



EFFAT REGIONAL COUNCIL OF THE TRADE UNIONS
IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE
FOR COOPERATION, SOLIDARITY AND SUPPORT

DRAFT

STRONGER UNIONS IN SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE
FOR ONE EUROPE WITH FAIR WAGES FOR ALL WORKERS

Common Paper/Position/Declaration

1. United in our unwavering defence of peace, solidarity and social justice in the region and in Europe;
2. Conscious of the damage suffered to workers' rights in our region over the last two decades when **social dialogue** has not been recognised or respected;
3. Resolute in our advocacy for the 10% of working people in Europe who are **working poor**, as well as the traditionally low-waged workers in agriculture, food and tourism sectors (where that figure is even more than 10%) which are particularly culpable for increasingly precarious working conditions, seasonal work and exacerbating demographic ageing;
4. Convinced of the need to reorient the European economy in favour of labour, away from capital, by ensuring adequate mechanisms for guaranteeing **wage growth** and **decent working** and employment conditions for workers;
5. Responsive to the longstanding and **unfair wages** of workers in South-East Europe (1,70€ in Bulgaria, for example) that results in an East-to-West 'brain drain', **social dumping** and the widespread **exploitation** of labour;
6. Focused on the need for **wage increases** to combat in-work poverty and socioeconomic inequality, improving productivity and **social cohesion**;
7. Striving for a European economy where **working people** have the recognition and **respect** they deserve;



We, the EFFAT member organisations from South-East Europe, united under the EFFAT banner, declare that:

- Workers can no longer afford the **lowest labour pay** of any strategic sector in Europe.
- We do not accept the **unfair wages** of workers in South East Europe. We want to see a **convergence of wages** in Europe – a prerequisite for social justice.
- We need **firm European regulation** governing **social dialogue** provisions and guaranteeing a **fair wage** across Europe.
- We condemn in any form the **exploitation** of agricultural, food and tourism workers including seasonal workers, and call for fair wages and decent labour conditions for workers in these sectors in line with profit and economic growth deriving from **European funding and the CAP**.
- Rather than boosting short-term financial interests – especially shareholder value – we want to see **profits reinvested back into the workforce**, into human potential, in the form of professional training, education and upskilling to improve knowledge of health and safety regulations etc.
- To manage the **effects of digitalisation** in our sectors we call for special measures concerning work in SEE to be guaranteed in collective agreements.
- As trade unionists, we **condemn racism** in all its forms and any other action geared towards undermining our democratic institutions.
- To deliver **sustainable social progress**, and to preserve the unity of Europe, we are pushing for solidarity and joint action to prevent the erosion of social dialogue and combat attempts to marginalise the trade union movement.
- We call for coordinated action to strengthen **cooperation** between all regions of EFFAT to intensify the **exchange of information** and **best practice** in the field of social dialogue, pay and social policies (in respect of TNCs, as a first step).

The world of work is changing, so as trade unions we must react accordingly. For this we need to become more diverse with more young and women members throughout our organisations. Only by better reflecting the modern labour force will we be able to secure the progressive social changes we want to see.

5 November 2019, Zagreb, Croatia

