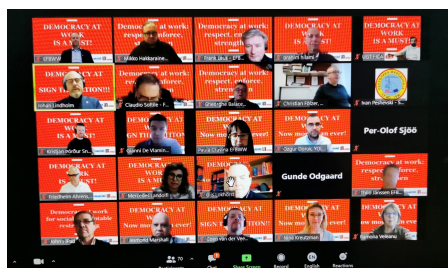


EFBWW NEWSLETTER

News from the EFBWW

EFBWW Executive Committee

The EFBWW Executive Committee gathered online on 24 November with some 60 participants, approving position papers on several dossiers (revision of the EWC Directive, asbestos campaign, report on gender issues) and discussing, among other things, the European Labour Authority and the European Green Deal. The Exco nominated three Standing Committee Wood vice-presidents. We congratulate Ole-Kristian Paulsen (1st vice-president for 2020-2021, Norway), Bruno Bothua (1st vice-president for 2022-2023, France) and Anete Kice (2nd vice-president 2020-2023, Latvia) on their election. The Exco also approved the organization of a written procedure to elect the vice-presidents of the Standing Committee Building. Two thematic discussions took place: one on the Recovery Strategy in the presence of Liina Carr from the ETUC. The second on Organising



in times of COVID-19.

The Executive Committee also officially launched a questionnaire to investigate the gender focus in collective agreements in our industries. Complete the questionnaire [here](#).

Social partners in the wood sectors issue joint position on Renovation Wave

The EFBWW, CEI-Bois, FEP, EOS, and EPF [welcome](#) the Renovation Wave Strategy. A refurbished and energy efficient EU building stock has a key role in the post COVID-19 recovery by creating green jobs, revitalising regenerative growth and paving the way for the decarbonisation of one of the largest energy consuming sectors in Europe. The renovation principles set up in the Strategy should now be implemented through National Energy & Climate Plans and Long-Term Renovation Strategies.

EFBWW urges EC to make Pay Transparency Directive a priority

The EFBWW joins the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) in [urging](#) the European Commission (EC) to make the Pay Transparency Directive a priority. The EC delayed the publication of its pay transparency directive until December 15 and cast some doubt about the initiative by marking it as "TBC". We demand that the EC presents the Directive proposal as soon as possible. The COVID-19 crisis is no excuse to delay its adoption.



EFBWW workshop on social and affordable housing - 14/12/2020

The EFBWW will organise an online workshop on social and affordable housing on 14 December 2020. In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, investments in social and affordable housing will be crucial in the creation of a recovery strategy for the construction industry. Increasing investments and stepping

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-up deep-renovation of social and affordable housing are of utmost importance. The EU [Renovation wave](#) explicitly underlines the necessity to invest in social and affordable housing. [Register here](#) for the workshop.

EU Pact for Skills

EFBWW and FIEC met EU Commissioners Breton (Internal Market) and Schmitt (Employment and Social Affairs) to discuss skills needs in the construction industry. The meeting took place in the framework of the [Skills Pact](#). The Commission identified the construction industry as a strategic sector in this field. Martin Mortensen from the Danish electricians trade union, insisted on the need for more investments in upskilling and reskilling of workers to meet the important challenges related to climate change and

digitalization. Mortensen insisted that this demands particular attention within the recovery strategy announced by the Commission and extra funding for VET and skills.



Ramona Veleanu from the Romanian construction trade union referred to the need for paritarian based solutions to help develop the construction industry in a sustainable manner in Central and East Europe. Sectoral social partners want to set up such paritarian funds, but face many obstacles from their respective governments. The EFBWW and the social partners in the construction industry committed to continue their

discussions in the social dialogue and with the Commission on how the industry can meet all the challenges ahead.

EFBWW and BWI cooperate on multinational companies

Multinational companies (MNCs) have been identified as a priority for cooperation by the two federations. EFBWW and BWI will join forces more closely to share information, develop joint strategies, and agree on tools to engage effectively in MNCs. This cooperation concerns MNCs from the building, woodworking, forestry and allied industries and trades, and the cement sector. In autumn 2021, BWI and the EFBWW will organise a Joint Conference on MNCs. Furthermore, and as part of the cooperation agreement, the EFBWW has joined the Global Cement Network and the G20 Cement Network.

Projects

Successful Train the Trainer seminar on preventing Formaldehyde exposure

More than 200 participants attended a [Seminar](#) organised by EFBWW and the European Panel Federation (EPF) on better protection of workers from exposure to Formaldehyde in the wood based panels industry. It was the first event in the framework of a joint EU-funded project. The project built on the

Voluntary Agreement between EFBWW and EPF called Action Guide regarding the prevention of formaldehyde exposure which includes a political and technical framework for prevention measures at company level. In a next step, the project will provide a number of national/regional seminars, giving social partners, workers and companies the chance to become familiar with the agreement.



