



The Role of Social Dialogue

INTRODUCTION

This briefing note outlines the actions of trade unions, their agreements and the social dialogue outcomes aimed at solidarity actions for Ukraine. It explains the role social dialogue is playing in contributing to responding to this crisis, protecting workers, their health and safety, jobs and livelihoods as well as measures for those who have lost their jobs.

This dramatic situation in Ukraine has resulted in unprecedented measures at both European, national and local levels in an attempt to mitigate the potentially devastating impact on societies.

At national level, the trade unions have initiated actions to protect those affected and have adopted measures with employers and public authorities to deal with the fallout of the war. The examples below show how trade unions have been acting quickly to seek agreements to protect those fleeing war (e.g. Czech Republic and Denmark), to integrate refugees into labour markets (e.g. Bulgaria, France and Germany), to coordinate fundraising and humanitarian aid efforts (e.g. Ireland, Hungary, and Poland) and to mitigate against the economic and social impact of the war and the sanctions (e.g. Spain and Italy). Depending on national contexts, the role of trade unions and employers differs by country.

At European level, the Social Partners have already adopted a joint statement on the Russian invasion of Ukraine condemning the unprovoked attack on the territorial integrity of Ukraine currently underway and proposing measures. [Statement of the EU cross-industry social partners on the Russian invasion of Ukraine | ETUC](#). The European Trade Union Federations have produced recommendations to European Works Council on how to act regarding the war in Ukraine.

This briefing note was originally produced on 18 March 2022 and updated on 07 April 2022 to take account of recent developments from Italy and Ireland.

One note of caution, this briefing note captures a dynamic situation which is subject to ongoing change. We therefore kindly ask affiliates to provide us with further information on any further related measures that have been introduced in your country so that we can update this briefing note.



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Belgium (FGTB)

- ***Have social dialogue discussions opened with employers on the implementation of measures aimed to address the impact of the attack on Ukraine?***
- ***What are the topics of the Social Dialogue discussions with employers?***

In the framework of a cooperation between the economic and social Councils of the European Union, a joint declaration on the situation in the Ukraine has been drawn up.

The Councils hosting the discussions between Belgian trade unions and employers (National Labour Council and Central Economic Council) were consulted on this Declaration.

The FGTB has expressed its concern that this Declaration addresses the issue of European resilience too briefly and above all without any request to mobilize social dialogue to deal with the impact of the war in matters that still concern the core business of these European social/economic Councils: energy prices, the situation of Ukrainian workers in the EU, supply problems and/or of trade flows.

This remark was transmitted by the National Labour Council without leading to a change in the text.

FGTB also regrets that the question of the effectiveness of sanctions against oligarchs in a context of deficient global financial regulation was not addressed in the Declaration.

- ***Have social dialogue discussions opened with National Authorities on the implementation of measures to address the impact of the attack on Ukraine?***
- ***What are the topics of the Social Dialogue discussions with National Authorities?***

The war in Ukraine presents a danger and a negative impact on prices and energy supply to the EU, which is essential for its objectives of reindustrialisation, strategic autonomy and climate transition.

It is more than ever urgent that the European Commission puts in place international trade policies that ensure diversification, price and energy supply.

The supply of energy materials is also regulated by the World Trade Organization. But the provisions of the ECT (Energy Charter Treaty) on transit and transport can offer more security of supply and prices, by detailing the WTO rules. In that respect the ECT stipulates that a contracting party cannot use taxes on-neither prevent the maintenance of the transit/transport infrastructure for the purpose of limiting the supply of raw materials.

If the exit from the Treaty is on the table (following pressure from certain member states or an expected opinion from the Court of Justice), this exit cannot be done in a rash manner. The European Commission must assess the impact and accompany it with the implementation of



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an external trade policy aimed at diversification and guaranteeing prices and supply at a level of at least equivalent than the ECT.

This is a topic the FGTB discussed in the dialogue with national authorities (Members of Parliament and Cabinets of Ministers).

Bulgaria (CITUB)

- ***Have social dialogue discussions opened with employers on the implementation of measures aimed to address the impact of the attack on Ukraine?***

Yes, trade unions and employers organisations in the food industry have discussed the consequences of the war in Ukraine to the Bulgarian companies. Social partners prepared a joint letter to the Prime Minister expressing their concerns about future gas supply and possible staff reduction. Social partners insist on receiving information on gas quantities in reserve in case of suspension of supplies and the mechanism for distributing the reserve towards the economy as a whole and the food industry in particular.

- ***What are the topics of the Social Dialogue discussions with employers?***

Topics discussed include the gas supply to food producers, the risk of staff reduction and the sustainability of food supply.

- ***Have social dialogue discussions opened with National Authorities on the implementation of measures to address the impact of the attack on Ukraine?***

Yes. The Association of Bulgarian Employers' Organizations (ABEO)¹ presented an official letter to the Bulgarian Prime Minister at the end of February 2022. The letter holds a view that employers can employ Ukrainian citizens arriving in Bulgaria. A follow-up meeting between the Minister of Innovation and growth and the representatives of ABEO confirmed the government willingness to include employers' organizations in the integration process of Ukrainian refugees.

The Confederation of Independent Trade Union in Bulgaria (CITUB) is expected to open discussions with national authorities on labour market integration of Ukrainians.

