary pre-condition for improving the situation of young people in the labour market;
2. Guarantee the high quality of job offers, trainings, traineeships and apprenticeships, particularly in those sectors where job creation will be most important in the future. YG should truly reflect the labour market needs as well promote technical skills and promote dual learning (apprenticeship) system.
3. Lead to a guaranteed offer and intervention within four months; aim, in the long term, for the implementation of a universal guarantee, and promote an individualised approach to the services provided
4. Guarantee equal access to public employment services;
5. Ensure full participation of social partners, civil society and young people in order to increase the transparency and the efficiency of measures adopted.
6. Guarantee appropriate social protection for young people to avoid increasing the risk of poverty and precariousness;
7. Strengthen existing active labour market programmes while building synergies between programmes and institutions in order to better to fulfil the goals of the EYG; reform the YG to mainly focus on creating new measures rather than supporting already existing programs; perform monitoring systems and thorough evaluation of the effects of YG which has not been possible yet due to lack of data. More commitment from governments is required, both in terms of setting strategic goals for the national YG measures and in terms of committing more financial resources to their implementation.
8. Strengthen trust in institutions, secure adequate financing and human resources for ensuring the quality of employment services; Reduce the bureaucracy around YG measures (mixed sources of financing and a large number of entities involved produces a lot of red-tape); advance the YG to an investment program rather than a short-term job creation scheme (measures aimed at stimulating employment of young people instead of temporary training placements without employment status and rights;

9. Carefully assess the target population and provide tailored approaches in order to respond to the heterogeneity of the youth population. Better targeting of measures towards long-term unemployed youth (as opposed to current situation where most of the money is spent on those most likely to find job). YG should target youngsters with a migration background and extend the age range for those eligible (suggestions varied between 29, 30 and 35 years).

QUALITY JOBS

Now, ten years after the crises the situation of young people remains difficult. Temporary jobs, precarious contracts, civic contracts replacing regular employment, forced self-employment, lack of basic social protection and even age-discriminatory practices (also on the basis of age) are still the norm for millions of young people who are trying to make their way in the labour market.

The growth in employment among young people in the recent years has been weaker than among older adults. For many young people, it is still difficult to find employment that would adequately reflect their education, be socially regulated and sufficiently remunerated.

Also, the labour market in Europe has changed dramatically over the past decade. The demands of globalisation and the move towards a high-skilled, more service-based economy has created many new challenges for young workers in Europe.

For young people, successful entry into the world of work – that is, successful transition from education to employment – means more than simply finding a job. Successful transition occurs only when young people find decent, quality jobs and stable employment.

Quality employment is a crucial element with regards to the autonomy and wellbeing of young people in Europe and throughout the world. The right to decent work and protection against unemployment are fundamental human rights. Being able to find quality work is essential for young people in order to participate fully in society, ensure autonomy and to avoid the pitfalls of poverty and social exclusion.

Although there is increasing focus on the fact that there are so many unemployed young people in Europe, far less attention is given to the fact that young people are more likely to be in low-quality and precarious jobs even when they do find work. Many young people have jobs of poor quality, on temporary contracts and in fear of losing their job. The lack of stability and job protection for young people points to a widening inequality between generations. Temporary employment often goes hand-in-hand with minimal job security and limited or no access to social benefits. It also allows more exploitation, violation of worker's rights and opens the

door to discrimination. Besides all that it has negative consequences on health - especially mental health - of young people, that affects them not only in the present time, but also for the future. Low quality jobs with lower income and lack of social protection will also affect the lives of those workers in the future and will jeopardise their social rights in adulthood and retirement (such as pensions). This further heightens the risk of social disengagement among young people. Social partners must take urgent action to ensure that there are more permanent, stable jobs made available to young people and that the “flexibility burden” should not be shared between generations, but rather with the employers (i.e. by increasing the cost of social protection obligations for employers in temporary contracts.)

Young people do dream of a secure and stable job. They value flexibility, but prioritize job security and income. They expect to find jobs that provide good wages and possibilities for career development, along with social protection and benefits. For most of them, expectations of a formal job go beyond earning an income and making a livelihood; young people see quality jobs as a key element of their personal and professional life and the pathway to their participation in the society as well as one of the crucial factors to become independent and start a family. And this must be a reachable goal for everyone.

We also see the need to strengthen labour inspection, which is at the forefront of ensuring compliance with work standards. Resources for the functioning and appropriate equipment of inspections should be increased. The ETUC - Youth Committee supports the ETUC action plan for more and better jobs as well as the ongoing debate on quality jobs at Europe level. We expect the new ELA to be a step forward in this direction.

The quality jobs we want:

1. Are strongly anchored to a sustainable development model;
2. Secure a salary that allows a living salary (without gender discrimination);
3. If they include a transition phase before stability, this must be fair and secured;
4. Free of all forms of discrimination on any grounds;
5. Fit the ambitions and skills of young people;
6. Based on an equal minimum wage setting mechanism and anchored to collective bargaining mechanisms;
7. Include full access to social protection: pension rights, unemployment benefits, educational, maternity, paternity and parental leave etc;
8. Make sure that they enjoy the right to join and actively participate in unions and their activities;
9. Include life-long learning paths and career guidance throughout the working life;
10. Good working conditions in safe and healthy workplaces;
11. Reasonable working time with good work-life balance.

