

Unions demand respect for workers' rights, high quality public services, functioning social dialogue from Eastern Partnership

(23 November 2017) The European Union is meeting with leaders of the Eastern Partnership countries, 24 November. Europe's unions are demanding that the EU and the governments of the countries make guaranteeing union rights a top priority. Attacks continue in several countries such as Belorussia, Georgia and Ukraine. The unions deplore that quality jobs and decent work, gender equality and growing income inequalities are not on the agenda. We want a Partnership that delivers for workers and all people. Improving collective bargaining and strengthening social dialogue should be one of the key areas as part of the work to strengthen the democracies and good governance.

Commenting on the Eastern Partnership EPSU's General Secretary said "We want to see the pillar of social rights adopted in Gothenburg and the UN sustainable development goals supported by the EU now reflected in the work of the Eastern Partnership, its priorities and the concrete actions of governments and the EU. That is the agenda of progress workers and people expect."

Other points the unions raise:

- Promoting the digital economy without ensuring protection for workers will give rise to insecure and precarious jobs. The work of the Eastern Partnership is not balanced. The unions demand strong data protection legislation to protect data and privacy of workers and people.
- There is scant attention for just transition and support for the workers and communities in regions and sectors that would see change and restructuring. Adaptation plans are non-existing.
- While the countries are committed to fighting corruption and fraud, there is no mention of investment in strengthening tax administrations. We underline that workers and people have had enough of the injustice and abuse of power. The unions underline the importance of modern public administrations with qualified staff and resources to do the work. Democratic, inclusive and

participative institutions and administrations are a key element in building our societies.

Please find [the statement of the ETUC and the Pan-European Regional Council here](#).

The summit will discuss how to further strengthen cooperation in the four priority areas earlier agreed:

- stronger economy: economic development and better market opportunities
- stronger governance: strengthening of institutions and good governance
- stronger connectivity: enhancing interconnections, notably in the areas of transport and energy
- stronger society: increasing mobility and contacts between people

There are 20 so-called deliverables for 2020 in these four areas. The 5th Eastern Partnership summit brings together the European Union with leaders of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belorussia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

The [Global union rights](#) index shows that union rights in Ukraine and Belorussia are not guaranteed.

For the [background documents](#) of the EU Council

For the [final conclusions of the Summit](#)

The Commission has [an informative website](#) dedicated to the Eastern Partnership

The European Parliament has adopted a [detailed position](#) demanding respect for human rights and putting a strong emphasis on fighting corruption and good public administration.

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