- ***What are the topics of the Social Dialogue discussions with National Authorities?***

The topic introduced by ABEO is focused on the provision of employment opportunities to the Ukrainians residing in Bulgaria. Based on previous analyses of the national labour market trends, ABEO considers that 200,000 Ukrainians can be employed. Current normative requirements stipulate that persons in a procedure for granting international protection have

¹ The Association of Bulgarian Employers' Organizations was established in 1995 as an association of officially recognized as representative organizations of employers in the Republic of Bulgaria. Currently AOB represents four employers' organizations: BICA, BIA, BCCI and CEIBG.



the right to work for 3 months after submitting the application for protection under Art. 29 (3) of the Asylum and Refugees Act. ABEO insists that the Bulgarian government should develop a program allowing faster acquisition of refugee/ humanitarian status for Ukrainian citizens. The program can also support participating employers by paying part of the means of subsistence for a certain period of time.

The March meeting between the Minister of Innovation and growth and ABEO representatives focused on the employment provision to Ukrainians. Both parties decided to establish a National Coordination Headquarters in order to facilitate labour market inclusion. Other measures discussed include the alleviation of registration conditions to the Ukrainians and the launch of website presenting the refugees available jobs in Bulgaria.

Labour market integration of arriving Ukrainians is highlighted by CITUB as well. CITUB stressed that the National Tripartite Agreement between the national representative organizations of workers, employers and the government signed in June 2020 provides for development of a program for settlement of third-country nationals with Bulgarian origin. The most recent estimates of CITUB show that up to BGN 300 million (EUR 150 million) will be needed to ensure settlement of 100,000 arrivals in Bulgaria.

We should emphasise that some of the measures to be implemented require changes in legislation or the adoption of emergency legislation regulating, for example, the rapid settlement of Ukrainian citizens on the Bulgarian labor market. This will be the reason for conducting a consensual social dialogue in order to quickly adopt and implement new norms. Due to the short period since the beginning of the military conflict, domestic issues have been discussed so far in the Economic and Social Council of the Republic of Bulgaria, but not in the National Council for Tripartite Cooperation.

Czech Republic (CMKOS)

- ***Have social dialogue discussions opened with employers on the implementation of measures aimed to address the impact of the attack on Ukraine?***

Yes. Most of the discussion is taking place at company level. When it comes to any measures of a larger scale, the talks are held at the tripartite meetings. Several irregular ad hoc meetings have been scheduled over the recent few weeks.

- ***What are the topics of the Social Dialogue discussions with employers?***

Gathering and coordinating the distribution of humanitarian aid, mitigating the impacts of Ukrainian men leaving employment and moving to Ukraine to fight, assistance for refugees interested in participating in the Czech labour market, protection of refugees from exploitation by illegal and grey market actors.



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- ***Have social dialogue discussions opened with National Authorities on the implementation of measures to address the impact of the attack on Ukraine?***

Yes.

- ***What are the topics of the Social Dialogue discussions with National Authorities?***

Legal classification of Ukrainian refugees – ČMKOS has been criticising the approach of Czech State executive which uses mainly economic criteria while assessing the situation of fleeing Ukrainian refugees and the crisis as a whole and the focus to firstly allow refugees free access to the Czech labour market instead of first strengthening their status as refugees and protection from exploitation. The Czech government should not resignate on its employment policies, protection of the Czech labour market's stability and its accessibility for Czech citizens.

Minimal financial support of refugees – ČMKOS generally supports substantial financial contributions both directly for Ukrainian refugees as well as any private subjects contributing on humanitarian aid. However, ČMKOS deems that more tools should be implemented to protect these supportive measures.

Protection of refugees from exploitation – ČMKOS proposes legal measures that would prevent agencies from employing third country nationals.

Strengthening the capacities of health and education sectors – Czech health services and schools are expected to be under heightened pressure in future months and are in dire need of additional financing and manpower to avoid any possible collapse.

Combating the economic impacts of the crisis, especially growing inflation – ČMKOS has been a proponent of temporary measures that would directly affect the prices of certain commodities that are causing panic among general populace and threatening certain sectors, e.g. transportation. Enforcement of market regulations should be strengthened and intensified. Short-time working schemes should be activated.

Denmark (FH)

The Danish Trade Union Confederation (FH) has been active in helping the many Ukrainians who are on the run as a result of the war. On March 3, the FH went public and called on the government to convene employers and FH for tripartite discussions on an alliance that can ensure that Ukrainian refugees get to work quickly and efficiently under orderly conditions. The following day the social partners were summoned to a meeting with the government. Negotiations will continue in the near future and the social partners will be involved.

Later that day, a majority in the Danish parliament agreed on a special law to help Ukrainian refugees in Denmark. The special law is a suspension of the normally applicable asylum rules



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so that Ukrainian refugees can get a residence permit so that they can live in the community, take a job and the children can go to school.

Our affiliate 3F has for many years been very active in organising Ukrainian workers – particularly in agricultural sector. They have announced that they are ready to very concretely support Ukrainian refugees arriving in Denmark.

The Danish Social Partners concluded the following agreements:

- Partnership on jobs for Ukrainians **(1)**
- Tripartite agreement on the continuation of the integrative vocational training programme (IGU) **(2)**
- Addendum to the tripartite agreement on the continuation of the integrative training programme (IGU)

(1) Partnership on jobs for Ukrainians

Europe is one step away from something that may quickly escalate into the greatest humanitarian crisis since World War II. Russia has invaded Ukraine. The war has driven thousands of Ukrainians from their homes and many of them are now heading for other European countries. A large number of Ukrainians have already arrived in Denmark and many more are on their way. Some of them have friends and family in Denmark and others have nowhere else to go. It is impossible to predict the number of Ukrainians who will come here.

The government, the Danish Employers' Confederation (DA), the Danish Trade Union Confederation (FH), the Danish Confederation of Professional Associations (AC), the National Association of Local Authorities in Denmark (KL) and Danish Regions agree that Denmark has a special responsibility for helping displaced persons from the Ukraine. First and foremost, they need help to find a place to live, their children must be able to go to day-care centres and schools, and they need access to healthcare. In addition to that, it is crucial to provide displaced persons from the Ukraine with swift access to the Danish labour market. This is not something that we have a definitive solution to here and now. It is a continuous effort. The partnership therefore commits to find good solutions on an ongoing basis as new challenges and barriers emerge with a view to helping Ukrainians find work.