WAGES

Wages – and the collective bargaining process attached to it - are and will remain in the core of trade union activities. As workers need to pay their expenses from the wages they earn, we need to stay focused on the topic of profit redistribution for the benefit of the working population.

Ten year after the crises wages still did not recover the same way banks and the economy did. As the successful ETUC Pay Rise campaign – fully supported and participated by the ETUC Youth Committee – stated, Europe needs a pay rise so that also workers can finally recover from the crises.

Wages need to follow productivity, employers rightly argue. What they do not say is that productivity has been rising faster than wages for more than 30 years. Since 1997 productivity has increased by 30%, but wages by only 20%. Wages have been declining as a proportion of wealth – leading to greater inequality, and undermining social cohesion – the costs of which are all too apparent today. Because of that fact, European economies are more fragile than ever.

On the other hand, we need to mention the significant wage gap between the different countries inside the EU, which causes intra-EU mobility and unfair redistribution of wealth between countries.

Wages should not be excluded from the functioning of the EU single market, and social policy co-ordination of Community law. The European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR) aims in this direction, while hard regulation would be needed both at European and national levels to realise real living standards convergence and to prevent social dumping.

Principle No.6 of the Pillar “Workers have the right to fair wages that provide for a decent standard of living” and the aim that minimum wages reach 60% of median, or 50% of the average wage, depending on which of these values are more beneficial for workers, are of major importance. The establishment of a European minimum wage instrument could lead to an upward wage convergence and strengthen the fight against poverty and social dumping.

Wages in private and public sector must develop in a positive convergence way to ensure quality public services. Low income situations causing emigration, including that of the best educated young people, must be prevented.

We support the initiative of the ETUC for a European Alliance for Upward Wage Convergence with the aim of all Europeans benefiting from fair distribution of income and wealth produced in Europe and the catching up of those lagging behind.

WORKING TIME AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE

One of the main issues concerning all workers is the important balance between work life and private life. The work life balance has been a core concern for trade unions since the early days of the movement and it continues to be one of the top priorities within the ETUC. We need to demand stronger legislation in order to promote women's rights to both participate actively in the labour market and on the same level as their male counterparts as well as promoting a fairer and more equal distribution of the responsibilities within the family. Collective bargaining has also proven to be a complementary tool to facilitate this fair and equal distribution at sectoral and company level. The lack of equality policies makes women too often bear the burden of the unpaid care work in the private sphere, resulting in several disadvantages in the labour market. The underrepresentation of women in the labour market is one of them. In order to even out gender differences in caring responsibilities and to promote a healthier balance between work and family life, we are pushing for an improvement in parental leave, including paid leave, and an emphasis on paternity leave and equality in the distribution. Furthermore, a more flexible work life should be put in place, with the possibility to reduce working hours and having more flexible working hours. More encouragement for reducing working hours should be done from EU, national and company level, while maintaining this concept as a full-time employment without loss of income. We encourage employers to try out 6-hours working time.

At the same time, we are pushing for increased public and social services for child care (such as accessible kindergartens) and for care of elderly people. Without accessible and public services available for everybody (regardless of their social and economic status), those responsibilities will fall on families and result in absence from the labour market, most likely for women.

Equal participation of young women and men in working life is indispensable in building a more equitable work environment and society at large in the future. However, structural changes will be needed to address the existing inequalities young women face when entering the labour market. So, all policies for youth employment must be based on gender equality and developed in line with this objective.

Following the work to deliver on the European Social Pillar of Rights the Commission has put out a proposal to ensure a better work life balance and to counter women's underrepresentation in the work force. The proposal includes both legislative and non-legislative measures. These include parental and paternity leave, carers leave and rights to request more flexible working life as well as economic incentives and a greater protection against discrimination and treat of dismissals. The directive would be a major improvement for women and families

in many European countries. However, going into triologue negotiations, Member States are sceptical towards the proposal and already we see dilution of the content. Although there is still a lot of room for improvement (i.e. the ETUC regrets that important elements such as payment of parental leave at sick-benefit level and non-transferability of the leave between parents have been weakened) we welcome the proposed work life balance directive, while still pushing for even more progressive, comprehensive and ambitious agreements on both national and European level. It is time to “recalibrate” work life balance.

JUST TRANSITION AND FIGHTING AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE

Addressing and combating climate change is a trade union issue and in particular of young trade unionists. Without urgent and ambitious action, we will face a temperature rise of 4°C or more this century and irreversible changes in our climate. The negative consequences that climate imbalances cause is not only in the ecological arena, but also visible in socio-economic terms. For instance, access to water, access to land will be dramatically jeopardized in many places and many will have no other choice than leaving the place they live. Industries and settlements in coastal plains and prone to extreme weather events are already facing the negative consequences of climate change, as well as the economies closely linked with climate-sensitive resources (i.e. agriculture, fisheries and tourism). At the same time negative consequences of climate changes are jeopardising people on low incomes more than others due to the lack of means to prepare for climate change, act upon the consequences (such as floods, fires, drought, unhealthy environments, etc.) and limited options (such as migrating, changing life styles, changing jobs, etc). Therefore, the consequences of climate change are being unfairly distributed among different social classes and more should be done in order to share the burden.