ETUI - EFBWW seminar on European Green Deal

The EFBWW, in cooperation with ETUI, will organise an online workshop on 13th and 14th January 2021 entitled: "The European Green Deal: a roadmap for industrial renewal in woodworking, construction and building materials industries". The key objectives of this workshop are to introduce the participants to the European Industrial Strategy and the Renovation Wave, to debate the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of these policies, to mobilise trade

unions on the participation of workers in the European Green Deal, to prepare initiatives in the framework of the Social Dialogue. Target group are the TU officers and TU representatives at company and sectoral level in the woodworking, construction, and building materials industries. Register [here](#).

SuSodCo Capacity Building Event

The SUSODCO project in which the EFBWW is a project partner aims to equip social dialogue partners with capacities to support the industrial relations in

Central and South-eastern Europe. The first event, on 9 December, will focus on unveiling the social dialogue challenges faced by the construction industry in Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary and Slovenia. The next event, on 16 December, will look at the different ways to integrate the European social dialogue framework in the national multiannual social dialogue programmes. More [info](#).



News from our affiliates

Austria



New safety rules in construction

In the run-up to the second lockdown, the Social partners in Austria agreed on new instructions for working safely on construction sites. The new measures were sent to all works councils and companies.

GBH Federal Chairman Josef Muchitsch explained that the "common goal was - as with the 1st lockdown - to create the best possible health protection for all employees". "This is the only way to continue working on our construction sites." More info is available on the [GBH webpage](#)



Consult the [EFBWW webpage](#) dedicated to COVID-19 for more info about positions and demands related to COVID-19 and about affiliates' responses to the pandemic.

Sweden



Historic new agreement for the construction industry in Sweden

After announcing a strike and after days of tough negotiations, the Swedish trade union Byggnads reached an historic agreement. The construction workers' fight was successful! Byggnads' president, Johan Lindholm, stated that "where the politics failed, Byggnads' members instead showed what a strong and united trade union can achieve". The new collective agreement is valid until 30 April 2023 and gives increased power to the regional safety representatives in construction, who



now have access to all workplaces with collective agreements. Construction workers will get a wage increase of 5.4% by 30 April 2023 and will fall under the pension provisions as from 22 years old. The new collective agreement also contains rules on gender equality and foresees a pregnancy pay for women who receive pregnancy benefit from the Swedish Social Insurance Agency. Working groups will be established to improve gender equality and to fight sexual harassment. The agreement means that the strike has been called off. More [info](#).

Målarna reaches new agreement for painters

Målarna, the Swedish painters' trade union signed a new collective agreement! The agreement is valid from 1 December and provides, among other benefits, a 5.4% wage increase over 29 months. Pension payments will be done monthly and from the age of 22 onwards. The agreement also has an extended basic training for safety representatives containing one specific session

on fighting sexual harassment. Målarna underlines that this agreement was reached in a "strange and unusual" context. The trade union's president, Mikael Johansson is "satisfied and happy" with the success "which bring about important improvements for members despite the current situation". But Målarna wants more. The wage formation model stipulated by law makes it difficult to demand more than the industry. Along with this, the fact that we are in the middle of the second wave of the pandemic, gives the employers all the power. The next collective bargaining negotiations will focus on changing the wage formation model that prevails in Sweden. More [info](#).

Turkey



A month full of struggles... and victories

The Turkish Trade Union of Road, Construction and Building Workers (YOL-İŞ) has had a difficult month full of struggles. A law enacted in 2018 stipulates that workers, employed by subcontracting companies which won tenders from public institutions, were recruited into permanent positions in these public institutions. However, a provisional article which was added to the law, specified that the workers were deemed to remain in the sector of the companies they previously worked for, not in the public institutions which recruited them. The YOL

-İŞ campaign against this provisional article was successful and workers were registered to belong to the construction sector 8,829 new members joined YOL-İŞ between 1 to 20 November. The number is expected to reach approximately 12 thousand. YOL-İŞ also fought against legislative preparations that allowed for establishing two-year unconditional fixed-term contracts for workers under 25 and over 50. As a result of the protests held, the relevant article was withdrawn. If enacted, about 10 million workers would have lost their rights to severance and notice pay. More [info](#).

Switzerland



Swiss Coalition for Corporate Justice SCCJ

Narrow defeat for Responsible Business Initiative

On 29 November, the Swiss people could vote on the Responsible Business Initiative. This proposal would have made businesses liable for human rights or environmental violations they cause all around the world. UNIA and more than 400 NGOs, environmental associations, political parties and workers' organisations, united in the [Swiss Coalition for Corporate Justice](#), supported this initiative.

