

**IndustriAll Europe online youth event**  
**'Getting young workers on board in the industry and in the union'**  
**31 May 2021, 10:00 – 13:00 hrs CET**

**Brief report of the event**

**1<sup>st</sup> Panel: 'Getting young workers on board at the workplace', moderated by Isabelle Barthès, Deputy General Secretary, industriAll Europe**

**Debate with:**

- **Pablo Cornide, DG Employment, European Commission**
- **Leila Chaibi, MEP, GUE/NGL France**
- **Panagiotis Chatzimichail, Board Member of the European Youth Forum**
- **Diego Andreis, Vice President, Ceemet**
- **Eleonora Di Prisco, industriAll Europe Youth Representative, UILTEC**

Pablo Cornide referred to the Youth Employment Support Package whose main proposal for tackling the problem of youth unemployment is the Reinforced Youth Guarantee. He highlighted that it is now up to the Member States to make use of this and other instruments (e.g. Skills Package, etc.) to improve the situation. IndustriAll Europe has already [welcomed](#) all these Commission proposals. However, we continue to emphasise that these are not enough to ensure a successful integration of young people on the labour market, especially because they lack quality criteria that can guarantee quality jobs for young workers.

Leila Chaibi also criticised the Reinforced Youth Guarantee, highlighting that the lack of quality criteria leaves young people without any protection from being exploited as cheap labour. She asked for binding legislation at EU-level to improve the working conditions of young people.

IndustriAll Europe supports Ms Chaibi's calls to abolish unpaid internships and sub-minimum wages for young workers. Work of equal value deserves equal pay. Ms Chaibi concluded by highlighting the paradox in today's society: irresponsible politicians asking for an increase in the pension age, while youth unemployment is soaring.

Panagiotis Chatzimichail emphasised that youth employment has been rising three times faster than regular employment. He also highlighted that many young people are treated as cheap labour, with unacceptable sub-minimum wages which are justified by some through age discrimination. Panagiotis stressed the need to think long-term, because youth unemployment has a life-long scarring effect. IndustriAll Europe agrees with him that the Action Plan of the European Pillar of Social Rights should lead to quality jobs and not just any jobs. Unfortunately, the [Action Plan](#) as it stands now will not be enough to deliver on the Social Europe that trade unions hoped for.

Diego Andreis highlighted the need to improve the attractiveness of the metal industry for young people, as well as the importance of continuous training on the job. He stressed the importance of collaboration with young people and the need to involve them actively at the companies where they work. He emphasised the value of social dialogue and social partnership for getting young people on board in the

industry and at the workplaces. Trade unions and employers must work together to ensure the integration of youth on the labour market.

Eleonora Di Prisco also stressed that social dialogue should become the key tool to ensure the inclusion of young people on the labour market. She highlighted the need for a collective bargaining agenda to improve the working conditions of apprentices and young workers. Collective bargaining can make a huge difference and ensure good quality jobs for youth.

IndustriAll Europe and its Youth Working Group will work intensively on this issue during the upcoming years to ensure a fair recovery for young workers and just digital and green transitions that leave nobody behind.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Panel: 'Getting young workers on board in the union', moderated by Tea Jarc, President of ETUC Youth Committee & Sindikat Mladi Plus, Slovenia**

**Debate with:**

- **Jean-Marie Robert, National Secretary, FGMM CFDT, France**
- **Tom Vrijens, ACV CSC METEA, Belgium**
- **Tomáš Valášek, Vice-President OS KOVO, Czechia**
- **Marie Nilsson, President IF Metall, Sweden**
- **Francesca Re David, President FIOM CGIL, Italy**

A key conversation among young unionists and trade union leaders also took place around the critical issues of how to better attract young people to trade unions and to give them the necessary space to become active in the labour movement.

All speakers agreed that trade union renewal is a central issue which needs to become a priority for all organisations (especially those where it has not yet become an issue of importance). Good examples of how to effectively involve young people in trade unions came from Belgium, Sweden, Austria, France, the Czech Republic and Italy. The strategies include information campaigns in schools, vocational education and training providers, and universities, with trade union membership open to pupils and students from early on.

Another important strategy is having young trade union representatives and shop stewards to address young workers and apprentices, and to explain to them the added value of being a member. The importance of the right form of communication, both online and offline, was repeatedly emphasised, as young people need to be able to identify with their union. Their views must be echoed in trade union messages and campaigns. Reversed mentorship through which the different generations can learn from each other emerged as a good example of how to ensure trade union renewal.