Climate change is already increasing inequalities and vulnerability. Without a rapid and massive reduction of greenhouse gas emissions globally, climate change is projected to have very severe impacts on future generations. We have a vital role to play to choose a pathway for a zero-carbon future.

A just transition is needed

In many ways, the transition will trigger positive effects. It will improve air quality, reduce energy dependency and it might represent a great vehicle for job creation as well as an opportunity to strengthen European know-how and technological capabilities in environ-

mental innovation. To fully tap this economic potential, investment and policy stability is needed. This is certainly the first added-value that climate policy planning can bring for workers: increasing certainty about the policy framework and investment that are the key prerequisites for moving to a low-carbon economy whilst creating and maintaining quality jobs across sectors, including in manufacturing industries.

From a workers' perspective, the transition will profoundly reshape the labour market in ways that creates both new risks and new opportunities for workers: new jobs but also, in some cases, destruction of jobs, replacement of some existing occupations by new ones, along with the need for new competencies and skills. Certain sectors and regions, especially the ones that are dependent on carbon intensive industries, may be more negatively impacted than others. Anticipating these trends and their impact on workers is at the heart of trade union activities. Climate governance and related policy planning offers an opportunity for trade unions to increase their understanding of the ongoing changes and their influence on climate policy.

The European and international political context and trade union commitments

In June 2018, the ETUC adopted a Resolution calling on the EU to adopt a “Long-term low emission strategy” aiming at reaching net-zero emissions by 2050. Three years after COP21 and the adoption of the Paris Agreement, news concerning the climate is particularly alarming. Temperatures are breaking record after record, confirming that day by day the world is drawing dangerously closer to the threshold beyond which climate disruptions will no longer be manageable. Extreme meteorological phenomena – fires, droughts, torrential rain, extended heat waves – are also occurring at an alarming rate, exposing millions of people to material and psychological disarray. In the face of such a situation, a wait-and-see attitude simply will not do. It is more urgent than ever now to amplify and step up efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to generalise the implementation of policies commensurate with both current and future transformations.

The credibility of the international climate regime lies in its concrete working arrangements. The Paris Agreement implementation guidelines are of the utmost importance for the future of the global climate regime. The rulebook adopted in Katowice should aim at these objectives from its start in 2020, with specific reference to the “Transparency Framework” and “Global Stock Take”, which are instruments that will provide guidance regarding the structure and content of the climate plans that parties will have to submit to the UNFCCC every five years and the assessment of the temperature objectives of the Paris Agreement.

The COP 24 must become an important milestone in the history of Just Transition. First, we are entering an era when the decarbonisation process should accelerate and therefore also its impact on workers and communities. Speeding up emissions reduction without preparing

the labour market at the same time would be a mistake. It would lead to unplanned and brutal disruptive effects in many industrial regions and, in doing so, it might weaken wide public support for climate policies. It may also trap climate action in skills-shortage deadlocks. Secondly, this COP took place in the industrial heart of a country which still produces 80% of its electricity from coal. On the road to a low-carbon economy, regions like Silesia will face specific challenges that must be acknowledged and tackled by public authorities.

Actions on climate change must start now, by shifting the economy towards greener and more sustainable jobs. At the same time, preparing current workers and especially new generations for new greener jobs must be done within educational systems, through non-formal and informal learning and lifelong learning.

We urge national and European policy makers to take bigger steps in stopping dangerous economies and promote and support the creation of green jobs and the circular economy.

For many years, with the rising importance given to issues linked to the greening of the economy, an increased involvement of trade unions has been observed. This participation is however still not as intense and effective as it could be: there are still Member States where TUs are not being consulted on climate and energy policy issues; additionally, in approximately half of the cases, proposals made by them are only partially or not at all considered. To improve that, strong trade union mobilisation and adequate internal capacities are needed.



02.

FUTURE OF SOCIAL EUROPE

FUTURE OF THE WELFARE STATE, SOCIAL INEQUALITY, SOCIAL INSURANCE AND FAIR TAXATION

The welfare state is fundamental for a modern society, in which workload and resources are fairly allocated to benefit the society in the best way. Its purpose is to help those in need to get back on their feet and help them; to benefit society. It also needs to function as a way to break the cycle of inherited poverty. Children of workers have always tended to have fewer opportunities. In order to do this, the welfare state needs to provide quality and accessible education, high wages and a social insurance that benefits all.

All young people should be included within the framework of our social insurance. In 2017, the risk of poverty or social exclusion rate for young people aged 15–24 was 29.1 % in the EU-28, corresponding to about 14,1 million young people⁷. The number of young people at risk of poverty or social exclusion did not decrease significantly since 2008. Clearly this shows young people, more than other age groups, are not adequately covered by social insurance.

