



EFFAT

EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND TOURISM TRADE UNIONS

Statement of the EFFAT Youth Bureau

International Youth day takes place on August 12th. It's goal is to raise global awareness among young people, around the important role they play in society together with a range of issues that they need to confront. Some of the issues young people in Europe are faced with are as follows, high rates of unemployment, emigration, low levels of participation in community politics and high rates of precarious employment.

The idea around initiating International youth day took place back in 1999 at the UN general assembly. That same year, on the 17th of December they adopted the International Youth conference recommendation, that International Youth day should be declared as the 12th of August. Each year International Youth day has a different theme, this year's theme is "Youth Engagement for global action" This theme is about promoting youth engagement at a number of different levels, such as local, national and global levels. The term 'youth' is defined as ranging in age between 15 and 30 years. On international youth day, we celebrate the involvement of young people in movements for change, and what they have achieved in the process.

Establishing a platform for young people to voice their opinion and analysis of how society should be arranged is essential for the creation of a genuine participatory democracy. It is fair to say that EFFAT has gained significant ground in its inclusion of young people, in its structures and decision-making bodies following the last congress in Zagreb in 2019. This effect relayed a strong message to EFFAT affiliates on the importance of including the voice of young people in trade union activities. As we look forward to International Youth day, we pay our respects and gratitude to all the activists, being very mindful they commit so much of their free time to the work of trade union activities. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to exceptional circumstances which in turn has greatly impacted on the labour market, in particular the issue of youth employment throughout Europe. According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), Young people have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic in terms of limited employment opportunities and the disruption of their education and training.

Throughout the pandemic the trade union movement has proven to be a vital resource for workers in terms of addressing the health and safety needs of workers across the board. In addition, it has played a pivotal role in providing advice and support to workers pertaining to issues of employment. Trade unions are best placed to impart critical knowledge and skills to young workers in the post COVID labour market.

EFFAT in many respects can be regarded as a model of good practice when it comes to communicating relevant information and networking and negotiating on behalf of and representing young workers. Our participation with EFFAT has led to a heightened awareness of the utmost need to draw attention to the deficits that exist in terms of youth participation in European trade unions and how this needs to be addressed in order to foster the growth and development of the movement into the future.

Young people have so much to offer to the trade union movement in terms of their particular life experiences, their passion and idealism. Trade unions have a very important role in harnessing the



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creative energy of young people and helping them to generate a greater sense of meaning and ownership of their working lives.

We would like to salute all young trade union activists across Europe and the World who commit themselves tirelessly to the ongoing cause of workers' rights. In solidarity, we support you in the struggle!

**UNITED
NATIONS** **INTERNATIONAL
YOUTH DAY**

**2020
YOUTH ENGAGEMENT
FOR GLOBAL ACTION**