

industriAll Europe Trade Union Motions

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CONGRESS

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for an  industriAll
future 

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EUROPEAN TRADE UNION

Energy

The current geopolitical situation must lead Europe to question its sovereignty and long-term strategy. The deindustrialisation of Europe is accelerating, making us dependent in more and more sectors. However, the climate emergency has not disappeared and carbon neutrality in Europe by 2050 is essential.

Sovereign, low-carbon, reliable and low-cost energy will be the solution for boosting European industrial competitiveness, while tackling climate change.

We recall that all countries have the right to choose their own energy mix.

The imposition of free competition in energy and particularly electricity is a dogma of the past. To bring prices down, it will be necessary to leave behind the market-driven logic of energy to pay the real costs and to have an abundant diversification of means of producing low-carbon energy.

The low-carbon sectors will have to complement each other because the profound decarbonisation of the European economy needs a structural transformation of our energy systems, combining the deployment of low-carbon production and renewable energies contributing to energy efficiency. Re-industrialisation and the transfer of uses to low-carbon energies will require all the low-carbon energies available, combined with robust and balanced networks, which also require the deployment of a coherent and complementary flexibility within the EU Member States.

We are calling for a review of the EU's energy policy, based on a global vision of the energy and climate challenges, integrating their economic, social, sovereignty and industrialisation components. Low-carbon technological neutrality should guide energy policy by setting decarbonisation goals rather than means. It should allow the use of all decarbonisation technologies, prioritising in each context the solutions that are the most efficient for the climate, the most economically sustainable, and the best from a social point of view.

A Europe without industry is a weak Europe. A Europe without strategy is a weakened Europe. A Europe competing against each other is a Europe in decline, while a Europe of cooperation is the only path to success. The EU must review its design of the energy market and the associated measures to promote European industry. It must build on its capacity to guarantee its independence in the design, manufacture and maintenance of its equipment across the value chain, paying particular attention to the critical raw minerals which, and only in the absence of sufficiently exploitable resources in Europe, must be the subject of a strategic supply and diversification policy coordinated at European level.

European energy infrastructure must be renewed and rapidly strengthened by the Member States. The choice of an energy mix must be accompanied by a clear economic vision, integrating the complete cost of the energy system, including complementary energies, and aiming to guarantee stable and predictable prices for consumers. It must also ensure that producers are sufficiently remunerated to cover the maintenance and operation of infrastructures, as well as the preparation for future investments.

With this motion, we ask:

- To include all low-carbon energies as means of production eligible for European policies
- To steer decarbonisation through targets for reducing the carbon intensity of the final energy produced, while respecting technological neutrality
- To take account in the objectives of the complete costs of the systems, including the adaptations of the networks and the additional production needed to guarantee reliable production and to ensure the safety of the electrical grids
- To develop sectors that integrate the carbon balance of the entire cycle of the sector in order to reach our reduction targets
- To revise energy sector regulations, and in particular electricity regulation, following an in-depth assessment and far-reaching structural reform of the organisation of the market.

Wage convergence: For fair and decent wages across the European Union

Wage growth and wage convergence are topics with which industriAll Europe is permanently engaged. Fair and decent wages are a goal to ensure the adequate wellbeing of all employees in the European Union. When the states of the Eastern Region joined the European Union in 2004, employees celebrated and looked forward to a better tomorrow. Politicians then promised them that their standard of living would rise rapidly and it would not take long to reach the level of the developed states of Western and Northern Europe - above all, Germany, which has always been a model for Eastern European countries and often an object of envy.

But what is the reality?

It is true that the economies of Eastern European countries have grown significantly. The countries of Eastern Europe, i.e. the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, together reach 80% of the European average in the creation of gross domestic product in purchasing power parity. Productivity per worker in these countries reaches more than 80% of the EU average. So the performance of the economies of the Eastern Region is rising, there is no doubt about that. Unfortunately, wages do not go hand in hand with increasing performance. Hourly labour costs in the countries of Eastern Europe, with the exception of Slovenia, reach 40%-50% of the European average, compared to, for example, Germany, where this share ranges between 31% and 44%.

After 20 years of EU membership, in 2023, labour costs compared to the EU average reached 57% in the Czech Republic, 54% in Slovakia, 46% in Poland and 40% in Hungary. At the same time, the salary in Slovak Republic is the lowest (median) among the Visegrád Group countries. It is therefore not surprising that many employees in Eastern European countries are disillusioned with EU membership.