Social security works around the risk of being without regular or any income and the principles of solidarity compensating for this risk. The spread of precarious jobs contributes to this as well. Intergenerational solidarity is a big part of this e.g. pensions: the “active” are contributing for “those who used to be active”. Our social security should be strong enough to also support those who have not yet had the chance to contribute. Such policies, based on lowering social security contributions for young workers, actually undermined the rights of both young people and retirees, pushing both generations into more precarious conditions and making everybody outsiders in the labour market and in society. The ETUC Youth Committee recalls its joint commitment with FERPA to promoting a quality entry to the labour market for young workers with working time that gives rights on pension entitlements, apprenticeships and internships, as well as to defending pension systems based on intergenerational solidarity.

In the end, this is an investment in a young generation which will benefit society as a whole and is therefore related to the question of economic survival for the European Union. The more skilled the population, the better for investment and innovation. That is why companies must pay their fair share in financing the welfare state, education and creating opportunities for social mobility.

7 Eurostat: (ilc_lvps08)

If Member States receive less income – based on taxes – they tend to save on basic needs such as social security and public services: education and training, child care, public transport, etc. This creates even more problems for young people. Especially due to the tightening of the admission requirements for social protection, many young people risk social exclusion, they have to rely on welfare and thus end up in an even weaker position.

To strengthen social justice, the ETUC and its Youth Committee believe that more has to be done to fight tax avoidance and to efficiently sanction tax evasion. Country-by-country reports are certainly a tool to track these potential misuses, yet this obligation should be extended to every country where a multinational company has an activity. A Common Consolidated Corporate Tax Base is needed to create effective tools to counter tax evasion and control of tax havens, as well as respect for human rights by international corporations in global supply chains. Also, tax systems must be more redistributive to provide equal opportunities.

Young people also believe that, in addition to the social policy in companies, the ecological behaviour of companies must also be taken in consideration. Companies that do not engage in climate targets must lose their European and national tax support!

MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

Europe is facing a series of challenges recently regarding the situation of the migrants, and strategies adopted by different stakeholders (especially governments) have proven to be not efficient enough. Their actions have impacted migrants' life, including the access to a decent job, healthy & safe working conditions and integration in the community they live in. An important aspect is the stereotypes that were developed around the term of "migrant" and the effects on the process of integration. The misuse of this term and various confusions have generated intense discussions and different approaches regarding migrants' situation. Although migration is a phenomenon existing from the beginning, speaking about migrants and migration today in Europe means mainly speaking about the "refugee crisis" a term which the ETUC opposes. We appeal member states to show responsibility and solidarity in finding common solutions to the political crisis grown out of the refugee emergency. The actual situation may be improved by promoting and investing in skills & abilities upgrading for the migrants, a process that impacts in a positive way the native labour market performance. There should also be better systems in place to recognise the acquired skills and qualifications of migrants, in order to ease their integration to the labour market and ensure them jobs equivalent to their qualifications.

In order to ease the process of migrants' integration into the labour market all stakeholders should contribute to the creation of policies that tackle the challenges migrant workers are confronted with.

Trade unions can play an important role in designing & adapting workplaces with the purpose of promoting inclusiveness, reducing prejudices and prejudgements and assuring equal treatment among all workers.

The ETUC - Youth Committee stands for a culture of welcome to migrants throughout Europe. It gives hands-on help on every regional level in refugee alliances and welcome projects. Across the usual social boundaries, young colleagues are working in firms and broad civil society alliances to achieve this. In this regard the ETUC - Youth Committee champions the integration of refugees into our trade unions and company-level representation of interests. In this regard, we remind our member organisations of the need to take concrete steps to implement the guidelines for integration of migrants in trade union structures and lines of action.

The ETUC - Youth Committee welcomes already existing and future initiatives by affiliates to enable migrants to become members. We also wholeheartedly welcome trade union contact points being set up for migrants. We remind European society of the existence of the UnionMigrantNet network (unionmigrantnet.eu, a network of trade union contact points aiming at facilitating the access of migrants to the labour market and to defend their rights at work) The ETUC – Youth Committee encourages affiliates to share best practices on this field. At the same time, the rising number of riots against migrants and their accommodation shows how important and even more vital than ever it is to protest and to educate against racist agitation. Anti-migrant sentiments provide the breeding ground for right-wing extremism and violence. The antiracist work of trade unions in companies and society is already making a major contribution to ensuring peaceful coexistence, regardless of background.

ETUC - Youth Committee demands a reorientation of European security policy. The priority must be to create legitimate escape routes that enable migrants fleeing from unsafe regions to reach Europe without risking their lives. The policy so far of stronger border controls, new border protection systems and a military approach to people smugglers and escape facilitators will not stop people dying on Europe's borders. Instead, it serves only to give a boost to people traffickers, who can hike the price of illegal escape routes, ending up in more deaths on the even riskier escape routes.

Many migrants in Europe are under the age of 30. The ETUC - Youth Committee demands young migrants be housed securely,, independent of their parents, be fully included in educational systems, be offered vocational training and then be able to seek a job. The principle of decent work and training applies to migrants too. Employers must not be allowed to abuse the current situation by operating wage dumping. We explicitly back any

measure promoting integration in the labour market offering conditions for migrants on a par with those for native residents.

