

Tripartite Social Summit for Growth and Employment

A united tripartite response to the social and economic impact of the Russian military aggression against Ukraine

Time to double down on social dialogue

Speech by Esther Lynch, Deputy General Secretary, ETUC

Times of crisis are a time to double down on social dialogue.

Unity, our ability to act together during times of crisis is a test of our European character and a key determinant of what future we, our children and grandchildren will live and work in.

Now is the time for the EU and national governments to realise genuine tripartite social dialogue. It's the best way to devise what is needed. From immediate to the long term, whether it is the necessary state supports and measures to mitigate the impact of the sanctions on industries, on food, energy and supply chains and to ensure that public services are not overwhelmed. It's the best way to know what to do to halt price increases, protect jobs and wages and the incomes of those who rely on social protection.

BUT, we need to deliver the promise to fully include the social partners in developing and implementing responses throughout Europe because this is not the reality everywhere. This requires an alert system when social partners are sidelined - the upcoming Council Recommendation on Social Dialogue needs to provide for this. Likewise the Commission needs to get its house in order too. The ETUC is calling for one Social Dialogue representative in each DG to ensure that social dialogue is properly respected.

A tripartite approach is also essential to protect people who are fleeing war from all forms of exploitation. This means stepping up labour inspection the situation calls

for a lot more than the ILO minimum of 1 inspector for every 10,000 workers. We need hard hitting sanctions on those who seek to exploit those who have fled the war. Women and children are particularly vulnerable, recognition of risks and preventative actions are key, the ETUC Women's' Committee in their statement have called on the French Presidency to urgently table the necessary instruments for the EU to accede to the Istanbul Convention. .

Tripartite social dialogue is already actively responding to this crisis as shown by the ETUC Peace Watch which reports how national level trade unions have initiated actions to protect those affected, raising money for humanitarian aid and quickly seeking agreements to protect those fleeing war, to integrate refugees into the labour market. Likewise the ETUC and Employers Organisations are stepping up our joint actions, focusing on what we can achieve together and I am happy to report the completion of the negotiation on our proposed work plan for 2022-2024.