The huge wage gap between Eastern and Western European countries is well documented. The differences in some cases may be due to different types of work, but the differences remain large even when the work tasks are very similar.

The wage should be fair and dignified, as written in European documents. Is the wage in Eastern Europe fair? Is it possible to consider it fair that a Czech or Hungarian employee from an East European country who performs the same work, with the same commitment receives only a part of the salary of a Western colleague for it? The argument that there are different price levels in individual countries does not hold either, because the price level in the countries of Eastern Europe already reaches almost 80% of the average European price level.

How is it possible for employees in a multinational company in a subsidiary company (usually in Eastern Europe) to have lower wages than employees in the parent country (usually in Western Europe) compared to the price level?

As for dignity, it can hardly be considered dignified when workers from Eastern Europe buy the same food and daily necessities at the same prices as their colleagues from richer

countries, as we can see in the flyers of chain stores, but with little more than half the income. It is not fair or dignified that Eastern European workers have to earn twice or more than their Western colleagues to buy the same thing.

The topic of fair and decent wages is not only a problem of Eastern European countries. The situation is even worse in countries such as Romania or Bulgaria, which rank last in statistics regarding wages, income and poverty. In 2023, labour costs represented only 29% of the EU average in Bulgaria and only 35% in Romania.

The Greek colleagues have reported that their working and wage conditions, instead of approaching the conditions in the countries of Northern and Western Europe, are, on the contrary, dramatically different.

The situation is not rosy even in countries that are among the developed ones and are among the founding members of the EU. For example, Italy faces a long-term decline in real wages. Already in 2020, the average real wage in Italy was more than two percent lower than in 1990, which is a completely unique phenomenon in the EU. According to a recent report by Save the Children, almost one in ten young people in Italy live in poverty, with more than two-thirds of those surveyed worried that future employment will not lift them out of it.

In recent years, as a result of the cost of living crisis in many EU countries, real wages have fallen, which has brought additional difficulties for workers to pay for ordinary living costs. In many countries, austerity measures are again being adopted, for example in the social area, regardless of the fact that during the crisis that began in 2008, it was proven that austerity measures resulted in a very slow recovery of the economies of individual countries.

Qualified and fairly paid work is our priority!

Despite Europe's recovery, poverty and worker inequality are rising, upward convergence between regions has stalled, and wage growth continues to lag behind productivity in many Member States. European institutions have recently adopted several new legislations that are moving in the right direction, towards a social Europe for all. But it's still not enough.

Convergence between EU countries is permanently among the priorities of industriAll Europe. At the 2021 Congress, a resolution entitled 'Wage Convergence and Fair Wages in Europe' was adopted.

In the post-congress period, several campaigns were conducted in which the topic of wages also resonated. Salary is one of the basic working conditions, the improvement of which was also targeted as part of these campaigns.

At the Mid-Term Conference held in Thessaloniki in 2023, the topic of education and retraining was given major attention. In this context, it was stated that the future of Europe as a place for a good life is linked to the existence of quality jobs, i.e. places with good working conditions and fair and decent wages.

As can be seen from the above facts, the levelling of differences between rich and poor countries is proceeding very slowly, or rather not at all. Unfortunately, completely opposite trends can also be observed. It is therefore not surprising that disappointed employees, not only from Eastern European countries, lean towards political parties whose programmes are to break up the EU. Support for the Green Deal, digitisation, and decarbonisation is lukewarm in Eastern Europe, when no one invests in them, money is taken out to the mother countries of multinational companies and invested in new technologies that do not contribute to increasing the wellbeing of those who participated in their creation.

How to achieve the goal?

The path to wage convergence leads through the strengthening of trade unions as bearers of collective bargaining. Therefore, we must:

- Fight at national and EU level for the strengthening of collective bargaining and also for tripartite social dialogue
- Advocate more actively and fight at national and EU level for fair pay and equal pay for equal work
- Promote measures to strengthen social dialogue, including strengthening the right to co-decision
- Suppress all attempts to weaken unions, for example by restricting the right to strike
- Develop mutual coordination and support in negotiations with social partners
- Support efforts aimed at preventing the deindustrialisation of Europe and strengthening the competitiveness of the European economy
- Prevent the outflow of profits from individual countries to tax havens within the EU as well as outside
- Share examples of good practice and exchange information on positive outcomes of social dialogue and collective bargaining
- Develop and improve the cooperation of trade unions at national and EU level in multinational companies, fight for quality working conditions, fair remuneration, convergence of wage levels and reduction of differences. For this reason, it is necessary to raise wage topics and the topic of equal pay even during EWC meetings

The goal cannot be achieved without mutual cooperation and support!