Intra-EU mobility

Youth mobility, promoted in the second chapter of the European Pillar of Social Rights is a right and should not be a reason to create precarious conditions for young workers, on the contrary, this capacity of youth can provide an important exchange & transfer of experience, knowledge, skills & abilities.

Freedom of movement of workers is a basic principle of the labour market and one of the pillars of the European integration process. It is furthermore one of the achievements most highly valued by the Peoples of Europe and comprises freedom of movement itself and the right to equal treatment in employment, access to social services and social security, education and training, among other fields.

Mobility of young workers, most of all, can be an important element in achieving the objectives of economic growth and employment in the EU, and can also promote the transfer of knowledge, innovation and skills development, which is essential in a world undergoing technological changes.

The ETUC Youth Committee regrets that labour mobility is often forced. Brain drain and economic emigration is not a positive move. It's bad for the country of origin concerned, and bad for the workers who have to emigrate because of economic circumstances. Therefore, the causes of such forced mobility should be embedded in much broader economic, employment and skills policies to ensure that economic development and growth benefit workers and their families and will prevent the current developments of 'brain drain' and 'youth drain'. In order to avoid such situations, the ETUC Youth Committee considers that it is necessary:

- To monitor the situation, in order to remove possible obstacles for mobility;
- To promote the importance of upholding national working standards and supply information about it;
- To promote cooperation between unions across borders;
- For social partners to engage in social dialogue to ensure free and fair mobility of these workers according the European principles;
- To combat the development of dual labour markets due to social dumping.
- To acknowledge and combat other reasons behind emigration: low quality of employment and living standards.

Social dumping seems to place the responsibility on the workers themselves, when this is actually the fault of the companies, national law and the lack of action of the labour inspectorate.

The ETUC - Youth Committee encourages its delegates to take the necessary steps to achieving the following goals: promoting a free and fair mobility in order to support workers' transition; the portability of social rights and the protection of mobile workers; recognition and standardization of academic titles and qualification; and fight against social dumping. More concrete actions with this aim can be found in the resolution "ETUC – Youth Committee position on youth mobility", adopted at the ETUC - Youth Committee meeting of June 2018.

FOR A YOUTH AUTONOMY ALLOWANCE

The risk of poverty or social exclusion in Europe is by far the highest in young people between the ages of 18 and 25. Many of them rely on family, student work or government support to have a financial income. The former two being a conductor for social inequality and the latter unfortunately often insufficient, we propose an alternative that will again empower young people: the Youth Autonomy Allowance (YAA).

It is an allowance that you will receive monthly from the year you turn 18 until you are 25, the only other condition being that you sign up for an education or job-seeking program. The amount should be high enough to promote autonomic choices independent from your (family's) financial situation: whether or not to study, which work conditions to accept, whether or not to stay with your parents, . . . Because all young people should have access to education. All graduates and unemployed should receive unemployment benefits. The implementation of Youth Guarantee is the responsibility of the governments, not the youth, so they should not have to bear the consequences of its failing. Young workers should not be forced to accept any job, under any condition. We see a rise of precarious work conditions all over Europe and we need to give the young generation more bargaining power. Last but not least: whether you choose to study or work for a pay check during these 7 years in which you launch yourself into the world, your choice should not be dependent on the financial implications for the path you chose.

Therefore, we believe every young person should be entitled to a YAA, only to be limited with progressive taxation in certain cases appertaining to the well-off sectors of society. With the new YAA we will include the young generation in social security, where this is currently not the case. For this, we call upon the principle of intergenerational solidarity, fundamentally inherent to social security. Local governments should aim to include YAA in their social security schemes as a new pillar without sacrificing the support systems for young people that already exist.

GENDER: YOUNG WOMEN IN THE LABOUR MARKET

Equality means that “the rights, responsibilities and opportunities should be the same”.

Young people all over Europe are met with a number of difficulties in relation to accessing the labour market and finding stable, quality jobs. Young women in particular are faced with even greater difficulties. The inequalities between men and women result in women being more likely to be in vulnerable or unstable working conditions, they more often than men hold part time positions, are over represented in sectors with precarious working conditions, and are faced with direct or indirect discrimination. The NEETS are higher among young women, who on average have higher NEETS and overall lower activity and employment rates. Women are furthermore vulnerable to the risk of (gender based) violence at work, especially young women.

Labour market segregation plays an important role in the financial inequalities between men and women, which amounts to a significant pay gap across all European countries. The economic inequalities between the genders lead to women being more vulnerable, also outside the labour market.

Women are still today taking on the primary responsibility of the household and the unpaid care work within the family. This leads to an extra burden for women that affects their opportunity to participate in the labour market at the same rates as men.

We as trade unions need to push for progressive policies that try to counter the negative consequences and supports young women by eliminating the differences between the genders. In order to make sure that our labour market is fair and equal, we need to find structural solutions that deal with these gendered inequalities. These includes maternal and non-transferable paternal leave in order to remove the burden of the child-caring responsibility from women at work and in the access to employment, as well as quality, affordable, universal and adequate care services for both children (including free education from 0 to three years) and the elderly, to relieve this responsibility from women and the individual family. We see that in sectors and countries where unions hold strong bargaining powers, differences in salary are reduced.