The government, DA, FH, AC, KL and Danish Regions therefore agree to set up a partnership with the involvement of companies and voluntary organisations that commits to ensure the shortest way to the Danish labour market for Ukrainians where they are not met with rigid rules and barriers. The partnership focuses on the following:

- A good reception in Denmark: It is important to receive Ukrainian nationals in a good way where they receive help to cope in Denmark. This applies to both practical tasks such as getting a civil registration (CPR) No., a NemID (the Danish secure log-in system), a bank account and a tax deduction card, but also when it comes to labour market integration and becoming integrated in Danish society.



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- **Swift identification of competences:** Identification of competences is an important tool for helping the Ukrainians enter the labour market. This must be carried out through a dialogue with the individual and by preparing CVs that include education, skills and job preferences.
- **Advertising jobs on a job bank:** Companies with vacancies can advertise them on a job bank. It must be easy and swift for job seeking Ukrainians to find a job – and help must be provided for those who need it. Local authorities and other relevant players can also use the job bank to match companies and Ukrainians.
- **The possibility of taking Danish language classes:** It is important to learn the Danish language in order to become an active member of the Danish society and the Danish labour market. With the special act, displaced Ukrainians will fall within the Danish Integration Act (*integrationsloven*). This means that they will get the opportunity to receive free Danish language classes. However, it is important to ensure continuous follow-up in order to find out whether the offer is used to a sufficient extent, since language barriers represent a major challenge.
- **Focus on skills development:** Short courses such as AMU courses (adult vocational training) and certificate courses may be necessary to provide Ukrainians with the right skills to perform Danish jobs. Persons with residence under the special act fall under the self-support and return programme of the Integration Act which provides the opportunity to obtain skills development through courses etc. It is important that the existing courses can also accommodate the Ukrainian nationals. Here, language and the number of persons in each class can be barriers. Furthermore, efforts can be made to offer skills development programmes for specific industries with good job prospects and general labour shortages (such as the hotel and restaurant industry and the transport and manufacturing industry) and recruitment for social and health education programmes can be supported.
- **The possibility of embarking on IGU programmes:** The government and the social partners have agreed that displaced persons from the Ukraine must also have access to participate in the IGU programme in order to receive a helping hand in finding a job as soon as possible. The adjustment of the target group of the IGU programme is part of the special act and it will have effect when the special act comes into force.
- **Focus on decent working conditions:** The employment of Ukrainian nationals must be in accordance with Danish pay and working conditions etc. It is a joint responsibility to provide information on the Danish labour market and what it is like to work in Denmark.

The government, DA, FH, AC, KL and Danish Regions have agreed to continuously follow up on whether the initiative meets the aims of the partnership. The partnership will therefore convene on a regular basis to follow up on the work to help displaced Ukrainians get access to the Danish labour market as quickly as possible based on relevant data, among other things. The partners also have the opportunity to invite relevant parties, companies and organisations to contribute to the work. It is important that barriers and other inexpedient circumstances are removed as soon as possible so as to make the efforts as effective as possible.



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It is important that all relevant parties – including companies and voluntary organisations – are involved in the efforts. Therefore, the government, DA, FH, AC, KL and Danish Regions will host a meeting for all concerned as soon as possible where we can create a joint understanding of how to contribute to the efforts and how to establish a good cooperation with a view to helping displaced Ukrainians establish a secure life in Denmark where they have access to the labour market as soon as possible.

(2) Tripartite agreement on the continuation of the integrative vocational training programme

Work and self-support are crucial to living in Denmark. It is therefore also absolutely vital to maintain the focus on supporting an increase in the employment rate of newly arrived refugees and immigrants for the benefit of integration and thereby for their own benefit and for the benefit of the Danish society.

The IGU programme which was introduced in 2016 as a pilot scheme on the basis of a tripartite agreement with the social partners is an important element in facilitating the access of refugees and persons reunited with a family member to the labour market. The programme has subsequently been continued with a new tripartite agreement which expires on 30 June 2022. The programme was most recently amended by an agreement of 21 December 2020 between the government and the social partners, among other things with an extension of the target group and increased training.

Since the introduction of the IGU programme, it has been intended as a stepping stone to employment on general labour market conditions. With the extension of the IGU programme in 2020, the aim was to give more people the opportunity to use it. However, COVID-19 restrictions and the decline in asylum seekers have undoubtedly led to a reduction in the intake of persons for the IGU programme in the past year. As opposed to what has previously been the case, there are more women than men who embark on an IGU programme. This indicates that the scheme can ease the otherwise difficult path to ordinary employment for both men and women. It therefore also continues to be important to support this development so that more refugees and immigrants find employment.

During the period from 2016 to 2021, a total of 2,742 agreements on IGU programmes were registered. It is estimated that almost 1 in 10 persons from the IGU target group have entered an agreement to participate in an IGU programme.

On this basis, the government and the social partners have agreed to continue the current IGU programme, including the language-mate scheme (sprogmakker), for a further 1½ years within the current framework until 1 January 2024.

The parties have also agreed that foreigners between the ages of 18 and 39 who have a residence permit under the Danish Act on Temporary Residence Permit for Persons who have assisted Danish Authorities, etc. in Afghanistan (lov om midlertidig opholdstilladelse til personer, der i Afghanistan har bistået danske myndigheder m.v.) must be covered by the Act on the Integrative Vocational Training Programme (IGU) (lov om integrationsgrunduddannelse).

