**Tea Jarc- TSS**

**President von der Leyen, colleagues, social partners,**

The European Trade Union Confederation welcomes the European Commission’s commitment to deliver a **Quality Jobs Roadmap** and a **Quality Jobs Act.**  
This initiative must mark a real turning point — a moment when the European Union demonstrates that it can deliver for its workers, not just for its markets.

Because for too long, Europe’s political agenda has been dominated by the language of **competitiveness and deregulation** — as if lowering standards and weakening protections could make us stronger.  
This approach has eroded Europe’s social model and failed to respond to the real challenges workers face every day.

Across the continent, workers are struggling and it is not fair they are being asked to do more with less.  
**Productivity targets rise, working hours stretch, and pressure grows — yet wages stagnate, job security declines, and inequality widens. Prices go up, but wages stand still. Jobs become more precarious.**

The tendency of employers for **more flexibility and competitiveness at any cost i**t is not how we build a fair or sustainable Europe.  
**Because we cannot build a strong Europe on a race to the bottom. We cannot protect our social model by weakening it.**

To succeed, and really deliver for the working people, the **Quality Jobs Act** must provide real protections for today’s realities of work.  
It should include:  
• A **Directive on Telework and the Right to Disconnect**, to guarantee that digitalisation improves work–life balance instead of eroding it;  
• **Binding measures to prevent psychosocial risks, stress, and online harassment at work**, because mental health and dignity are part of decent work;  
• **Clear rules on AI and algorithmic management**, ensuring transparency, accountability, and the *human-in-control* principle in every workplace;  
• And **strong regulation of labour intermediaries and subcontracting**, limiting the number of chains and ensuring joint and several liability to end the growing exploitation of workers.

We also cannot ignore the **green transition**, already causing significant job losses in several sectors.  
Transition must be **just** — through a **Just Transition Directive** that ensures no worker or region is left behind.  
Delivering for every worker also means **ending labour market precariousness**, including banning unpaid traineeships that exploit young people as cheap or even free labour.  
To strengthen **democracy at work**, we need robust measures to reinforce collective bargaining and **revise public procurement directives**, so that EU funds go only to employers who respect workers’ and trade union rights.

New legislative initiatives are essential to address the challenges ahead, but we must also **enforce what already exists**, ensure **compliance with workers’ rights**, and back this with **investment in quality jobs.**  
The next **Multiannual Financial Framework** will be crucial — safeguarding the European Social Fund and prioritising **social investment, quality employment, and social dialogue** to achieve a truly Social Europe.

The idea that Europe’s future lies in cheaper labour, longer working hours, or weaker protections is fundamentally wrong.  
It undermines trust in the European project and fuels frustration among those who make Europe work.

Europe’s strength lies not in deregulation but in **cohesion, fairness, and solidarity.**  
Delivering the **Quality Jobs Act** is not just about labour policy — it is about defending the European social model itself.

**President von der Leyen**, the ETUC and Europe’s unions stand ready to work with you to make this a success — to prove that Europe can once again put **people before profit, and dignity before deregulation.**

**Thank you.**