All youth policies need to include the gender perspective (gender mainstreaming). The reasons behind the disparity between the genders are manifold (social, cultural, economical), but the result is a financial inequality that can be seen from a young age all the way to retirement.

INTERGENERATIONAL SOLIDARITY

The latest demographic statistics and trends have shown at European level a challenging situation ahead regarding the ageing society and workforce. In this regard, trade unions with the other social partners have to focus on encouraging an intergenerational solidarity at the workplace and also in the society. Different measures with the purpose of strengthening inter-generational solidarity in the labour market are needed, especially with the high rate of unemployment among youth nowadays.

Workers of all ages should benefit from a safe and healthy work environment, an inclusive and non-discriminatory workplace that allows them to develop and keep up with the new technologies.

Creating policies that promote mentoring programs, ensuring a fair distribution of tasks according to their abilities/skills/knowledge should be on the stakeholders' agenda in order to decrease the unemployment rate among youth.

The ETUC - Youth Committee and FERPA are engaged for a better Europe based on solidarity and equality, social justice and cohesion, peace and democracy also by promoting an intergenerational approach at all levels. We call for a timely implementation of the agreement signed by these two organisations in 2016 "A fairer Europe for all generations".

THE RISE OF POPULISM

We point out that inequality in European societies fuels the rise of populism. The poor quality of jobs and outlook for life that resulted from the economic crisis and the policies implemented since then are fuelling support for such movements.

The ETUC Youth Committee denounces right-wing extremism and populism, including ultra-nationalism, xenophobia, islamophobia, euroscepticism and anti-semitism. The ETUC Youth Committee denounces this rise in populism with loss of rights for all workers. We remain concerned about the influence of these forces on young people and on European society. Our vision is of an open and inclusive society and a European citizenship that quality of life and work of our workers, who in turn are citizens.

We call for the defence of the fundamental values of tolerance, non-discrimination and cultural diversity. Urgent and resolute action must be taken against the growing forces of hatred and division in our European territory and global society. The ETUC - Youth Committee and its member organisations are committed to undertake the necessary actions to pursue the following objectives.

- We must maintain the values of trade unions in a world of growing populism, always acting in accordance with our fundamental values, such as freedom, equality, solidarity, justice, democracy, transparency and never compromising the basic values of trade unions.
- Create knowledge about the dynamics behind populist and extremist speech, with prevention alternatives by investing in quality research.
- Promote real alternatives for the future and campaigning for common values. Use these propositions in both internal and external communication to better transmit our effective and targeted strategies;
- To strengthen trade unionists in recognizing populism, discussing threats, building good practices and promoting European interaction in order to act against populism.
- Invest in training and information on this growing tendency of populism and its impact.
- Actively campaigning and promoting other European-wide campaigns to prevent populism among young workers.
- Combat hate speech and fake news to allow safe spaces - offline and online - for all young people and workers.

The next European Parliamentary elections take place at a crucial moment for Europe. We are observing an alarming rise of various far right movements.

That's the reason why the ETUC Youth Committee is highlighting the need to reverse this trend and encourage the highest possible participation of young people in the forthcoming European elections.

Any campaign to favour the participation of young people in elections should be based on the denunciation of racism and xenophobia and on the defence of a European social model for social justice and respect for human rights.

Young people are very exposed to this type of movement that goes against the European values and social and democratic ideals that we favour as models for a fair and transparent Europe.

Active involvement is the key to the construction of a participatory and widespread democratic European model that redesigns a new social and economic strategy to defend the future and the rights of young workers.

We must urge young people to vote in May 2019 for a European Parliament that supports and defends European values⁸.

⁸ ETUC Youth Committee Resolution on right-wing Populism. December 2017, Brussels. Available at: [f https://www.etuc.org/en/circular/etuc-youth-committee-resolution-right-wing-populism](https://www.etuc.org/en/circular/etuc-youth-committee-resolution-right-wing-populism)



03.

FUTURE OF TRADE UNIONS

ORGANISE, ORGANISE, ORGANISE

Trade unions face an existential crisis. Either we recruit new, young members in considerable numbers, or within a matter of decades we will no longer exist as mass membership organisations: if the current de-unionization trend continues, unions in Europe will lose more than 11 million members at least, i.e. 26 % of the current members, in the next 10 years.

The vast majority of European trade unions - 27 out of 31 countries - cannot stop membership decline and are experiencing a slow but almost continuous loss of trade union density.

The median age of union members has increased as well, many members are in their mid-40s to early 50s. The percentage of people under 25 joining a union has fallen significantly. This is worrying because there is a strong association between joining young and remaining a member – people who do not join a union relatively young are much less likely to join later. Recruitment of more young people is therefore crucial for the survival of the trade union movement.