The parties have further agreed that in connection with the continuation of the IGU programme, a targeted information effort must be maintained so that more persons will benefit from the IGU programme.



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Finally, the government and the social partners have agreed that a continuation of the IGU programme can be viewed in combination with proposed or future reform measures. The parties therefore also agree to renegotiate the IGU programme in accordance with the recommendations of the Reform Commission with a view to strengthening the programme and the transition from IGU to employment or training. This is expected to take place as soon as possible following the publication of the Commission's recommendations and no later than during the first half of 2023.

The government will seek the support of the parties in Parliament to continue the IGU programme and ensure its funding as soon as possible.

Finland (STTK / SAK)

- ***Have social dialogue discussions opened with employers on the implementation of measures aimed to address the impact of the attack on Ukraine?***

We did a common press release with other confederations of labour unions, but without employers. We subsequently did a common press release with employer confederations calling for energy independence from Russian energy.

- ***What are the topics of the Social Dialogue discussions with employers?***

No current discussions but energy is important and maybe also refugees as time goes on.

- ***Have social dialogue discussions opened with National Authorities on the implementation of measures to address the impact of the attack on Ukraine?***

Trade union and employer organisations have met the top politicians.

- ***What are the topics of the Social Dialogue discussions with National Authorities?***

See above. But no official social dialogues.

In Finland, the Ministry of the Interior has established a coordination group to discuss issues related to immigration/refugees from Ukraine. SAK participates, along with the other social partners. Various issues concerning the reception, services and labour market participation of Ukrainians have already been discussed in this group.

France (FO)

After an initial collection of initiatives at national level within our organisations, it appeared that there have been no social dialogue discussions directly with employers organisations on the implementation of measures aimed to address the impact of the attack on Ukraine or more broadly the situation in Ukraine. We have seen many expressions of solidarity of our unions with the Ukrainian trade unions and workers and more broadly with people fleeing the war in Ukraine but we have not yet any concrete example of any initiatives resulting from social dialogue or collective bargaining at company level, at local level or at sectoral level neither.



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However, **on the 8th of March 2022**, a meeting has been organised on the situation in Ukraine at the initiative of the French Prime Minister with French social partners, the Economic and Finance minister, the Labour minister, the representatives of the Ecological Transition and the Industry ministers but also with head of cabinets of the Foreign affairs and the Defense ministers and the Chief of Staff of the French Army. French employers' organisations and trade unions were present.

This meeting was dedicated to an update on the situation in Ukraine and the announcement of a "resilience plan" to face the situation caused by the war in Ukraine and by the economic sanctions took against the Russian government. The French government also wanted to hear the relative positions of the French social partners. Beyond the consensual message against the war, for the respect of International law and the support to the population, workers and trade unions in Ukraine with the International and European trade union movement but also to activists for peace in Russia that were under repression, FO also discussed the economic and social consequences for workers and households across Europe and in France, going back to the issue of wages and purchasing power against the constant inflation and explosion of energy, fuel and food prices but also the prolongation of short-time work schemes to protect workers in the most impacted sectors by the current conflict. By the end of the meeting, no specifics on the foreseen measures by the French government were announced.

On the 11th of March 2022, the French Social Dialogue Committee on European and International Affairs (CDSEI) dedicated to the preparation of the EPSCO Council of the 14th of March, and that includes French social partners, addressed the discussions that will take place between Labour Ministers on Ukraine with a focus on the implementation of the EU directive on temporary protection and the CARE initiative brought forward by the European Commission on the 8th of March. This last issue was also touched upon during the meeting of the French Follow-up Committee on the implementation of the ESF **on the 10th of March 2022** with low indications on the eventual redirection of remaining funds from the previous MFF 2014-2020 of the ESF and the ERDF in support of Ukrainian refugees, indicating non-existent needs until now.

On the 11th of March 2022, the deputy minister for Citizenship received several private sector companies committed to welcoming displaced Ukrainians (LMVH, Danone, BNP Paribas, Orange, Accor, Ikea, Gecina, Airbnb, Lydia) in the presence of the High Commissioner for Employment and Business Engagement and the Inter-ministerial Housing Delegate. This meeting aimed to amplify the dissemination of the platform "Je m'engage pour l'Ukraine". The aid proposed by the companies at the end of the meeting concerns in particular accommodation, donations (medicines, sim cards, furniture etc.), facilitated communication (sim card, calls to Ukraine free of fees, etc...), cash donation to international associations and organizations.



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Also on 11 March, the minister of Labour and the deputy minister for Citizenship convened a Steering Committee on the implementation of the temporary protection directive and the integration of displaced Ukrainians on the labour market with representatives of the French public employment services and the French office for asylum and refugees “to anticipate the arrival of displaced Ukrainians, to calibrate as well as possible the support programmes towards employment and training in order to be able to provide a rapid and adapted response to their needs”. Among the actions mentioned, we can find the active mobilization of the public employment services; raise visibility, facilitate access and strengthen the offer of training; amplify the existing initiatives on employment. On these points, a joint roadmap should be defined in the coming days. This Committee also wishes to examine the modalities of deployment and development of the AGIR programme (global and individualized support programme for the integration of refugees that will be launched in June 2022). This program will be funded up to 25% by the Ministry of Labour, 25% by the Ministry of Housing and 50% by the Ministry of Home Affairs with a gradual increase for full capacity by 2026.

French social partners were heard on the 14th of March by the deputy minister for Citizenship on the integration of Ukrainian refugees in the labour market without clear orientation at the end of the meeting. However, the French government indicated that social partners should be invited to take part to exchanges with the Steering Committee put in place on the 11th of March. FO will present further updates to the ETUC PEACE WATCH.