Situation in Ukraine during the military aggression of the Russian Federation

IndustriAll Europe's affiliates strongly condemn the ongoing aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, which began in 2014 and escalated into a large-scale war on 24 February 2022, and express their unanimous support for the people of Ukraine and their efforts in the struggle for freedom, independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

IndustriAll Europe's affiliates express solidarity with Ukrainian trade unions, which continue to protect the interests of workers during the war, defend the right to safe work, and contribute to supporting the country's economy.

The Russian war in Ukraine has already led to huge human losses, the destruction of the economy, key sectors, namely the metallurgical industry, chemical, petrochemical, mechanical engineering, mining and others, strategic infrastructure, and the loss of millions of current and potential jobs.

Separately, we would like to emphasise the importance of the issue of Ukraine's energy security, which has become critical in the conditions of war. Russia's targeted attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure have caused large-scale destruction, leaving millions of citizens without access to basic needs: electricity, heat and water. The strike on the energy sector is an attempt to undermine the country's economy and destroy the civilian population of Ukraine.

IndustriAll Europe's solidarity with Ukraine remains unwavering

We call on the international community to strengthen sanctions against the aggressor, as well as to increase support for the Ukrainian people in their struggle.

At this critical time, we call on European states and international institutions to continue to help restore Ukraine's energy security, supporting it both financially and technically.

We insist on the need to maintain proper working conditions for all employees, to ensure social protection and the rights of workers even in wartime. Ensuring social dialogue is a key element for the future recovery of Ukraine and its further development. It is the trade unions who will be able to monitor compliance with international and national labour standards at all stages of reconstruction in order to prevent the exploitation of workers.

Restoring energy infrastructure should be a priority in Ukraine's post-war reconstruction. IndustriAll Europe stresses the importance of modernising and decentralising energy systems, a just, green transition and Ukraine's full integration into the pan-European energy network. This will ensure Ukraine's resilience and independence from external energy pressure. We support measures aimed at introducing modern technologies and innovations in the energy sector that will help restore Ukraine's energy sector, increase its efficiency and environmental sustainability.

We pay special attention to the need to create conditions for the return of Ukrainians to their homes in Ukraine. Millions of people have been forced to flee their homes due to hostilities, and we call on the international community, EU governments and other international organisations to provide the necessary support to create conditions for the safe and dignified return of these people to their homeland.

Post-war reconstruction of Ukraine should be fair, socially oriented, and take into account the rights of workers. Ukraine's recovery must be based on the principles of sustainable development, decent work, equality and social justice. In addition, reconstruction should include the active participation of trade unions to ensure that workers' rights are protected and to promote an economy based on innovation and green technologies. The involvement of trade unions in monitoring the implementation of investment plans through a system of social dialogue and collective agreements in compliance with the EU Directive on adequate minimum wages should be undeniable.

IndustriAll Europe supports the development of a European industrial defence strategy, which is an important element of collective security and stability in Europe. In the context of the war in Ukraine, this issue is of particular importance. We believe that Ukrainian defence enterprises should become an integral part of this strategy. Ukraine's participation in European defence programmes and cooperation in the production of military equipment, weapons and the latest technologies will strengthen the defence capability of Ukraine and Europe as a whole. Such cooperation will also contribute to the recovery of Ukraine's economy through involvement in joint projects in the defence industry. Ukraine's integration into European industrial chains will create new opportunities for workers, contribute to job creation, advanced training and improve social standards. The involvement of Ukrainian specialists in international projects will help exchange valuable experience, as well as contribute to the economic development of Ukraine after the war.

IndustriAll Europe is ready to support joint initiatives and promote cooperation between Ukrainian and European enterprises within the framework of industrial policy, which will help to restore the Ukrainian economy and its integration into the EU economy.

We will continue to support Ukrainian trade unions in their activities to preserve labour rights, trade union rights and freedoms, and contribute to all possible assistance in overcoming the consequences of this terrible war.

Peace and Democracy

We, the trade union organisations committed to the defence of workers' rights and fundamental freedoms, express our deep concern faced with the rise of the far right in Europe. This progression presents a direct threat to the peace, democracy and acquired social rights won by decades of workers' struggles.

History teaches us that the far right, in all its forms, undermines workers' rights, destroys collective solidarity and creates divisions within our societies. Its programme is based on undermining trade union freedoms, stigmatising certain sections of the population and challenging the principles of social justice and equality. Faced with this threat, we strongly affirm that the values of solidarity, equality and fraternity must remain our shared foundation.