Even though voters backed the initiative by a narrow majority, it failed to win support in a majority of

Swiss cantons as required. The government and many business leaders had come out firmly against the plan. The initiative would have applied to around 1,500 companies. Small and medium-sized companies with up to 250 employees were excluded from the initiative. Within the proposed initiative, those affected could have sued for damages in a civil court in Switzerland and claim financial compensation for the damage suffered.

Germany



IG BAU condemns growing number of accidents

Recently, the German prevention authority BG BAU (Berufsgenossenschaft Bau) published figures on accidents in the German building sector. The number of fatal accidents rose from 67 to 87 in the first nine months of the year, compared to 2019. After another terrible accident on 16 October in Denklingen (Bavaria) in which four construction workers aged 16,

34, 37 and 37 were fatally injured, IG BAU wrote to the German ministry. In its letter, IG BAU pointed to the fact that checks and guidance by the labour authorities have diminished during the pandemic. IG BAU criticises that labour inspectors are now to a large extent working from home and are not any longer active on site.



In this section the EFBWW gives the possibility to its affiliates to share their stories.

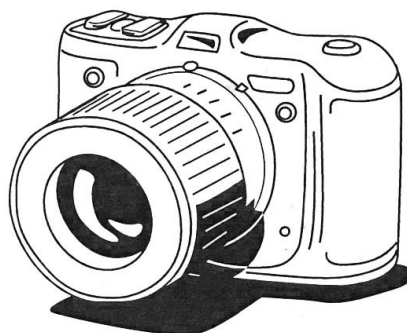
If you have news or contributions, do not hesitate to contact pcravina@efbww.eu.

Miscellaneous

ETUC calls for EU financial support for Social Partners

The ETUC has called upon the Commission to establish a funding instrument for its affiliates in response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. There is every possibility that the crisis will impact negatively on Social Partners' financial situation and make it more difficult for the trade unions to play their role. The ETUC was informed that the Com-

mission put forward a proposal under the 2020 EaSI funding programme. The overall envelope of resources expected to be made available in 2020 will be €5m. The ETUC will circulate a call for expression of interest that will include the eligibility criteria to access these funds.



ILO publishes report on decent work and inclusive growth

The International Labour Organization (ILO) published "The Global Deal for Decent Work and Inclusive Growth Flagship Report 2020". This study illustrates the importance of social dialogue in managing the consequences of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, as well as the benefits of involving social partners in adult-learning systems to prepare for the future of work. More [info](#).

CALL FOR PICTURES

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

As we are always looking for pictures to illustrate our newsletters and brochures, we would be grateful if you could share good, representative pictures of male and female workers from all our industries, at the worksite, manifestations, etc. Please contact pcravina@efbww.eu.

EFBWW Provisional Meeting schedule 2021

14 December 2020	EFBWW Workshop on social and affordable housing	Videoconference
15 December 2020	Due diligence project seminar	Videoconference
13-14 January 2021	EFBWW - ETUI - Just transition workshop	Videoconference
20 January 2021	STIC project - Wood sector EWCs	Webinar
January 2021	DESOCO project - Thematic meeting S&H	Videoconference TBC*
9 February 2021	Joint Presidium EFBWW/BWI	Videoconference
10 February 2021	STIC Project - Building sector EWCs	Webinar
18 February 2021	SD Wood-Furniture WP	Videoconference
25 February 2021	EFBWW Standing Committee Wood	Hybrid meeting
February 2021	SD Construction - Working group VET & Youth	Videoconference TBC* by EC
9 March 2021	EFBWW H&S Coordination group	Hybrid meeting
22 March 2021	EFBWW EWC Steering group	Videoconference
24 March 2021	STIC Project - Cement EWCs	Webinar
25-26 March 2021	EFBWW-ETUI - Future of Work Workshop	Videoconference
31 March 2021	EFBWW Auditing Committee	Videoconference
7 April 2021	STIC Project - Building materials EWCs	Webinar
14 April 2021	SD Construction - Working group Employment	Videoconference
April 2021	EFBWW Presidium	Videoconference
29 April 2021	EFBWW Standing Committee Building	TBC by EESC*
5 May 2021	SD Wood plenary meeting	Videoconference
6 May 2021	SD Furniture plenary meeting	Videoconference
25 May 2021	EFBWW EWC Coordinators' meeting	Videoconference
1 June 2021	EFBWW Executive Committee	TBC by EESC*
10 June 2021	Monitoring & enforcement project - Final conference	Videoconference*
21 June 2021	BWI joint conference on women in trade	TBC*
June or July 2021	DESOCO project - thematic meeting VET & Youth	TBC*

* **Disclaimer:** Some of the calendar dates remain to be confirmed depending on the decision of the EC/EESC and the evolving COVID-19 situation. The EFBWW Secretariat continues to closely monitor the situation linked to the COVID-19 situation. The EFBWW Presidium will decide and inform affiliates in due time on the status of meetings.