Germany (DGB)

BDA and DGB have published a 1-Page on the Ukraine War, which includes a paragraph on the social partners role when it comes to refugees (translation below):

“It is still unclear to what extent refugees will reach Germany and how many will stay. Companies, works councils and staff councils are ready to play their part in taking in these people, training them and integrating them into the labour market. In recent years, we have been able to gain experience with the reception of refugees. In the process, we have also learned that the procedures must be organised in a legally secure and unbureaucratic manner. We call on the federal government to create this framework.”

In addition, please find below a summary DGB’s general demand on integration of refugees in the labour market:

- **Creating legal certainty:** In addition to a lack of language skills, it is above all the lack of legal security of residence status that contributes to uncertainty and uncertain prospects. The reason is that fewer and fewer refugees are recognised directly and are only given the status of toleration. This also prevents companies from hiring or training refugees. The DGB advocates that integration has priority over deportation. Those who have settled well



into the German working world also have good prospects of participating in social life. For integration into society, this should be more important than residence status.

- **Protection against exploitation and precarious employment:** People from abroad, but especially refugees, are not familiar with the legal system in Germany and often have low or unrecognised qualifications. These groups are particularly at risk of being exploited in the labour market. Due to the difficult life situation of refugees (wars, displacement, cultural differences), there is a danger that they will initially only find work in precarious forms of employment. This can be an entry point, but it is necessary that further qualification is also offered during employment. Our goal must be to protect refugees from precarious employment in the same way as domestic workers.
- **Provide advice / counselling:** In order to protect refugees from labour exploitation, counselling facilities on social and labour law are absolutely necessary. Unfortunately, they only exist in a few places. We need more counselling centres on labour law and labour exploitation that support refugees in asserting their labour rights. These centres must advise primarily from the workers' point of view and not be limited to general legal information. This way, there is a chance that at least the worst cases will be prevented.
- **Increase the effectiveness of labour policy measures:** Counselling, qualification and on-the-job language courses are essential instruments to prepare refugees for the German labour market and to make use of their individual skills and competences. The direct contact of refugees with companies and administration is essential for their entry into working life. Companies could be much more active here, and the existing training and employment programmes must be advertised more strongly. In addition, the potential of female refugees must be better utilised in order to prevent them from drifting into traditional role patterns. For women's access to integration courses, vocational training or employment, it is therefore important that childcare facilities and family-friendly working hours are available.

Hungary (SZEFL/LIGA)

Regarding the questions raised, unfortunately we can only answer that there are no social dialogue discussions regarding the current crisis the public sector in Hungary. Even so, the social care workers are taking an active part in handling the migrant situation, providing shelter in homes for elderly and orphans, etc...

Hungarian national elections are coming up on 3 April 2022, and in the middle of the campaigning period, unfortunately there is a (social dialogue) forum stop on the national level since February. So no NGTT (National Economic and Social Council), no VKF (tripartite national



level consultation forum for the private sector), and no OKÉT (national level consultation forum for the public sector) are being held until the elections.

Since the state of emergency decree governance is still in force in Hungary in view of the pandemic, the Hungarian government has recognised the vast majority of people fleeing Ukraine as eligible for temporary protection by a decree on the night of 24 February. Most recent short info on this is available on the link below:

https://helsinki.hu/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/HHC_Ukraine_Guide_2022_03_09_EN.pdf

Asylum-seekers from Ukraine have the right to education, health care and work in Hungary. It is now worthwhile even for employers to employ asylum-seekers, since in addition to filling long-standing labour shortages in certain sectors, such as hospitality and construction, the state also provides subsidies to companies that employ refugees with Ukrainian-Hungarian dual citizenship or asylum status who have fled to Hungary on fixed-term or indefinite contracts for at least 20 hours a week.

From the side of LIGA, we and our affiliates are taking part continuously in different humanitarian actions welcoming and helping refugees and we are also collecting money for our Ukrainian partners unions.

Ireland (ICTU)

The Russian invasion of Ukraine and the ensuing humanitarian crisis have resonated greatly with the Irish public. In light of this, ICTU, as the representative voice of workers in Ireland, and Ibec, the leading representative employer body have come together to facilitate and encourage workers and employers to give practical support to the humanitarian relief efforts of the International Red Cross and UNICEF Ireland in Ukraine. [Congress and Ibec team up to support Ukraine humanitarian relief efforts | ICTU](#)

Italy (CGIL/CISL/UIIL)

Italian trade unions CGIL CISL UIL in agreement with the following employer's associations (Confindustria, AGCI, Casartigiani, CNA, Confagricoltura, Confapi, Confartigianato Imprese, Confcommercio, Confcooperative, Confesercenti, Confetra, Confimi Industria, Legacoop), in the context of the dramatic and serious situation that the war is causing in Ukraine, have agreed to set up a joint solidarity fund aimed to humanitarian purposes for Ukrainian people.

To that end and to respond in a concrete manner, an ad hoc bank account has been activated, linked to a Solidarity Fund for the Ukrainian people into which voluntary contributions from workers and companies will flow. A specific "Steering Committee" will consider the modalities



and forms of humanitarian intervention in support of the Ukrainian population affected by war. The fundraising will end on 31 October 2022.

Latvia (LBAS)

The government of Latvia has provided a number of assisting measures to Ukrainian refugees, including such measures as, lowered requirements in access to labour market (language requirements etc), education opportunities, free transportation. The measures were passed very fast due to the pressing need and arriving number of refugees. Therefore, the measures were not discussed within classical social dialogue structures.