We must continuously call on all workers to mobilise against the narrative of hate and division. It is our responsibility to defend a model of society that is based on social justice, the respect for fundamental rights and cooperation between peoples. The rise of authoritarian ideologies can only be fought with strong trade union engagement, unity of the working class and unfailing civic mobilisation.

We also reaffirm our commitment to peace in Europe and in the world. The far right, through its exacerbated nationalism and isolationist policies, threatens international stability and prefers to fuel tensions rather than promote diplomacy and cooperation. We reject this logic of confrontation and call for a policy based on dialogue and the defence of human rights.

Faced with these crucial issues, we, the trade union organisations, believe that it is essential to reinforce the Strategic Plan and our future actions with the following commitments:

- Inform workers and raise awareness about the dangers of the far right and its impact on their rights and working conditions
- Actively defend the values of democracy, trade union freedom and social justice
- Fight against all forms of discrimination, racism and division within the world of work
- Act for a united, fair and peaceful Europe, at the service of the people and not financial interests

Peace is a prerequisite for the full exercise of human rights and the stability of democracies. Without social and economic justice, there can be neither peace nor security.

We call on all workers, as well as all progressive forces, to unite to defend our rights and freedoms against the threat of the far right. History has already shown us what isolationism and authoritarianism can lead to. We have a duty to preserve peace, democracy and the acquired social rights for future generations.

Together, united and in solidarity, we will face up to this threat and build a future based on justice and human dignity.

Industry unions builders for peace

There is the possibility` of progressing in happiness, knowledge and wisdom if you forget the struggles and conflicts that lead to death. The appeal of men to men: remember your human nature and forget the rest. If you know how to do this, a way to a new paradise will open up, otherwise we are exposed to the risk of universal death.

Russell-Einstein Manifesto

Trade union movements since their inception have represented an extraordinary form of participation of multitudes, overcoming forms of individualism, to win improvements and combat conditions of poverty and exploitation. Trade unions have been the place where workers have found the strength to improve their living and working conditions by uniting their voices in a collective project.

The direct involvement of workers and activists makes change possible, strengthening the union's effectiveness and role. This participation is the beating heart of our project for change, because yes, another world is possible.

In recent decades, the world has experienced profound geopolitical and socio-economic changes that have reshaped relations between states, economies and individuals.

At the end of the 20th century, globalisation seemed to represent the definitive answer to the challenges of the contemporary world, offering the premise of a stable order and widespread prosperity, but only a few years later this system was challenged by global crises, conflicts and tensions in every corner of the planet.

Globalisation has brought obvious benefits, but it has also fuelled new inequalities and tensions.

Democracies are facing an internal crisis, with a growing distrust of institutions by citizens who, exasperated, abandon themselves in the arms of those who promise them easy solutions to huge problems.

In the world, authoritarian regimes and autocracies are growing, and in democracies, sovereignty and far-right movements are advancing unstoppably.

We are witnessing a multiplication of conflicts: from Ukraine to the Middle East, Israel and Palestine and Syria, Myanmar, via South America and Africa.

War is presented as a method of resolving disputes between peoples, leaving no room for diplomacy.

In conflicts, civilian deaths increase, images of children covered in blood, lost in the rubble shake our consciences as human beings. The eagerness of each of the warring parties to 'engrave their victory in the conscience' has created thousands of small defeats.

An entire generation of children will presumably grow up and live with the trauma of missiles, shelling and sirens, hatching hatred and revenge.

This spiral must stop. We cannot stand by and remain indifferent.

We must place humanity at the centre of our choices, creating worldwide structures that guarantee peace, overcoming existing national and cultural divisions, which are the cause of wars.

Pacifism represents an advanced point in the cultural evolution of mankind, in which reason dominates over aggressive instincts.

The world war in pieces, with the many widespread situations of war and conflict, must find the workers' people of the world and their trade union organisations as protagonists of an international pressure movement, towards institutions and states, to counter the devastating destructive force that continues to claim victims worldwide among civilians and among workers and their families.

That is why we consider it urgent and indispensable that the European federation of industry – industriAll Europe, organise a meeting between affiliated organisations to discuss and identify initiatives to build bridges of peace between peoples by raising awareness among workers and the trade unions representing them.

