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EFFAT Resolution on Support for Upcoming Strikes and Mobilisations

Adopted at the EFFAT Executive Committee on 4-5 November 2026.

Introduction

With a series of strike actions planned across Europe throughout November, EFFAT expresses its full support for all affiliates who will be taking to the streets. As the cost-of-living crisis continues with no end in sight, we stand in total solidarity with every worker who is striking.

Since the energy crisis of 2022, workers across Europe have faced a sharp increase in the cost of living, from energy bills and food prices to rent and everyday essentials. Although inflation has since slowed, prices remain considerably higher than before the crisis. Meanwhile, wages have, to a large extent, failed to keep pace with inflation, resulting in a significant loss of purchasing power. Especially workers in the sectors EFFAT represents, food, agriculture, tourism and domestic work, have been particularly hard hit, as many were already among the lowest paid.

Although real wages have started to recover, the European Commission forecasts that by 2026 they will be only 1.4% higher than in 2019, after taking inflation into account. This represents almost no improvement in workers' purchasing power over seven years. At the same time, housing has become increasingly unaffordable: between 2010 and 2024, housing prices across the EU increased by 53% and rents by 25%, significantly outpacing the overall increase in consumer prices.

Yet, while workers struggle to make ends meet, an increasing share of the wealth generated by economic activity is being channelled towards shareholders. Evidence already gathered by EFFAT on financialisation in its sectors highlights how dividends and share buybacks can take priority over investment in workers, decent working conditions, and long-term productive capacity. This is part of a wider European trend. Research commissioned by the ETUC and conducted by University College London shows that, among 300 of Europe's largest listed non-financial companies, the share of net profits distributed to shareholders through dividends and share buybacks rose from 27% in 2000 to 68% in 2024, while net investment as a share of gross profits fell from 18.9% to 7.4%.

This model prioritises short-term shareholder returns over workers' interests and the long-term prosperity of the European economy. Europe cannot build sustainable competitiveness and shared prosperity while allowing financial returns to take precedence over people, decent work and productive investment.

A Wave of Cost-of-Living Strikes Across Europe

Rather than seeking to ease this burden, European governments have too often chosen austerity, cutting the very public services on which working people depend. It is therefore no surprise that discontent has grown, giving rise to demonstrations and strikes that the trade union movement is leading in many countries across Europe. This mobilisation has been accompanied by a growing awareness and engagement among young people, who are among the most affected as they face insecure work, unaffordable housing, and diminishing prospects.

Throughout November, our affiliates, together with their respective confederations, have called strikes and mobilisations to demand that their governments take real and lasting action to end the cost-of-living crisis for all workers, young and old alike. These demands include fair wages, strong protection of workers' rights, and properly funded public services.

The strikes planned by our affiliates include:

France – 5 November: French trade unions have called for a nationwide day of strikes and demonstrations over wages, public services, employment, and industry.

Spain – 11 November: The trade union confederations CCOO and UGT have called a 24-hour general strike, supported by other unions, focusing on the housing crisis, wages and workers' rights. It will be the first general strike jointly backed by CCOO and UGT in 14 years.

Italy: Italian Trade Unions are also mobilising against the cost-of-living crisis with different initiatives that will take place over the upcoming weeks. CGIL has called a nationwide general strike involving workers in both the public and private sectors on 20 November, demanding fairer wages, stronger purchasing power, and better social protection. At the same time CISL have launched the initiative *"Il Patto che unisce" (The Pact that Brings People Together)* in October 2026. The campaign aims to promote a social pact for employment, social cohesion and economic growth, bringing together trade unions, employers, institutions and civil society through social dialogue, negotiation and shared responsibility in a time of significant economic and social challenges. Meanwhile, UIL has expressed a positive assessment of certain measures included in the Budget Law, particularly the tax relief on contractual wage increases. However, it is also planning local-level mobilisations to call for a stronger social dimension in the Budget Law, with particular emphasis on local taxation and its impact on workers and households.

Portugal: On 21 November, CGTP has announced a strike and demonstration.

Belgium: A national Demonstration has been jointly announced by ABVV-FGTB, ACV-CSC and SYNOVA for 23 November.

EFFAT's Demands and Solidarity

These mobilisations build on a wider wave of trade union action taking place across Europe in recent weeks and months. From Belgium and Bulgaria to Germany, Serbia, Ireland, and Portugal, workers have taken to the streets and organised industrial action to make their voices heard. A common thread runs through all these mobilisations and initiatives: the

demand for fairer wages, stronger social protection, affordable living and housing conditions, and decisive action to tackle the cost-of-living crisis.

EFFAT pledges its full support to our brothers and sisters who are joining these strikes and mobilisations. We send them our solidarity and call on governments across Europe and the EU Institutions to listen to their demands and act without delay. Especially given that the jobs of those working in agriculture, the agri-food industry, and tour-ism are indispensable to our society and should be reflected as such, with fairer wages, better working conditions, and genuine recognition.

We send them our solidarity and call on governments across Europe and the EU Institutions to listen to their demands and act without delay. Workers must not be left to pay the price of economic crises and geopolitical instability.

EFFAT also stands in solidarity with young people and workers across Europe who are raising their voices and taking action peacefully for a fairer, more inclusive and more social Europe.

We also stand firmly against police violence, repression and the criminalisation of those who exercise their fundamental right to protest.

We are also calling for European and national public funding to be contingent on respect for workers' rights, quality jobs, and support for just transitions. A fairer Europe is indeed possi-ble, but it must put workers, decent work and people's living standards first.