

Civil society and trade unions call for a Europe that cares



For a Europe that cares for all – during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond

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(24 April 2020) A large group of European organisations came together ahead of the European Council video conference on 23rd April, to demand an alternative vision for Europe following the COVID-19 crisis. On behalf of European trade unions and union federations, the statement was signed by the ETUC. Some of the key points include:

- Build a solidarity-driven and comprehensive strategy to prevent infections, save lives and minimise the ongoing impact of the pandemic. This must include ensuring that any vaccine, or treatment, developed for COVID-19 is affordable and accessible to all, and that patent rules that put pharmaceutical industry profits before public health are overhauled.
- Ensure that restrictive emergency measures serve the purpose of combating the pandemic only, are time-limited, and are compatible with the rule of law and the EU's fundamental values. Simultaneously, dialogue with, and support

for, organised civil society must be maintained.

- End the age of austerity in Europe, and work towards a macroeconomic framework that prioritises tackling inequality, and invests in human wellbeing and the preservation and protection of the natural environment that sustains us. Tax wealthy companies and individuals to help pay for the costs of the rescue and recovery packages.
- Strengthen workers' rights, safeguard employment, support people's income, and introduce measures to protect those left out of the labour market. Measures should address the situation in Europe and the EU's partner countries, and should especially consider health workers, care-givers and those in precarious work, the overwhelming majority of whom are women.
- Support health systems and people in the global South, and ensure basic services, in particular healthcare and access to water, are provided to all regardless of resident status, race, nationality, language or other factors.

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