

RESOLUTION

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION, DIVERSITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL IN EFBWW POLICIES

The EFBWW Women's Network was created almost 10 years ago, to deal with gender policy issues related to our sectors and share initiatives on specific problems for our women workers, identifying a space in the debate with other European organizations, within the ETUC as well as with the International Federation BWI.

The identification of a "Gender Agenda" has allowed us in these years to have a deeper understanding of these specific issues and problems, even if we have to record that the Federation has given it an often subordinate place compared to other priorities and to other political issues.

The EFBWW General Assembly is a great opportunity to recalibrate and confirm our commitment on equal opportunities, with gender equality being one of the first priorities to strive for. The EFBWW will give this topic the right space and weight, also and above all inserting it through a method of mainstreaming in all areas of our political activities and organization.

This ambition can be achieved and practiced only if a greater number of women enter the Secretariat, the Presidium, the Executive Committee, the various permanent committees of the sector and the various thematic coordination groups of our federation.

Although we are aware that we are still far from the objective of equal representation between men and women, we underline the urgent need to increase the presence of women at all levels, starting from the workplace, also looking at a greater participation of female workers, taking advantage of the spaces of change in the construction sector, green building, digitalisation, just transition, energy efficiency and climate change.

In the same way, the Gender themes will have to enter the agendas of the Social Dialogue of all our sectors, Construction, Wood and Forestry, as well as in the themes treated by the EWCs and by the European and International trade union networks.

As for the implementation, gender policies will be part of the broader scope of inclusion and diversity. Digitalisation and modern working tools are an opportunity for us to reach out not only to women, young and higher educated workers, but also to people in a more vulnerable or disadvantaged position which in the end will strengthen our trade unions.



A concrete EFBWW strategy on women's participation, diversity and equal opportunities for all will be very relevant for our (transforming) sectors to guarantee real inclusion and equal treatment for all workers at our workplaces. The EFBWW will facilitate this strategy, initiated by the person designated to represent the EFBWW at the ETUC on gender issues.

This new strategy on women's participation, diversity and equal opportunities for all will be verified annually and gradually implemented if, during the next 4 years of congressional mandate, new facts and dynamics should occur that may require more incisive actions by the EFBWW.



RESOLUTION

EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK IN EU COUNTRIES

Motion aiming at strengthening actions to counteract the persistent pay gap between construction, the woodworking, furniture and construction materials industries workers in various EU countries, unjustified levels of costs of living and labor productivity.

In 2004, 2007 and 2013, the new countries of Central and Eastern Europe and South Eastern Europe joined the European Union. The European common market for goods and services has also significantly expanded. The enlargement of the Union also significantly extended the Community labor market.

From 2004 to 2019, in most new EU Member States, GDP and labor productivity significantly increased. However, GDP growth does not translate directly into an increase in employee salaries in the new EU countries. In the construction, construction materials, wood and furniture sectors, the difference in the level of average wages in comparable jobs in the most developed and new EU countries has remained at a similar level since 2004.

On the other hand, the increase in the living cost and prices of basic consumer goods in many new EU countries in 2004-2019 was significantly higher than the increase in wages.

Such a large difference in the income of workers in our sectors in the most developed and new EU countries is not justified by the differences in labor productivity, especially that in most of these last countries new technologies and new methods of work organization are the same and have been introduced by the leading multinational European companies - dominant in these markets. .

In many countries of Central - Eastern Europe and South-Eastern Europe, the intensity of work in our sectors is very high, and the real working time is also long. The nominal increase in monthly wages is often linked to the extension of real working time, exceeding significantly 40 hours per week.

Analysis of the policy pursued by many multinational companies and their subcontractors in the new EU countries indicates that the common European labor market is only a declarative concept and has little to do with reality. One of the most important factors of increasing productivity in the new EU countries is still lowering labor costs, including maintaining a low level of remuneration.