Poland (NSZZ)

Due to the fact that the main wave of refugees - mainly mothers, children and elderly - from Ukraine goes to Poland, the dialogue focuses primarily on providing immediate direct support to refugees and is conducted jointly with the government in the frame of the Social Dialogue Council (RDS). On 28 February at the RDS presidium, a joint statement was made that comprehensive aid should be carried out in cooperation of the government, local governments, NGOs and social partners. On 7 March, the RDS presidium approved as a matter of urgency the government's bill on assistance to Ukrainian citizens in connection with the armed conflict on the territory of that country (introducing the immediate legalisation of refugee stay, financial support and access to healthcare, adopted by the parliament on 12 March). Among other things, it was agreed that trade unions would be included in the list of organisations to which the authorities would commission assistance to refugees without the rigours of public procurement rules. In the coming days, talks are planned on the creation of a working platform for the exchange of information between social partners on activities addressed to those refugees who will stay in Poland.

Please note that the above information concerns only elements of social dialogue. In addition to this, trade unions (but also employers' organisations) direct a large part of their activity to helping both those who arrive to Poland and those communities who defend themselves against the barbaric invaders. Social partners independently organise the transport of refugees, donate money, medicines, food, clothing, sanitation and hygiene measures. These are the most important tasks for now due to the dramatic humanitarian disaster caused by Russia. And it could be worse. Today, Russian bombs fell 20 kms from the Polish border.

Portugal (UGT-P)



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A meeting of the CPCS (Social Concertation Permanent Council), a tripartite body whose president is the prime-minister, was organised. The point was to present the implementation of measures to address the impact of Ukraine situation on fuel and gas supply/price. This is a very sensitive point for consumers and industries because the price of fuel is already one of the most expensive in Europe. The PM announced a set of national measures to tackle the crisis however he stressed the need for an European reply in order to overcome the multiple challenges.

From the government point of view, this energetic crisis is seen as an opportunity to speed up the energy transition.

The situation in Portugal is worsened by the extreme drought that is affecting agriculture and livestock. The situation in Ukraine is likely to bring along a rise in cereals and in the food industry as a whole.

It was decided to create a tripartite group to follow the impact of Ukraine crisis within the scope of CPCS.

Another aspect is the fact that the refugees that are arriving so far c. 3500 people asked for international protection. The government (Ministry of Labor and Social Solidarity) is managing a Platform to register the job offers. We had the opportunity to stress the need for the involvement of social partners in this complex process (quality jobs, housing, social security, language skills...) and Ms. Godinho was very open regarding this.

Spain UGT

- ***Have social dialogue discussions opened with employers on the implementation of measures aimed to address the impact of the attack on Ukraine?***

On Monday 7 March 2022, the President of the Spanish Government held a meeting with the social partners in the framework of the social dialogue roundtable for the Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan.

In this scenario, the government and the social partners agreed on the need to jointly respond as far as possible to the impact that the invasion of Ukraine will have on growth and activity.

The government requested the collaboration of employers and trade unions to promote the National Response Plan to the Impact of the War, with measures to address the sectors most affected by this crisis, accelerate the energy transition and strengthen the resilience of our economy.

During the meeting, the President of the Government stated that the mechanisms of social dialogue can help to spread the impact of the conflict and allow for a quicker recovery. More specifically, the President asked the social partners for their help and collaboration to speed



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up the implementation of the Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan, promoting the energy transition and thus reinforcing strategic autonomy for the future.

UGT-E is ready to intensify social dialogue in order to cushion the economic impact and boost the effective deployment of the investments and reforms of the Recovery Plan.

- **What are the topics of the Social Dialogue discussions with employers?**

A dialogue is currently underway on a new Agreement for Employment and Collective Bargaining that establishes criteria, guidelines and recommendations for collective bargaining processes in the period to be determined. Specifically, among other issues, UGT-E advocates that such an agreement should establish an adequate increase in wages to guarantee the purchasing power of workers and thus strengthen economic recovery and job creation.

- **What are the topics of the Social Dialogue discussions with National Authorities? (at the moment...)**

Everything related to the implementation of the investments and reforms of the Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan, for instance: plans for the creation of quality employment; training and qualification of workers; digitalisation; social security for the self-employed, etc.

CCOO

Unfortunately, social dialogue in Spain is irregular depending on the ministry responsible. In the case of matters related to asylum and refuge for people fleeing the war in Ukraine, decisions are being taken unilaterally by the government without the most representative trade union organisations, which are part of the consultative bodies, not even being consulted or informed of these measures. We consider this absence of dialogue on refugee issues unacceptable, especially since international protection must be combined with social and employment integration measures for people entitled to asylum.

ETUF Recommendations

War in Ukraine: call for solidarity and anticipation of impact on workers

“Joint Recommendations of the European Trade Union Federations to EWC/SE Coordinators and worker representatives in SNBs, EWCs and SEs March 2022 “

The international trade union movement condemns Russia's invasion of Ukraine, expresses solidarity with the people, workers and trade unions in Ukraine, and demands that all Russian forces leave Ukraine immediately. We urge for open dialogue to resume in order to find a peaceful solution to this crisis. Our thoughts are with the workers in Ukraine who face incredible hardships as a result of the war. Workers in Russia, in neighbouring countries and all across Europe, must also not bear the brunt of the war.



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The ITUC (International Trade Union Confederation) launched an online petition in support of peace, dialogue and democracy: <https://petitions.ituc-csi.org/ukraine>.

Solidarity funds have been set up by the Global Trade Union Federations and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) to support Ukrainian trade unions to provide workers and their families in Ukraine with food and water provisions, medical supplies and hygiene items. Please get in touch with your European Trade Union Federation should you, your Special Negotiating Body, your European Works Council, or your SE-Works Council (in European companies with the statute of *Societas Europaea*) wish to contribute.

