**Petra Bolster-Damen**

In June 2021, Petra Bolster-Damen has been elected both as member of the Executive Board of the Netherlands Trade Union Confederation (FNV) and as its international secretary. In these roles, she is responsible for the FNV’s day-to-day activities on topics reaching from labour migration, fiscal policies, and trade agreements, to socio-economic policies, European affairs and the digital transition, for instance.

Petra Bolster-Damen was born in 1971, in the most southern province of the Netherlands – a region which is bordering both Belgium and Germany. Her mother was already an active trade union member during her youth, contaminating her with the virus when she spoke about taking collective action in the cleaning sector. Already before Bolster-Damen had finished her degree in Management, Economics and Law, she started working for the FNV. In 1996, she began her career as a counselor on a case-by-case basis for members of the FNV’s Industry Union.

Four years later, in 2000, Bolster-Damen made the step to the collective representation of workers in the metal industry. Only to become the main trade union negotiator of the FNV Metal Union in 2017. Throughout her career, she managed to find agreements on a plentitude of collective agreements.

In addition to her native language Dutch, Bolster-Damen speaks English and German fluently. She gained experience with the functioning of trade union federations at a European and international level. From 2017 onwards, she was a member of the Executive Committees of IndustriAll Europe and of IndustriAll Global. She also played an active role in the Womens’ Committee of the first.

In the Netherlands, Petra Bolster-Damen is currently striving to improve the working and the living conditions of both European and third-country labour migrants. She tries to make their voices heard in the public debate, through providing a podium for their stories on how they have been mistreated by their employers. These workers cannot be forgotten or ignored anymore by policy makers.

In conclusion, the Dutch trade unionist firmly believes we need a more social Europe, with decent jobs, with robust social safety nets, and wherein wealth and well-being is distributed fairly. For Petra Bolster-Damen, people should be at the left, right and center of the trade union movement. It is her deep conviction that together we are stronger, and united we are unstoppable. This is motivating her to be a candidate for the position of Vice-President of the ETUC.