The European Federation of Building and Woodworkers aims to enforce the same pay for the same work for migrant and posted workers on domestic markets. At the same time, it emphasizes the fact that the differences in the remuneration of employees in our sectors in various EU countries - not justified by differences in the cost of living - undermines the foundations of the Community's single market.

The existence of high pay differences in the same job positions, unjustified by labor productivity and differences in the cost of living, for many years, creates two different categories of labor markets in the EU. We do not accept such a division.

EFBWW strongly supports the demand for decent wages and an upward convergence of wage levels. EFBWW supports national autonomous and tripartite arrangements aimed at introducing mechanisms for wage increases that take into account the qualifications required for specific occupations and jobs. These goals must primarily be achieved through collective bargaining and an increase of the coverage of collective bargaining agreements.

EU member states have developed different wage setting systems with collectively agreed wages, statutory and collectively agreed minimum wages and a combination of these mechanisms. EFBWW therefore supports a European approach that improves minimum wages in EU Member States while respecting the different labour market systems in each EU Member State.



RESOLUTION

CREATING A SOCIAL EUROPE OF WORKERS! FACILITATING DECENT WORK - ACTIVELY SHAPING THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE WORLD OF WORK

The EFBWW champions a united, social and democratic Europe of workers. The European Union must focus its policies on ensuring full employment, social progress and a high level of environmental protection, as set out in the Treaty on European Union (Art. 3, paragraph 3).

The EFBWW is taking the recently elected president of the European Commission at her word and calling for tangible measures geared towards establishing a social Europe, protecting the climate and ensuring that workers benefit from the digitalisation of the world of work.

Europe needs to change, otherwise people will turn away from it. The European economic and social model is built on collective bargaining autonomy, social dialogue, democracy at work and professions that are regulated by the social partners, enabling the latter to actively help shape how their industries develop and respond to change. The EFBWW therefore calls on the European Commission to strengthen these tools, which are key to ensuring a fair transformation of the world of work, rather than weakening them with legislative initiatives. The EFBWW is clearly opposed to a deregulated single market. The EU's single market policy must encourage social progress and decent work, rather than triggering a race to the bottom where labour standards are concerned.

1. Fair mobility and decent work

The EFBWW calls on the EU to improve the conditions of employment of all workers (including posted workers) active on the common European labour and services market. The principle of equal pay for equal work in the same place must underlie all arrangements proposed by the European Commission in its single market policy.

With this in mind, the EFBWW welcomes the revised Posting of Workers Directive, which must now be transposed into national law in a way that protects posted workers from exploitation and secures their right to the wages paid at the place where the work is done.



More specifically, in a bid to further improve working conditions and ensure fair mobility in Europe, the EFBWW demands the following:

- The European Labour Authority (ELA) must be organised in such a way that it can effectively enforce existing European labour and social legislation. The ELA must have the financial and human resources it needs to enable it to fulfil its role to optimal effect.
- Public procurement directives must provide for the payment of collectively agreed wages as a binding criterion for awarding any contract.
- Social security fraud committed by companies when posting workers must be effectively counteracted. The European Parliament has drawn up some welcome proposals to this end. As such, the EFBWW feels that A1 certificates must be unforgeable and have to be applied for before workers are posted.
- The EFBWW calls for the introduction of a European electronic social security register and European social security numbers, so that labour inspectors can check in real time whether workers are covered by social security and were properly registered prior to being posted.
- The European Commission must make full use of its powers, via competition law and legislation governing state subsidies, to prevent unfair legislation in posted workers' countries of origin (as is the case in Slovenia, for instance). The posting of workers should not become a subsidised business model in which posting companies receive a rebate on social security contributions to the detriment of workers and social security systems.
- The European Commission must not launch initiatives that – as with the European service card – result in the introduction of the country of origin principle and complicate labour inspections.
- The European Union must amend company law in a way that effectively prevents the establishment and operation of letterbox companies. Companies should not abuse freedom of establishment by relocating their HQ to wherever the lowest tax, labour and social standards apply without being able to demonstrate considerable business activity at this new site.
- To this end, the common European economic policy must be used to boost collective bargaining coverage and ensure upward convergence to the highest social and labour standards. The EFBWW roundly rejects the curtailment of collective bargaining autonomy or other labour and social rights in the course of structural adjustment programmes or in connection with economic policy recommendations.
- The EFBWW welcomes ECJ ruling C-55/18, which requires EU Member States to demand that employers systematically record their workers' working time. The European Commission must closely monitor this process and push for industry-specific solutions coordinated with the social partners.
- The European Union must also step up its efforts to combat precarious employment (temporary agency work, bogus self-employment, undeclared work or involuntary part-time work).