Many European Works Councils have adopted statements or issued press releases to express their solidarity with all workers falling victim to the war. Some have called on their company to take concrete actions to support people in Ukraine and displaced workers. Others have appealed to workers from their company to open their homes to refugees, or are collecting funds and supplies (sleeping bags, tents...) from workers to be sent to Ukraine.

Your multinational company may have ties (production sites, suppliers, retailers, export/import...) in Russia or Ukraine. The consequences of the war have already been felt on energy prices and the cost of raw materials, which had already greatly increased over the last few months. Your company's activities could thus be disrupted, with likely impacts on its workers and those of its suppliers. We therefore recommend members in Special Negotiating Bodies, European Works Councils or Works Councils of European Companies-SE (*Societas Europaea*) to:

- **Request the company to provide emergency measures for its workers** directly impacted by the conflict in Ukraine, including maintaining wages, benefits, and social security contributions when work is suspended due to the war, or by turning plants/offices into shelters. The situation of workers from Ukraine posted in European countries, as well as workers taking time off to support their families in Ukraine, should also be addressed.
- **Call for management to contribute to humanitarian efforts** by providing financial and material support to people in Ukraine, as well as displaced workers and their families. Some multinational companies have already announced significant donations to NGOs and local organisations in Ukraine.
- **Urgently request management information** about the economic and social impact of the war on working conditions, jobs and sites in Ukraine, Russia and European countries. The SNB, EWC or SE-WC might call for an extraordinary meeting with management, depending on the extent of the likely impact. Regular reporting by management to the select committee might also be set up. Consultation shall apply where needed.

Your national and European trade union federations are available anytime to support you. Please also report to them about any initiative or emergency measures you may take, or any critical situation your company may face in relation to the war in Ukraine.



INDUSTRIALL; UNI Europa, EFFAT, EFBWW, ETF, EPSU.

EFFAT

Since the start of this war a week ago, EFFAT and the IUF have been advocating for a prompt ceasefire through diplomacy and constructive dialogue, the creation of humanitarian corridors for the evacuation of civilians, and the restoration of sovereignty and democratic freedoms in Ukraine.

IUF and EFFAT have been intensifying their contacts with the Ukrainian affiliates to make sure workers and the civil populations are supported through Solidarity actions:

- EFFAT and IUF keep regular exchanges with the IUF Ukraine Coordination Council which gives constant updates on the repercussion of the conflict on our affiliates and enterprises in the territory. See IUF-EFFAT released statement – [Link](#)
- The IUF will open a bank account to receive solidarity donations for our affiliates in Ukraine. It will be used to provide emergency assistance now and to help with rebuilding when this becomes possible. The IUF will send out a circular with the bank details on Monday 7 March 2022
- On 1 March, EFFAT took part in the ETUC extraordinary Executive Meeting where Ukrainian Trade Union leaders took part and a [resolution](#) ‘**War in Ukraine has to stop now!**’ was adopted
- On 15 March, EFFAT will take part in a European and Global Day of Action for Peace in Brussels

IUF and EFFAT will continue to monitor the development of this illegitimate attack to Ukraine and its inevitable repercussions on our affiliates, working people and civilians at large. Vulnerable people and workers are always those paying the highest price of any conflict. That’s why IUF and EFFAT will seize any opportunity to say our resolute NO to the invasion and urge Russian military forces to return home.

EFFAT also negotiated a joint statement with HOTREC on Ukraine **(1)** and second joint statement with the agri-food employers **(2)**.

***(1)** Joint HOTREC-EFFAT Statement on Ukraine 16 March 2022*

HOTREC and EFFAT, the European social partners in the hospitality sector, condemn Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and deplore the loss of lives and the human suffering. The attack is a flagrant violation of international laws and agreements, and of Ukraine’s territorial integrity



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as a sovereign and democratic state. Real peace talks need to be established while safe humanitarian corridors need to open to allow civilians to leave the country. Reception and relocation plans within the EU have to be set up. HOTREC and EFFAT welcome the activation of the Temporary Protection Directive by the European Council, allowing all people fleeing Ukraine to be protected and to access residency, housing, education, and labour, for one year, with a possible prolongation to three years. Furthermore, we welcome the EU's Guidelines on external border management which clarify the facilitations available to Member States' border guards under the Schengen rules in conducting border controls. This will ensure efficient border management and help those fleeing the war to find shelter without delay, whilst maintaining a high level of security checks. Specific attention must be paid to the situation of women and children fleeing the war zones, to protect them from gender-based and sexual violence, and in particular from human trafficking. HOTREC and EFFAT call on the Commission and Member States to introduce measures to minimise the impact of the war on workers and businesses in the hospitality sector which has not yet recovered from the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and will be highly affected by this conflict. Such actions should include the continuation of emergency measures successfully used by the EU to tackle the COVID-19 outbreak (such as State Aid, SURE or other cohesion funds), by refinancing and refocusing them to address the consequences of the war on the economy and employment. The social partners support the request for a suspension of the membership of the Russian Federation from the UN World Tourism Organisation, as discussed at the UNWTO Executive Council meeting on 8 March 2022, since Russia is not aligned with the organisation's fundamental principles and values. HOTREC and EFFAT maintain their support to the employers' associations and trade unions in Ukraine and encourage all efforts our member organisations are undertaking at national level to provide shelter and protection to the refugees. The social partners will continue to monitor the development of the geopolitical situation and its repercussions on our affiliates, working people and civilians at large. HOTREC and EFFAT urge the immediate cessation of the military intervention, the withdrawal of Russian troops and equipment from Ukraine, a de-escalation of tensions and a return to diplomacy aiming at the instantaneous restoration of sovereignty and democratic freedoms in Ukraine.