Many unions try to recruit new members without having any overall strategic thinking on union activity and future prospects. How to recruit and retain new members must start with a shared analysis of the opportunities for and threats to trade union membership in a specific local and/or sectoral union, then identifying and making strategic choices.

Therefore, we encourage all European union's leadership teams to start – if they haven't already done so – making their own strategic choices including their youth structures and ask for the full backing of union federations and confederations.

Revolutionising trade union strategies is a huge effort and it doesn't bring success from day one. It needs commitment and endurance, which should be supported at the European level too via ETUC, ETUI and the European federations.

Because of the changes in work places (platform economies), temporality of work (short term jobs, civic contracts, forced self-employment, apprenticeships and traineeships, student work), and high youth unemployment, trade unions should consider enlarging the scope of their memberships and work in an inclusive way in order to include and represent all workers. This should be taken into consideration when they are preparing their strategies.

There are many existing best practices, case studies, different tools and methods for organising workers and planning organising activities. The ETUC established an ad-hoc Organising Committee to provide a European platform for organisers to exchange good practices, to share experiences and disseminate information (and receive feedback) on what is being done at European level by the ETUI, ETUC and ETUFs in this field. The ETUI organises training for organisers and also for leaders, who make strategic decisions.

The time of traditional organising of workers automatically joining the union when entering a workplace is over. Unions have to move out of their offices and go to the places where young people study and work – such as malls, restaurants, co-working spaces, and hubs – or look for a job, as well as participating in events where they can get in contact with many young people, such as concerts, festivals, etc...

What is important is that young trade union representatives should talk with young employees. It will be easier for them to make contact and thus it will be easier to convince an employee to join the union.

Using already existing tools better, with the involvement of trade union youth and dedicating more resources to organising activities and actions aimed directly at young workers can be a first step towards a trend change in trade union density and a generational renewal.

Trade unions should get involved in online platform work and the provision of concrete support services for platform workers by organising them; negotiating with online platforms; and by mediating conflicts between platform workers and platform owners.

The quality integration of migrants in European societies and labour markets is a priority of the ETUC and its youth committee. ETUC affiliates have been deploying many effective strategies throughout the continent to better organise and protect migrants and trade unions are intensifying their support and showing solidarity towards migrants against the background of the growing xenophobic narrative. Youth structures of trade unions should promote the affiliation of migrants and promote their representation in the high-level decisions of the trade unions.

The resolution of the ETUC - Youth Committee "ETUC Youth Committee Action Plan on Organising Young Workers" (adopted in December 2015, available at: <https://www.etuc.org/en/circular/etuc-youth-committee-action-plan-organising-young-workers>) called upon unions to mirror the composition of the workforce and fully represent the needs of the furthest from full employment, notably youth, women, migrants and those belonging to vulnerable groups (migrants, refugees, LGBTIQI, disabled etc). A set of recommendations were put forward on internal organisation, communication, training, research and monitoring and building alliances and partnerships. These are still relevant, and we encourage the members of the ETUC Youth Committee to translate this strategy into concrete actions at national level.

MODERNIZATION OF TRADE UNION STRUCTURES AND COMMUNICATION

One of the key issues for being more attractive as trade unions for young people is to provide solutions to the problems of youth at work, which comes alongside the need for modernization of trade union structures and communication. As mentioned before, new technologies change the whole structure of the future labour market, so we cannot stay rigid in these turbulent times, but have to adapt to the situation with more flexible structures and communication, to enable instant reactions if needed.

Structural change means not only different statutes of unions or a change in regulation for the Congress delegations, it means a horizontal approach towards members instead of a hierarchical system, more direct democracy in decision making and rebuilding our local communities. Youth in trade unions, whether they have a formal structure or not, should be a part of the decision making.

Youth members in trade unions can play an important part in making union structures more youth friendly and also in introducing tools such as social media, applications and other communication channels that are used by young people into the daily routine of union work.

The ETUC / Youth Committee believes that youth-only spaces for improving unions representative capacity towards young workers are effective measures to better represent and organise the youth. Separate spaces shouldn't mean separatism, as young trade unionists should be involved in the highest bodies of decision making as well as participate actively in all lines of action of the organisations. These spaces can also have an entrepreneur role, as they are laboratories for putting forward new ideas, new ways of doing things and new takes on traditional union work. They can also help in building bridges between the labour movement and potential allies, as well as to developing a youth specific knowledge and agenda. Last but not least, youth committees or similar structures have the transformative potential of facilitating trade union renewal by proposing better participatory models of union democracy.

Also, the language used in communications plays a crucial part in achieving success. We should keep to the golden rule of KISS – Keep it short and simple! A platform providing up to date information on programs, actions, news, etc. can not only be content on a webpage. It can come in the form of messages on Viber or WhatsApp, a picture or video on Instagram, in the Facebook news feed or a tweet.

Joining a union and paying our membership fee can and should be made easier as well. Modern technology provides the tools – most of the times for free – for online registrations

and automatic payments, we simply need to make use of them. Also, a reduced membership fee in the first year of their membership for young students or workers can be an attractive tool to introduce them to trade union activities.

It is necessary to establish a pan-European trade union card which allows workers to be organised beyond their nationality.

