

FDT ACTION PLAN

2025-2027

In a political context, which is driven by centre-right forces, by increased geopolitical tensions, by a focus on simplification the FDT sector will have to cope with many challenges: we will have to defend already adopted progressive European regulations (Due Diligence (CSDDD) and the Reporting Directive, as well as the Green Deal); we will have to actively intervene in ongoing legislative processes (Unfair Trade Practices; Mercosur); we will continue with the projects we have already started (our demands on subcontracting and labour intermediaries; meat and tobacco activities); we will put into practice initiatives adopted at the EFFAT Congress (water; migrant workforce) and we will compile an overview of existing European regulations in our sector and their relevance for workers. We will also apply for a new EU project ("The food sector a strategic sector for Europe").

Fighting Forward: For People and the Planet

Green Deal, industrial policy and just transition

We will examine the EU Commission's proposals and pay attention that:

- Our just transition demands are taken up including the demand for a Just Transition framework and a Just Transition Directive to anticipate change.
- Further promote EFFAT demands against shareholder value maximisation and power concentration.
- The FDT sectors and its workers are considered in all industrial policy initiatives, and.
- that any allocation of public funding is linked to social conditionalities (job security, quality job creation, investment in upskilling and reskilling as well as respect for collective bargaining)
- We will assess the impact of AI in our sector.

Climate change - the resource water and the consequences on employment and workers

As decided by the VI EFFAT Congress "EFFAT will launch a strategic discussion on the use of water in our sectors and the impact of water scarcity, building on the inspiring work already undertaken by some affiliates. EFFAT will develop its position on the sustainable use of water resources". We will therefore:

- Work towards an EFFAT position on sustainable use of water resources including water quality, rights to water, water scarcity, water competition and the impact on the workforce.
- Work on a Directive on maximum working temperatures and extreme weather events that should not only focus on work outside but as well on factory workers.

Due Diligence

Under the pretext of simplification, the European Commission reopened end February 2025 various directives and regulations under the heading "omnibus package". According to the announcement, these were intended to harmonise reporting obligations (CSDDD, CSRD, taxonomy). However, the proposal now deeply interferes with the regulatory substance of those legislations, which had been adopted and closed in the last mandate.

- In the coming months, EFFAT will fight these changes which are also detrimental for the FDT sector.
- We will make it clear in the political debate on the Omnibus why the EU Commission's proposals effectively undermine the purpose of the different regulations and are to the detriment of workers here and worldwide.

Mercosur: fight against the present agreement and in favour of fair trade

The EU-Mercosur agreement as negotiated does not improve any of the points that EFFAT opposed with the resolution unanimously adopted at EFFAT Congress in November 2024.

- The FDT sector will work together with the other EFFAT sectors and committees, as well as with European allies, to ensure that this specific agreement is not voted through neither in Council nor in the European Parliament. We will also take appropriate initiatives at national level.
- EFFAT will gather data and information showing the negative effect on workers in our sectors.
- EFFAT will work towards a joint understanding of the "rebalancing mechanism", included for the first time in an FTA.
- EFFAT will work together with the IUF on the Mercosur agreement and its effects for both continents.

Fighting forward: For a Fair Europe for workers

Improve working conditions for migrant workers within the EU and from third countries

Migrant workers, who mainly work in so-called low skilled positions, are often denied basic labour rights: They are paid less, often must work longer hours and are housed in unacceptable conditions. The migration movements and legal status of mobile workers are often unclear.

To work alongside migrant workers to improve their working and living conditions in the respective target countries, the sector will.

- develop an overview of migration movements and countries of origin as well as the legal basis of mobility,
- identify regulatory gaps in European law and/or lack of control of the Member States
- actively work to expand the network of EU-funded trade union counselling
- assess the possibility to enable cross-border membership of trade unions.
- look into the housing conditions.
- exchange of good practices organising migrant workers in cooperation with work done by the EFFAT working group on organising and trade union renewal

EFFAT demand of an EU Directive on labour intermediaries and fair working conditions across subcontracting chains

We will continue our work started under the meat project through:

- EFFAT workinggroup on intermediaries and subcontracting, which will reflect on this piece of legislation, build strategies how to place this demand on the EU agenda and keep the momentum around this issue.
- EFFAT will keep the political pressure high on the EU institutions and will further promote its demand for an EU Directive on labour intermediaries and fair working conditions across subcontracting chains.
- EFFAT will take an active role in the European Parliament INI report on subcontracting and intermediaries.
- EFFAT will organise a high-level event to present its demands on subcontracting and intermediaries.
- We will continue to collect concrete examples from national level showing the urgent need to regulate subcontracting and intermediaries on Europe level.

Unfair trading practices Directive

As decided at Congress “EFFAT will advocate for the improvement of the Unfair Trading Practices Directive including a ban on sales below production costs”.

This Directive is an important instrument when it comes to countering the price pressure on suppliers in the agricultural and food sector. An improved Directive would counter one of the employers' preferred arguments in collective bargaining (*"A pay rise is not possible because the retailers are squeezing us with unfair practices"*)

- To come to an EFFAT position on at least the following key points:
 - Scope: the protective effect of the directive must apply to all companies whatever their size
 - All unfair trading practices must be prohibited through a general clause, specifically selling below production cost must be prohibited.
 - More inspections and more effective enforcement are needed.
- To campaign for this position - advocacy towards the European policy makers
- To work towards a joint position at least on the scope with FoodDrinkEurope
- Take an active role in the work of the EU Agri-Food Chain Observatory

Continuation of the special projects in the meat industry and tobacco

The **meat project** has showed that trade union action was central to ensuring better labour standards across the meat industry. The project has led to greater transparency on working conditions across countries, cross-border cooperation and ultimately to joint demands.

- We will continue these efforts through regular dialogue online or at the FDT sector General Assembly.
- Monitoring ongoing organising efforts, primarily the one in Danish Crown

The **tobacco project** has started its work understanding the transformation of the tobacco sector and the impact on employment and the jobs of the future.

- The results will be analysed together with the Steering Committee and recommendations will be developed for a just transition of the sector.
- Taking an active role in the upcoming revision of the Tobacco Product Directive and other Directives important for the sector

Fighting forward: For a strong EFFAT

Overview on existing European regulations in our sectors and their effect on the workforce

The aim is to provide workers with an easy-to-understand overview that enables them to understand European legislation and recognise the added value for them.

Setting up new EWCs in our FDT sectors

In our FDT sectors we currently have around 130 EWCs coordinated by EFFAT. We will continue our efforts in setting up new EWCs, coordinate the existing ones and improve the EWC work where needed.

Organising and capacity building

EFFAT will continue its efforts on organising and capacity building with a specific focus on the meat sector in Central and Eastern Europe. We will learn from the achievements through organising in Danish Crown and continue those efforts.

Application for a new EU project entitled "The food sector a strategic sector for Europe".

This project would run for 24 months in 2026 and 2027. It would allow us to work on the issues of this Action Plan.

The methodology of this project would be a) to develop expertise on the question: "What disrupts the resilience of the food sector now and in the future" and b) to develop scenarios for the different possible development paths with a special focus on working conditions and employment.