



Brussels, 22 March 2021

Open Letter to the European Commission: No Public Contracts for Companies without Collective Agreements – Change Public Procurement Rules Now

We are European trade union leaders united in UNI Europa, representing services workers throughout Europe.

It is in the public interest that public contracts are only awarded to companies that are party to collective agreements, covering at least wages and general working conditions. Companies that refuse to bargain or implement collective agreements should be prevented from receiving public contracts. Public funding should not go to companies that seek a competitive advantage through low wages and low working conditions. Indeed, public money should be employed to achieve decent pay and working conditions instead of undermining both.

We therefore write to you today with a simple but important request:

Change EU public procurement rules to provide a European framework that is conducive to achieve this end: No public contracts for companies without collective agreements.

Every worker, working under such a public contract, should be covered by the applicable collective agreements in the relevant sector and region according to national law and practice.

We seek a clear political undertaking by the European Commission for this simple change now, followed by a swift legislative initiative.

Every year, over 250 000 public authorities in the EU spend around 14% of GDP (around EUR 2 trillion per year) on the purchase of services, works and supplies. In many of our sectors, public authorities are the principal buyers. Ours are mostly labour-intensive sectors. When companies are subjected to ruthlessly compete for public procurement on the single measurable cost, they consistently turn to undercutting working conditions by suppressing their workers' fundamental collective bargaining rights. Changing the applicable rules is an effective means to strengthen collective bargaining coverage and thus raise wages and working conditions in services sectors. Indeed, it provides easy leverage for the EU and national governments to proactively promote collective bargaining.

Since the Covid-19 crisis started last year, care workers, cleaners, call centre workers, logistics and postal workers, security guards and all essential workers have been risking their lives to keep our society going. At the same time, they are among the lowest paid and most precarious workers in the EU. Many of them work under public contracts. Yet, some of the companies they work for have been allowed to cut corners and drive down workers' pay and conditions to extract ever-more wealth.

We need to end this race to the bottom and give dignity and respect to all essential workers. We need EU legislation now that ensures that no public contract is awarded to a company that is not party to a collective agreement.

Frank Bsirske, President, UNI Europa
Oliver Roethig, Regional Secretary, UNI Europa
Barbara Teiber, President, GPA, Austria
Roman Hebenstreit, President, VIDA, Austria
Koenraad Maertens, Federal Secretary Cleaning and Private Security Sectors, ACCG-FGTB, Belgium
Robrecht Vanderbeeken, General Secretary, ACOD Cultuur, Belgium
Wies Descheemaeker, General Secretary, ACOD VRT, Belgium
Stefaan Decock, General Secretary, ACV Puls, Belgium
Koen de Mey, President, ACV Transcom, Belgium
Olivier Valentin, National Secretary, CGSLB, Belgium
Felipe Van Keirsbilck, General Secretary, CNE-CSC, Belgium
Gaetan Stas, General Secretary, CSC Alimentation et Services, Belgium
Patrick Vandenberghe, President, CSC BIE, Belgium
Myriam Delmée, President, SETCa, Belgium
Valentin Stoyanov, President, TUFC, Bulgaria
Zlatica Stulic, President, Commercial trade union of Croatia, Croatia
Petar Perković, President, Croatian Union Bank and Financial Employees, Croatia
Mario Iveković, President, Novi Sindikat, Croatia
Sinisa Milicic, President, RIS, Croatia
Darije Hanzalek, President, Sindikat grafičara i medija, Croatia
Zlatica Stulic, President, Commercial Trade Union of Croatia, Croatia
Antonis Chrysostomou, President, EPOET, Cyprus
Renata Burianova, President, USO, Czech Republic
Michael Budolfson, Vice-President, Finansforbundet, Denmark
Lone Clausen, Vice president, Forsikringsforbundet, Denmark
Per Tonnesen, President, HK Handel, Denmark
John Nielsen, President, Serviceforbundet, Denmark
Riitta Koskinen, Bargaining Specialist, Industrial Union Teamliitto, Finland
Annika Rönni-Sällinen, President, PAM, Finland
Jari Jokinen, CEO, TEK, Finland
Jorma Malinen, President, Trade Union Pro, Finland
Kari Ahola, President, Unio (Finance), Finland
Olivier Guivarch, General secretary, CFDT Services, France
Françoise Chazaud, General Secretary, FASAP-FO, France
Sébastien Busiris, General Secretary, FEC-FO, France
Luc Mathieu, General Secretary, Fédération CFDT Banques et Assurances, France
Christine Besseyre, General Secretary, FO COM, France
William Maunier, General Secretary, SNRT-CGT Audiovisuel, France
Ulrike Laux, Member of the Federal Board, IG BAU, Germany

