

ETUC and EESC Workers' Group Cooperation Agreement

Adopted at the Executive Committee Meeting of 17-18 December 2019

European trade unions are fighting for strong solidarity and more social justice, for a European Union that acts in the interests of workers and defends our social model, a unique example to others around the world.

European workers continue to suffer the negative effects of the deep economic and social crisis, years of austerity, the lack of quality jobs and investment. A neo-liberal policy agenda has created high unemployment, social exclusion, and discontent among workers and other citizens. Workers face new and ongoing challenges including how to manage the future world of work, the threat to the freedom of association and of the role of collective bargaining in the new forms of work. They face adversities such as the need for a just transition in the move to a low-carbon economy, persistent and growing inequalities, and the ongoing struggle for gender equality, non-discrimination and equal opportunities for all.

The ETUC and the EESC Workers' Group will continue to work together to address these challenges and to drive for a Europe that works for workers, **based on their respective priorities (see annex)**. This is the only way to restore the trust of European workers and other citizens in the European Union project and to fight against rising sentiments of far-right populism, nationalism, and xenophobia.

The ETUC and the Workers' Group will continue to insist on the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights including in particular legislative measures at European level as well as national initiatives to ensure upward convergence of living and working conditions, less inequality and more economic and social cohesion between and within the Member States, including through sound macroeconomic policies. Both parties will strive for and concretely contribute to finding solutions which lead to quality jobs and full employment, improved economic and social opportunities, social protection, personal security and well-being for all.

The ETUC and the Workers' Group are committed to supporting the Sustainable Development Goals and to push for a concrete implementation of the principles and goals through effective European legislation.

Considering the different roles of the two bodies, **the ETUC and the Workers' Group will find common ground for cooperation**, exchange of experiences and expertise.

To achieve these joint goals:

- The good level of cooperation between the ETUC and the EESC Workers' Group shall be sustained during the current ETUC mandate (2019-2023).
- The President of the EESC Workers' Group will permanently be invited to take part in the ETUC Executive and Steering Committee meetings.
- The General Secretary and/or the ETUC Secretariat will regularly be invited to speak at the EESC Workers' Group Extraordinary meetings and other meetings on specific issues.

- There will be regular exchanges on the legislative program of the European Institutions in terms of expertise and common goals, taking into consideration the different roles of the two bodies. Since the goal of both parties is to strengthen the workers' voice in the EU legislative process, the ETUC with the Workers' Group will cooperate and share their respective positions, providing mutual support and coordinating the respective lobbying. They shall encourage the exchange of experts between the two bodies.
- Workers' Group members will participate in the ETUC Working Groups and Committees, to enable an exchange of information about the development of different policies and about ETUC and Workers' Group initiatives.
- The EESC Workers' Group and the ETUC will promote joint meetings and events. The ETUC Secretariat and the Workers' Group Bureau will meet twice a year to discuss the implementation of the political priorities and programming for the following year, including where possible, the coordination of activities or events and to evaluate our mutual collaboration.
- There will be a shared exchange of information regarding the outcomes of studies and projects undertaken by the ETUC, the ETUI, and the EESC Workers' Group.
- The Workers' Group Secretariat is engaged in supporting ETUC activities in the EESC premises while respecting the internal and budgetary rules of the EU Institutions.
- Several Workers' Group members hold positions of responsibility in the ETUC bodies, also forming the bridge between the EESC Workers' Group and the ETUC.