Lastly, we have the challenge of building a trade union 4.0 for action, organisation and services for the workers.

SOCIAL DIALOGUE AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

We believe that social dialogue and collective bargaining remains at the centre of trade union activities in the future, but it should change its focus. As more and more workers are employed in precarious forms of employment, forced into self-employment or working for a platform in the gig economy, trade unions should also expand and include these workers, who often don't even have employee status in their collective bargaining negotiation, and also when preparing or negotiating legislative changes that affect them as well

But first of all, we have to redefine the terms employer and employee and tackle the barriers which prevent atypical workers and the self-employed from joining a union or from bargaining collectively. We cannot end up with a labour market of insiders and outsiders. Legislation should provide sufficient labour and social rights to all kinds of workers, not only for those –proportionately fewer and fewer– having a full-time, permanent contract with access to social benefits. The transition process should be the subject of social dialogue in various configurations. Lack of transparent and systematic debate will lead to social tensions and conflicts, which will reduce the chances of achieving the full benefits of technological development.

TRADE UNION EDUCATION

Training to workers

Education in general is key for the worker's job aspirations in the future – as we stated in the previous chapters. It becomes more and more important to be able to constantly learn new things, to be able to use and control technology, to adapt and to have soft skills, that cannot be provided by robots or algorithms.

Trade unions should also get engaged in vocational education and training, professional extension courses and further education, to safeguard the rights of workers to study and develop themselves in order to ensure the maintenance of their capacity to keep their current or find a new job if necessary.

A skilled workforce is one of the main assets of the European social and economic model. Education contributes to boosting economic growth and increase productivity and wages. There are only 10.7% of adults taking part in lifelong learning. At the same time, ETUC member organisations observe inequalities in accessing training to workers at company level, making it difficult for those most in need of training, such as low- and high-skilled workers, to improve their skills, qualifications and therefore wage levels, working conditions and career prospects.

The ETUC - Youth Committee therefore backs the ETUC request towards the EU policies on education after 2020⁹, these being:

- European right to training guaranteeing high quality employee training for all workers, in particular low skilled ones, including paid educational leave;
- A real “Skills guarantee” allowing low skilled workers to obtain at least certified basic skills and key competences;
- Investment in education and training to ensure appropriate funding by the EU (and member states) in the future Multi-Annual Financial Framework (MFF) post 2020;
- Effective social dialogue on VET to consolidate efficient governance on vocational training at all levels.

⁹ EU priorities on education and training post 2020 - Towards a European right to training for all”: <https://www.etuc.org/en/document/eu-priorities-education-and-training-post-2020-towards-european-right-training-all>

Training aimed at trade union members

In the last years many Unions facing financial difficulties decided to reduce their spending for training activities addressed to unionists. This resulted in less training while the challenges Unions have to face become if possible even more complex. The key to reverse this trend: trade union renewal requires quality training.

When designing trade union training, particular attention should to be paid to skills and knowledge for analytic and strategic thinking: the future is uncertain and trade union leaders have to define long-term plans.

Trade union education should also pick up the pace and use the modern tools of current times. With better use of online platforms, we could multiply our capacity of training members at all levels. Short and easy to understand video spots, webinars and other e-learning and b-learning methodology could result in members being well informed and more ready to act.

TRANSNATIONAL MEMBERSHIP AND TRADE UNION ERASMUS

Transnational trade union membership is already mentioned in the ETUC Congress resolution: “Towards a European System of Industrial Relations” of the 9th ETUC Congress in Helsinki 1999, which committed the ETUC to draw up a Charter of mutual recognition of trade union membership among the affiliates of the ETUC.

With regards to increasing labour mobility and globalisation shaping the future of Europe’s labour market, we need to come back to the actual implementation of this idea, as international solidarity and transferable memberships could be key for the future to ensure equal treatment for all workers. The very structure of the transnational membership should be the outcome of a thoughtful debate between all ETUC affiliates. Terms and conditions should be carefully designed, especially considering access to trade union services and the validity period of the access to these in a transnational situation. In any case, the ETUC – Youth Committee calls all ETUC members to start this debate as soon as possible.

In addition, the ETUC Youth Committee suggests that ETUC affiliates also organise so called Trade union Erasmus programs to exchange young activists who would this way have the opportunity to learn more about the grass route level work of a different organisation and bring home valuable knowledge, that they can use in the process of revitalisation of their own structures.

ALLIANCES

Building alliances with other youth organisations and relevant and democratic stakeholders in youth employment policy is and will remain a core value of the ETUC Youth Committee. We believe that this cooperation will not only be strategic to move forward our political priorities, but we will also enrich our positions through this mutual work and learning. Human rights' associations, LGBTQI movements and student movements, Environmental and Women's groups are some of the organisations the ETUC - Youth Committee and its member organisations collaborate with. Above all, we continue our cooperation and active participation at the European Youth Forum to represent the voice of young workers in their structures.

Insisting on this need to build alliances with civil society, the ETUC - Youth Committee recalls that only representative trade union and employer organisations are entitled to put into effect the fundamental right to bargain collectively and to take part in social dialogue negotiations.



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