Solidarity for strengthening trade union rights and fair practices in south-eastern Europe via more cooperation at multinationals

CONSIDERING that the strength of trade unions in Europe and at the national level is key to achieving a prosperous Europe based on a strong industry;

NOTING that multinational companies, together with the governments in the related countries, are increasing pressure and attacks on collective bargaining, social security systems, trade unions, jobs, and labour rights;

ACKNOWLEDGING that these multinationals apply systematic pressure on workers who want to unionise, through threats, intimidation, harassment, unjust dismissals, and forcing union members to resign;

We the undersigned trade unions HEREBY:

1. CALL UPON European-based multinational companies to respect labour rights and trade union recognition wherever they operate;
2. CONDEMN company strategies that lead to social dumping, deterioration of working conditions, and violation of trade union rights;
3. DEMAND strict application of the principle "equal work - equal pay";
4. CALL UPON the European institutions to improve their supervision and monitoring of the actions of European-based companies operating outside Europe;
5. CALL FOR strengthening mechanisms that hold multinational companies accountable for the actions of their subsidiaries and suppliers in South-Eastern European countries;
6. EMPHASISE the need for South-Eastern European countries to harmonise their labour laws with international norms and ensure their effective implementation;
7. PROPOSE that the single European minimum wage mechanism must be linked to the cost of living; and properly implemented according to the 2022/2041 Directive on adequate minimum wages in all countries of South Eastern Europe;
8. STRESS the importance of the implementation of fundamental human rights for fair and decent pay through collective labour agreements with their obligatory application.
9. REQUEST industriAll European Trade Union to set its future priorities to support South-Eastern European trade unions in:
 - a) Strengthening transnational solidarity and trade union cooperation within multinational companies;
 - b) Promoting to create an atmosphere of industrial relations in multinationals where organising is currently challenged;
 - c) Encouraging trade unions to protect workers' rights when investments come from companies outside the European Union;
 - d) Improving information sharing about agreements reached at European headquarters that affect subsidiaries in the region;

- e) Assisting collective bargaining, especially in countries where legislation opposes social dialogue in terms of the challenges faced in recent years of economic crisis;
- f) Supporting trade unions in addressing the challenges of Industry 4.0 and ensuring a "fair transition" to a green Europe.

The Congress HEREBY:

AFFIRMS that protecting the interests of workers requires the strengthening of solidarity throughout Europe while building strong national unions.

Youth employment, trade union repression and unionisation in industry

The organisations affiliated to industriAll Europe are concerned by the growing job insecurity of young people in industry, exacerbated by the widespread use of precarious contracts and increased trade union repression.

While it should offer a future and social emancipation, industry is undermined by temporary work and excessive sub-contracting, making any long-term projection impossible. Defending a strong European industry means strengthening trade unions, which are the only ones capable of protecting workers' rights and imposing new social progress.

Faced with these challenges, one hope is emerging: the (re)politicisation of trade unionism, illustrated, in France, by the massive mobilisation of young people faced with the rise of the far right after the European elections on 9 June. This political awakening reveals that, faced with a direct threat to their rights, young people are getting involved. This energy must be invested in our organisations to make them a lasting collective force.

This resurgence reinforces the role of trade unions as a counterweight and elevates the political debate. It is crucial to seize this momentum and fully integrate young people in the trade union fight and class struggle.

However, the situation of young workers remains alarming: their unemployment rate is twice that of the European average. The health crisis has aggravated their precariousness, marked by unemployment, poverty and uberisation, depriving them of social protection. When they try to organise, they face pressure, intimidation and unfair dismissal. Trade union repression constitutes a major obstacle to their engagement and must be fought to promote unionisation.

The unionisation of young people is essential to address their concerns and ensure the future of the trade union movement. Our organisations must remain indispensable forces for social justice and workers' rights.

The organisations affiliated to industriAll Europe call on this Congress to commit to:

- The protection of trade union activists, particularly young people, to guarantee involvement without the fear of reprisals
- The need for national and international legislation to guarantee trade union freedom
- The introduction of efficient support mechanisms for repressed activists
- The demand for stable and quality industrial employment for young people
- Massive development of unionisation of young people, with adapted tools
- The reinforcement of international solidarity against trade union repression
- The demand for amnesty for young people convicted due to their trade union involvement

The organisations affiliated to industriAll Europe call on all organisations to make youth employment and the fight against social and trade union repression a priority. Because a young worker exploited today is a broken employee tomorrow. Let us act now to impose a fair and progressive social model.