2. Protecting the climate – promoting sustainability in the world of work

Man-made climate change is one of the biggest challenges of our time. This was acknowledged by 195 nations at the Paris Climate Change Conference in November 2015, which decided to limit global warming to well below 2°C compared to pre-industrial times.



The EFBWW welcomes the fact that EU Member States have agreed on the long-term climate goal, to be achieved by 2050, of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80 to 95% compared to 1990 levels.

For the European Union, the ratification of the Paris Agreement means that tangible measures must be adopted to protect the climate. A clear political roadmap is vital if we want to almost completely decarbonise our economy and world of work by 2050.

The EFBWW believes that ambitious climate protection goals offer an opportunity to create decent, future-proof jobs. Those in the construction and woodworking industries are part of the solution, as they will work to rebuild our economy and mobility system.

With a view to achieving the EU's climate goals, the EFBWW demands the following:

- The European Directive on the energy performance of buildings¹ must be consistently implemented. Approximately 50% of the EU's final energy consumption is associated with heating and cooling, with buildings accounting for 80% of this total. Bearing this in mind, attaining the EU's climate goals will require considerable efforts to make buildings more energy efficient. The EFBWW calls on the European Commission to closely monitor the implementation of the Directive at national level.
- The EFBWW calls for a clear increase in the share of rail, pedestrian and bicycle traffic and for far more freight to be transported by rail. This can only be achieved by retrofitting transport infrastructure and making it more environmentally friendly. As such, the EU's Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021-2027 must focus on developing climate-friendly transport infrastructure (including cycle paths and footpaths). Likewise, new large-scale projects that damage the environment must be rejected.
- Only about 55% of Europe's railways are currently electrified². A clear climate strategy can only be based on renewable, and therefore 'green', energy. The EFBWW champions the electrification of railways, to minimise the use of polluting diesel trains.
- A significant proportion of transport-related CO₂ emissions are generated at the local level. The European Union must roll out funding programmes to financially support the ecological renovation of transport infrastructure and the development of local public transport in cities and municipalities.

The accessibility of economic areas is an important issue in this context. Europe has a high-quality road network, at least in central areas, but elsewhere there is a lot of catching up to do. The network of minor roads desperately needs to be expanded and renovated.

Many regions are insufficiently accessible, with public transport playing only a secondary role. A sensible infrastructure policy must strive to remedy this situation and make Europe's periphery accessible via public transport. But enhancing transport links is not all that is required: health and educational establishments must be provided everywhere. This is the only way to stop a rural exodus.

1. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AAOJ.L.2018.156.01.0075.01.ENG>

2. In Europe's rail network, 127,142 km of the total 230,551 km of lines are electrified. Source: 7th Annual Market Monitoring Report, Independent Regulators Group



If nothing is done, entire regions will be depopulated in the future, which in turn will exacerbate housing shortages in urban areas. As rents in Europe's major cities are often unaffordable, the EFBWW demands the following:

- More affordable housing must be built.
- The Maastricht criteria on public investment should not be applied to housing.
- Non-profit developers of sustainable housing must be given better access to EU funding.
- The European Union must also offer additional sources of funding, e.g. in the form of low-interest loans for climate-protection projects via the European Investment Bank (EIB).
- The EFBWW is open to a socially cushioned greening of the tax system but must be consulted when such a system is devised.
- The shift towards a climate-neutral society will also bring about changes in the world of work. This shift must be fair, meaning that anyone working in the construction and woodworking industries must be (re)trained at an early stage to meet new occupational requirements.
- Workers in industries particularly affected by this shift (e.g. by losing their job) must receive adequate compensation. Higher energy costs (in the cement industry, for instance) must not be offset by companies simply bypassing collective agreements or replacing jobs covered by collective agreements with temporary employment contracts.
- Forest management must adhere to the principle of sustainable development. The protection of biodiversity in Europe is vital for enabling forests to adapt to climate change.
- The EFBWW supports eco-social labels like those of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) that promote sustainable forest management. The EFBWW believes that criteria governing good working conditions are an integral, non-negotiable component of the FSC and PEFC schemes and that the fulfilment of these criteria must be effectively monitored. The EFBWW is working closely with Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI) to this end.

3. Digital transformation that benefits workers

The digital transformation is in full swing in the construction and woodworking industries. New technologies and innovative planning and production processes are constantly gaining ground. Examples include the continuing expansion of building information modelling (BIM), the use of new building materials compatible with 3D printers, the increasing popularity of wearables (digital, body-worn devices) like exoskeletons or data glasses, and the use of drones to monitor major construction sites.

All these technical developments will significantly impact the world of work. The EFBWW advocates actively shaping this transformation to ensure that workers benefit. The promotion of decent work must be at the heart of the digital transformation. The digitalisation of the world of work must not be allowed to trigger a major shift that benefits companies, where the profits from streamlining are privatised and therefore only companies benefit, while more flexible production models are used to play workers off against one another.



Digitalisation can play an important role to make jobs in our sectors more attractive for every single worker regardless of age, gender, race, ethnic origin, physical ability, religion, belief, sexual orientation or other aspects of one's identity. A more diverse and inclusive working environment and modern working tools are an opportunity to reach out to young and higher educated workers which at the end will strengthen our trade unions.

The digital transformation must not open any new economic gaps between Europe's countries and regions as some countries benefit far more from digitalisation than others. The European Union must therefore promote an active cohesion policy in the field of digitalisation through the transfer of knowledge and capital.

The EFBWW demands that new digital technologies benefit workers and are developed to minimise, rather than exacerbate, physical and mental stress at work.

OSH legislation must nip any health and safety risks facing workers in the bud at an early stage.

The EFBWW demands that we actively shape the changes taking place in the world of work:

- The European Working Time Directive is intended to safeguard occupational health and safety and protect workers from the delimitation of working time. It applies equally in both the digital and analogue age and consequently must not be changed.
- The European Commission should make use of its OSH competencies, identify new risks to worker health and safety at an early stage and introduce suitable legislation to provide for adequate protection. As such, the EFBWW calls for the introduction of an anti-stress regulation to better protect workers from health risks caused by mental stress, for example.
- The social partners should be involved from the moment new technologies are developed so that they can assess their impact on workers' health. With this in mind, the EFBWW demands that the European Commission structure and promote dialogue between the sectoral social partners, OSH institutions and developers of new digital technologies. New technologies should promote an inclusive and diverse working environment which facilitates the access to the workplace for people in a vulnerable or disadvantaged position.
- The EFBWW is committed to working with the sectoral social partners to devise a European further education strategy that determines qualification needs and finds solutions. This requires enhanced social dialogue and financial resources sufficient to sustainably guarantee training for workers.
- Apprenticeship systems combined with formal education (e.g. dual systems) and regulated systems for confirming professional qualifications guarantee that the skilled workers of the future are properly trained and enable the provision of high-quality services. The European Commission should therefore encourage the creation of formal systems for confirming professional qualifications (such as the obligation to pass master craftsman's examinations) and systems of regulating professions of public trust, rather than deeming this an obstacle to the European single market.



- Digital tools should be used to improve labour inspections through, for example, establishing a European social security register, enabling rapid exchanges of digital data between public authorities, and using electronic systems to record the working time of mobile workers.
- Data on workers must be more effectively protected throughout Europe.

