



ETUC Statement in protection of labour law standards and workers' interests in Latvia

Adopted at the Executive Committee meeting of 10-11 March 2026

The ETUC expresses deep concerns regarding Labour law amendments which are currently discussed by the Parliament of Latvia (Saeima).

The ETUC strongly invites the deputies of the Parliament to reject the amendments to the labour law, which reduce overtime payment by a half, limit ultra-activity of collective agreements and diminish the protection for trade union members against discrimination through dismissal, the latter being good case practice that Latvia can be proud of. The proposed amendments lack balance of interests, do not ensure general protection of workers and do not compensate workers for deteriorating working standards. The ETUC recalls that high standards in the times of uncertainties are needed for workers to feel solidarity in building a strong and resilient economy.

Meaningful competitiveness cannot be built on the backs of workers through reducing labour costs and workers' income. As evidenced by Eurostat, in 2024 average labour cost per hour worked in Latvia was 15.1 euro, the fourth lowest in EU and more than two times lower than the EU average, which stood at 33.5 Euro. Calculations by trade unions show that for instance nurse assistants in the health care sector would lose up to 173 Euro of their monthly income if the overtime rates are reduced, as proposed.

Latvia, as all member states of the European Union, should aim towards upwards convergence and a strong European social economy model driven by social dialogue and collective bargaining. Therefore, the ETUC expresses its full support to Latvian trade unions to protect regulation that facilitates overtime rate setting in a balanced manner, through collective bargaining.

The ETUC calls on the Parliament to pay attention to the trade union initiative, which collected more than 18000 signatures just in 3 days, demonstrating a strong workers' voice requesting to protect current overtime payment.