Transatlantic Relations

The transatlantic relationship between the European Union and the United States has been a pillar of global stability and shared prosperity in spite of regular trade frictions and political divergences regarding the role of international law and multilateralism. However, in light of growing trade tensions and escalating tariff disputes, as well as with US attempts to aggressively interfere with domestic policies, it is imperative that this relationship is rebalanced on the principles of fairness, mutual respect, and social justice. No one country should set the rules. Moreover, the uncertainty and unpredictable behaviour of the American administration should lead the EU to implement a de-risking policy to reduce Europe's strategic dependencies with the US through searching for new export markets and fostering internal European demand and supply diversification.

With fears of recession growing, the last thing workers need is another irresponsible battle between the US and Europe. The recent decision by the United States to impose tariffs—such as the 25% tariff on European automotive exports and on steel and aluminium—undermines the spirit of cooperation and risks pushing both economies toward recession. Even temporary waivers or delays in tariff implementation only add uncertainty for workers and industries already under pressure.

Trade wars and retaliatory tariffs are not only economically harmful but also socially destructive, risking extensive job losses and threatening the integrity of Europe's industrial base while raising costs and undermining competitiveness on the other side of the Atlantic. The EU must defend its economic interests, but it needs to go beyond mere retaliatory measures. Retaliatory tariffs risk triggering a cycle of escalation that benefits no one. The European Union must focus on decisive, strategic action to safeguard both industrial capacities and jobs. What is needed is a comprehensive and forward-thinking strategy, one that combines trade policy with large-scale investments to support European production, boost domestic demand, diversify trade partnerships and protect quality jobs.

We reaffirm the central role of trade unions in shaping this future. Workers must never be collateral damage in geopolitical disputes.

With this resolution, we urge European governments and the EU to:

- Develop a comprehensive industrial and trade strategy that moves beyond reactive tariffs and focuses on investment, innovation, sustainable development and job protection and creation through the further development of the internal market
- Expand instruments such as SURE, the EGF and ESF+ to support workers affected by trade shocks and transform them into precautionary tools to save jobs on the basis of social conditionalities
- Enhance strategic autonomy in critical sectors, such as energy-intensive, automotive, steel, and technology, reducing reliance on vulnerable trade relationships
- Accelerate efforts to diversify and cooperate with trade partners who are willing to engage in fair and socially responsible Free Trade Agreements based on universal rules, respect of workers' rights and sustainability rules, with the involvement of trade unions

- Foster a global agenda to (re)build a multilateral fair-trade regime and related institutions
- To work towards a progressive, international rules-based system, with a fully functioning World Trade Organisation (WTO)
- Increase commitment from the EU and the US to find a positive outcome in relation to the Global Agreement on Sustainable Steel and Aluminium
- Continue to inform and consult trade unions on relevant trade issues affecting transatlantic relations
- Pursue a coherent industrial policy in order to strengthen Europe as a business location in international competition, e.g. by reducing energy costs or European investment programs to promote transformation

Solidarity Statement: In Solidarity with LGBTI+ People in Hungary

The Hungarian Parliament has passed a law empowering local authorities to ban Pride marches and other public LGBTI+ events and allowed the use of facial recognition to identify protestors, significantly restricting freedom of assembly and expression in a move that starkly contradicts basic democratic principles and EU values.

This legislation is not only an attack on LGBTI+ people, but a direct assault on freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, and human dignity. As reported by ILGA-Europe and other human rights defenders, these developments represent a dangerous trend of shrinking space for civil society and rising authoritarianism. These actions have drawn strong criticism from international human rights bodies highlighting Hungary's alarming drift away from democratic norms.

Trade unions have a responsibility to stand up for equality, inclusion, and human rights for all. In an environment of repression and fear, LGBTI+ trade union members, workers and their families are especially vulnerable, facing discrimination not only in society but also in the workplace.

This must stop.

IndustriAll Europe stands with the LGBTI+ community in Hungary and across Europe.

We call on the Hungarian Government to:

- Immediately repeal discriminatory laws that target LGBTI+ people and restrict freedom of assembly.
- Guarantee the full protection of human rights and democratic freedoms, including the right to peaceful protest and Pride marches.
- Cease state-sponsored homo- and transphobic rhetoric and ensure safe space for civil society and inclusive and safe workplaces for all.
- Uphold its obligations under EU law and international human rights conventions.

IndustriAll Europe expresses its deepest concern and strongest condemnation of the escalating attacks against the fundamental rights and freedoms of LGBTI+ people in Hungary, and stands united in the fight for equality, democracy, and freedom – today and always.

