

Ensuring transformation in all industrial sectors and achieving an economically and socially just transition.

The experience of social dialogue in Spain in recent years has shown us that the success in ensuring the necessary transformation in all industrial sectors and achieving a socially and economically just transition, especially in a context of crisis like the current one, lies in opting for principles and measures that are radically different from those imposed during the financial and economic crises of 2008 and 2011.

Those measures, which were based on the fundamental principle of increasing business competitiveness by reducing labour costs, placed the burden of the crisis on workers and led to an increase in poverty and social inequality.

Spain was a clear example of how these measures not only impoverished the working class, but also led to a serious worsening of their working conditions and a loss of social rights.

Social dialogue was frequently ignored, the legally binding force of collective agreements was weakened, the bargaining power of workers' representatives and their influence on the establishment of fairer and more equitable working conditions was limited, and, in short, the collective bargaining system was dismantled in order to devalue wages and facilitate the abusive and unilateral use of labour flexibility in favour of the company.

This meant a backward step in labour and social terms in our country, which it has taken us 10 years to reverse.

Other measures have proved to be not only possible, but much more successful in achieving the desired economic transformation, but also inclusive and fair growth, which benefits society as a whole.

The struggle of the trade union organisations, the work with employers and the will for dialogue and consensus of the progressive government of our country are challenging the erroneous postulates and dogmas of austerity, of social austerity, if one wishes, of a decade ago, by opting for another way of facing the challenges of the crisis and the transformation of the industrial and labour world.

Spain is growing economically, socially and democratically. The promotion of social dialogue and the strengthening of collective bargaining are working to achieve greater competitiveness, to create quality and stable employment. To dignify wages and increase domestic consumption. To combine labour flexibility that balances the interests of workers and companies. For internal flexibility as a tool for maintaining jobs in view of future crises, to the detriment of dismissal. Or for a social protection system that avoids falling into poverty and increasing social inequality.

The result of this commitment is particularly promising. The data show that the reforms carried out are producing a significant reduction in the rate of temporary employment and a

remarkable creation of stable employment, the quality of labour relations is improving, especially for young people and women, wage devaluation is being prevented and working conditions are improving. These are win-win policies and dialogue.

This shows that economic crises and industrial transformation can and must be tackled in a balanced and fair way, avoiding the mistakes of the past. This means placing social policy at the heart of all policies; placing social rights and the right of working people to live in dignity at the centre of economic and industrial policy. Let us not forget a very important part of the American commitment to reduce inflation: financial support subject to the condition of strengthening the participation of working people. Trade union reinforcement. Collective bargaining.

Having lived through the disastrous experiences of 2010 and seeing the positive effects of this way of working together, I would like to conclude by stressing the value of the latter in order to grow and become more resilient. Also democratically. If with those measures we saw the seeds of Euroscepticism, with these we see the future of a bright, inclusive and strengthened Europe.