(2) Joint statement: Agri-food employers and workers on the war in Ukraine

The following statement has been prepared jointly by the European trade union Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions (EFFAT), the Employers' Group of Professional Agricultural Organisations (GEOPA) and the food manufacturers FoodDrinkEurope. Together these organisations, as sectoral social partners, represent the employers and workers that work in the agri-food sector.

We strongly condemn the unprovoked invasion of Ukraine, express solidarity with the victims and join in the call for peace and dialogue at the earliest opportunity. Our highest priority is to



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ensure the safety and protection of Ukrainian people and workers. Safe humanitarian corridors have to be established to allow civilians to leave the country and we thank all those ready to offer shelter and comfort to the victims of war.

We are also proud of the activities undertaken by our members so far.

These include:

- *Farmers and companies working with humanitarian groups and charities, providing food, medical supplies and cash donations and supporting aid efforts to help affected communities.*
- *EFFAT affiliates providing financial and material aid to workers in Ukraine, as well as helping in welcoming refugees and all people fleeing Ukraine, particularly in the neighbouring countries, but not only*
- *Solidarity funds being established by many trade union organisations, including by IUF, the global trade union organisation in the agri-food sector.*
- *Farmers welcoming refugees onto their farms and offering them accommodation and job opportunities.*
- *GEOPA affiliates collaborating with the European Labour Authority to ensure the availability of translated documents into Ukrainian to facilitate the integration of misplaced people.*
- *Companies ensuring that Ukrainian workers and their families in the areas under attack are as safe as possible, while continuing to receive their wages. This war has important European and global consequences for the agri-food sector. The interruption of Ukrainian agricultural production and exports, as well as the legitimate sanctions imposed on Russia, will severely affect global markets and food supplies. Ukraine is the EU's fourth biggest external food supplier and provides the EU with a quarter of its cereal and vegetable oil imports, including nearly half of its maize. While primarily focusing on the ongoing conflict resolution, EU decisionmakers must also consider the impact on the agri-food sector and its workforce, an essential sector providing food all across the world.*

Specifically, we ask the European Commission to:

- *Implement emergency measures to minimise the impact of the war on workers and businesses in the agri-food sector. Such measures should include the continuation of measures successfully used by the EU to tackle the Covid-19 fallout, such as SURE. These measures can be refinanced and refocused to address the consequences of the war on the*



economy and employment, with a focus on intra-EU labour mobility and the need to ensure full equal treatment

- *Put in place concrete measures to tackle high energy and food prices that may endanger access to food, particularly for the most vulnerable households*
- *Provide a detailed assessment of the actual and potential impact of the war on jobs in the EU agri-food sector*
- *Deliver an action plan to ensure fully functioning, sustainable and resilient food supply chains and food security in Europe and globally.*

Finally, we welcome the activation of the Temporary Protection Directive by the European Council, where displaced people who left Ukraine can have access to the EU labour market and enjoy equal treatment with EU nationals. In this respect we also welcome the activation of the operational guidelines on border management by the Commission.

We call on Member States to guarantee the full range of rights provided by the Directive, which include access to the labour market, housing, health care, education and welfare support to all people in Ukraine fleeing the war.

EPSU

EPSU and HOSPEEM issued a Solidarity message with Ukraine employers and trade unions:

The social partners involved in the European sectoral social dialogue – Hospital and Healthcare, HOSPEEM and EPSU, strongly deplore and condemn the unprovoked attack of the Russian government on the territorial integrity of Ukraine. Furthermore, we are horrified by the reported attack on a maternity and children hospital in Mariupol, Ukraine on March 9. As of March 10, the WHO has confirmed 25 other attacks.

Attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure such as hospitals must stop immediately.

Furthermore, we are calling on all to respect and protect in all circumstances health facilities, civilian and military medical units in line with International Humanitarian Law. Reiterating the words of the WHO, the social partners stress that health providers must be protected so they are allowed to treat the injured, and to save lives.

We express our solidarity with fellow employers, trade unions and workers in the hospital and healthcare sector, who continue to provide medical care to people in Ukraine in the direst



circumstances. Our member organisations across Europe are collecting medical equipment and similar resources to support healthcare provision.

EPSU and CEMR also adopted the following statement:

European social partners of local and regional governments strongly support their peers in Ukraine

We, CEMR and EPSU, representing social partners at the European Social Dialogue Committee of Local and Regional Governments, strongly condemn the multiple attacks and violations of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine by Russia. We express our full support and solidarity to the Ukrainian people and workers in Ukrainian municipalities, cities, hromadas, districts, and raions.

We are firmly opposed to the dismemberment of a free and democratic state in Europe. The escalation of violence, repeated bombings and attacks on Ukrainian cities and territories are a serious threat to the preservation of peace and democracy across Europe. Ukraine's territorial integrity and its security must be respected, as well as its political independence as a democratic state.

Our thoughts are with Ukrainian people, with first responders, emergency services workers and municipal operators that are working in solidarity to ensure the maximum possible level of services to all people in the territories under attack. The destruction of infrastructures by the belligerents jeopardises the efficient and safe maintenance of basic public services provided by Ukrainian local and regional governments to their citizens. We are ready to support our peers in the country with the materials and expertise they may need in the days and weeks to come.

We stand by the Ukrainian workers and we will mobilise for peace and stability in Ukraine and Europe. We stand by all public service workers call on to treat the casualties of war. We call on the European Union and the international community to provide support and asylum for the people fleeing the war zones.

Municipalities and regions are facing already the human consequences of such a tragedy for Europe, resulting in a flow of humanitarian refugees and displaced persons. We stand with the



principles agreed in our joint migration guidelines: support local migration services to provide reception, shelter and life in dignity for every newcomer to our local communities. Coordination with our national governments will also be essential to ensure the necessary help to municipalities tackling this unforeseen challenge.