Gaza

There has been catastrophic disregard for the principles of international humanitarian law and 90% of the population of Gaza has been internally displaced, some several times. Most workplaces in Gaza have been devastated and thousands of workers have been killed at their workplace, including more than 1000 healthcare workers.

Since 2 March 2025, Israeli authorities have imposed a full blockade on Gaza, bringing to a near-standstill the humanitarian efforts to protect and assist civilians through the provision of commodities. Since 18 March 2025, Israeli forces have escalated bombardments from the air, land and sea across the Gaza Strip and expanded ground operations. This has resulted in hundreds of casualties and the destruction of civilian infrastructure.

The whole population of Gaza is affected by multidimensional poverty and collective punishment. The ongoing atrocities in Gaza and the use of starvation as a weapon are war crimes and are currently being addressed as potential genocide by the International Court of Justice. This must be stopped immediately and it is the obligation of the EU and its member states to take actions to stop this. There is an urgent need for access to humanitarian aid and the lifting of the blockade of the Gaza Strip.

Parts of the right-wing Israeli Government openly seek the expulsion of Palestinians from the Gaza Strip as well as a permanent occupation and settlement.

At its meeting on 13 and 14 December 2023, industriAll Europe's Executive Committee had already taken a clear position on the conflict, which is still valid.

The immeasurable suffering of the people in the Gaza Strip moves many people around the world. But justified criticism must not turn into anti-Semitism. The safety of Jews must not be linked to Israeli warfare. Anti-Semitic slogans and attacks must be condemned in the strongest possible terms. The security of Jewish life must be guaranteed in every country.

Conversely, not every form of solidarity with the people of Palestine should be placed under general suspicion. Criticism of the Israeli Government's actions is not the same as anti-Semitism – just as solidarity with Palestinians does not mean support for Hamas.

The Palestinians have a right to live in peace, dignity and in an independent state.

Congress demands the end of all violation of human rights by all parties and an immediate cease-fire.

Palestine has been occupied since 1967. Therefore, Congress re-iterates its call for a just solution in accordance with UN resolutions, the recognition of a Palestinian state and an end to the illegal military occupation.

Congress urges the European Union to suspend arms deliveries and its Association Agreement with Israel, in accordance with Article 2 on the respect for human rights.

Congress supports all ongoing investigations of the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Congress calls for compliance with the International Court of Justice (ICJ) opinion on the occupation of Palestinian territory, in relation to trade with Israeli settlements in occupied Palestinian territory.

Congress unreservedly condemns all forms of violence targeting any segment of the civilian population and calls for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire. Every life matters, and all war crimes, wherever they have been committed, are unacceptable.

Congress wholeheartedly condemns Hamas' brutal terrorist attacks of October 7th. The cruelty of the attack and hostage-taking by the terrorist organisation Hamas is indescribable and in no way justifiable.

Congress condemns every violation of international humanitarian law and the bombing of civilian populations in this conflict. The reaction of the Israeli Government has provoked a humanitarian crisis of devastating impact for the population living in the Gaza Strip and the occupied West Bank. This conflict is a humanitarian crisis. With every passing day, the humanitarian catastrophe worsens.

Congress calls for humanitarian corridors through the Gaza Strip and the occupied West Bank to facilitate the supply of essential goods and services.

It is time for diplomacy. Congress calls on the European Union and European governments to intensify their work to stop the war, ensure the release of all hostages and facilitate a path towards a just peace and Two-State Solution.

As trade unionists, we condemn the escalation of antisemitism and Islamophobia around the world and strongly oppose war, violence and all forms of racism. We want peace and justice for all.

Urgency of an action plan for quality industrial jobs and a strong and ambitious reindustrialisation

Not a week goes by without a new announcement of a restructuring, closure or social breakdown of all kinds, not only within the Benelux, but also, and even more so, across all of Europe. A cascade of job losses is affecting entire value chains.

The figures are alarming:

- The EU has lost almost one million jobs in the manufacturing sector, between 2019 and 2023. The manufacturing sector is today one of the hardest hit, with the number of jobs lost due to corporate restructuring tripling in the first five months of 2025 compared to the same period in 2022.
- 25% of European industrial companies are expected to undergo major restructuring in the coming months.
- *“Every day in Europe, around 500 skilled workers in the manufacturing sector lose their livelihoods with no prospect of alternative employment”* (Esther Lynch, ETUC, 12/05/2025)

European workers are facing a storm that has emerged on two fronts:

- On the one hand, the one linked to climate and technological challenges;
- On the other hand, the one linked to geopolitical tensions, new balances of power and a trade war between blocs in which Europe is struggling to find its place.

Furthermore, we know that never before has so much money been spent by multinationals, Big Tech, and fossil fuel lobby groups on lobbying activities targeting European policymakers. Last year, more than €343 million was spent by companies that report allocating more than €1 million a year to lobbying. This represents an increase of one third compared to 2020 (and we are aware that this is a blatant underestimation).

We know the result of this strengthened alliance of employers: deregulation and dismantling of social correction mechanisms in the name of preserving European competitiveness (e.g. the Omnibus package).

What's more, the employers' side is supported by our increasingly right-wing governments, which are doing nothing but opting for bad decisions like austerity and deregulation. At the same time, while showing ingenuity in order to evade tax, companies have never paid out as many dividends to their shareholders as they did this year.

It is obvious that the 'Just Transition' is a priority area for our trade union organisations and we fully subscribe to the Strategic Plan that will be debated and approved at the Congress in Budapest. With the nuance and expectations outlined by the ETUC in its press release of 12/5/2025:

“Trade unions are always favourable to genuine social dialogue, but the time for words and speeches is over. The Commission must present a European industrial plan aimed at protecting and creating new, quality jobs by investing in our industries.”

It is also URGENT that we, as representatives of European industrial workers, express ourselves with one voice, more clearly and more united.

The coming months will be decisive for European workers.

To achieve this, we need a stronger and more assertive industriAll Europe, around which we must unite!

We expect our European organisation to:

- Intensify, more than ever, the fluidity of communication between us;
- Make our voice heard even more clearly by our European elected representatives, in discussion forums and the lobbying groups in which it participates;
- Clearly demands investment in industry and R&D;
- Encourages a coordinated action plan across all our regions for the promotion and defence of:
 - Our quality jobs
 - Fair wages
 - Fair taxation
 - Decent pensions
 - A European industrial plan that rises to the scale of today's challenges rather than a race towards a war economy
 - Democracy both in the workplace and in society
 - Professional training that ensures the quality of our workforce, which has up to now been renowned
- Advocates for an employment protection mechanism, similar to the SURE programme which helped save jobs during the pandemic, in order to prevent irreversible losses of our industrial capacity;
- Encourages more support measures for those who lose their jobs despite everything. We need to keep our highly-skilled workforce already prepared for the challenges of tomorrow - not sacrifice them or let them to evaporate into thin air.
- Strengthens and supports the workers' representatives on EWCs during restructurings, in their struggle to maintain jobs and mutual solidarity
- Compiles a detailed study of our sectors
 - Development/industrial decline
 - Job creation/job losses
 - Catalogue of advancements/social regressions
- Conducts a review of union strategy over the past two years
- But also opposes any form of austerity and deregulation of the labour market and workers' social protection systems

We need to provide the workers we represent with trade union answers to the problems they face today. We must fight for a future for our sectors and their value chains, and stop the current haemorrhaging.

It is time to send a stronger signal and to build a more powerful counterforce with our members, our activists, the unions of the Member States and OUR European federation, industriAll Europe.

Trade unions stand for fundamental democratic rights and principles

At the industriAll Europe 2025 Congress, we express our commitment to democracy and social dialogue on behalf of more than 200 organisations and 7 million members in 39 countries. We stand in solidarity and support our affiliates in all countries.

- where fundamental civil rights, such as the right to freedom of assembly and association, are violated
- where workers' rights are curtailed
- where trade unions are made more difficult or even impossible to operate, whether in the competitive or public sectors

These statements are particularly valid for Hungary, the host country of our Congress, where government measures have significantly weakened workers' advocacy positions in recent years. The country has one of the most employer-friendly labour codes, the strike law that makes strikes difficult or impossible, and there are practically no substantive sanctions for employer violations, thus increasing workplace intimidation.

In Hungary, the government's deliberate dismantling of social dialogue - at national, sectoral and company level - has led to a decline in the number of collective agreements and a rise in unilateral employer decisions.

We are increasingly faced with:

- the unlawful dismissal of trade union officials
- the disregard of trade union initiatives
- the violation of equal opportunities in the workplace

The member organisations of industriAll Europe stand united with the Hungarian trade unions and demand:

- the restoration of the right to strike and assembly
- the cessation of threats against NGOs
- the substantive transformation and operation of the interest reconciliation system
- that employers fully respect the right of workers to organise