Frank Werneke, President, VER.DI, Germany
Giorgos Motsios, President, OTOE, Greece
Zoltán Karsai, President, KASZ, Hungary
Jozsef Nagy, President, HGWU, Hungary
Zsuzsanna Tóth, President, Postás Szakszervezet, Hungary
Ilona Radvanszki, President Tavszak, Hungary
Steve Fitzpatrick, General Secretary, CWU, Ireland
John O'Connell, General Secretary, FSU, Ireland
Gerry Light, General Secretary, Mandate Trade Union, Ireland
Ethel Buckley, Deputy General Secretary, SIPTU, Ireland
Cinzia Bernardini, National Secretary, Filcams-CGIL, Italy
Mauro Incletolli, National Coordinator, First-CISL, Italy
Nino Baseotto, General Secretary, FISAC CGIL, Italy
Davide Guarini, General Secretary, FIST, Italy
Brunetto Boco, General Secretary, UILTuCS, Italy
Gabriele Slavazza, Deputy General Secretary, Unita Sindacale, Italy
Irena Liepina, President, LSAB PRO, Latvia
Ramojus Skirsgilas, Acting Chairman, LRTPS, Lithuania
Roberto Mendolia, President, ALEBA, Luxembourg
Gabriel Di Letizia, President, LCGB, Luxembourg
Michelle Cloos, Member of the executive board, OGB-L, Luxembourg
Željko Burić, President, Sindikat Telekomu Crne Gore, Montenegro
Tuur Elzinga, President, FNV, Netherlands
Christopher Ray Beckham, President, HK, Norway
Terje Mikkelsen, National secretary, NAF, Norway
Czeslawa Sonta, President, KRZZP, Poland
Cristina Alexandra Pereira Trony, Board Member, MAIS, Portugal
Manuel Gonçalves, President, SINTTAV, Portugal
José Oliveira, International Secretary, SNTCT, Portugal
José Arsénio, General Secretary, SINDELCO, Portugal
Cristiana Matei, Antic, President, Romania
Leonard Octavian Paduret, President, FAIR-MediaSind, Romania
Vasile Gogescu, President, FSC, Romania
Florentin Iancu, President, SITT, Romania
Svetozár Michálek, President, OZBP, Slovakia
Mirsad Begić, President, Svobodni sindikat Slovenije, Slovenia
Antonio Cabrera González, General secretary, CCOO Health Federation, Spain
Vicente Sanchez, General Secretary, CCOO Construcción y Servicios, Spain
Regino Martin, General Secretary, CCOO Postal FSC, Spain
Mari Cruz Elkoro, General Secretary, ELA private services federation - ELA Zerbitzuak, Spain
José María Martínez, General Secretary, Federación de Servicios de CCOO, Spain
Carmen Donate, International Secretary, FeSMC-UGT, Spain
José Pepe Sayagués, Federal Secretary of the Postal Sector, FeSP-UGT, Spain
Pepe Fernández, General Secretary, FSC CCOO, Spain

Ramona Pineros López, Secretary for Trade Union Action, Sector Telecomunicaciones
Federación de Servicios a la Ciudadanía CCOO, Spain
Magnus Pettersson, President, Fastighets, Sweden
Ulrika Boëthius, President, Finansförbundet, Sweden
Anders Johansson, President, Forena, Sweden
Linda Palmethofer, President, Handels, Sweden
Valle Karlsson, President, Seko, Sweden
Ulrika Lindstrand, President, The Swedish Association of Graduate Engineers, Sweden
Peter Lökvist, Head of International Department, Transportarbetareförbundet, Sweden
Peter Hellberg, 1st Vice President, Unionen, Sweden
Stefan Giger, General Secretary, SSP-VPOD, Switzerland
Daniel Mürger, President, Syndicom, Switzerland
Vania Alleva, President, UNIA, Switzerland
Dave Ward, General Secretary, CWU, United Kingdom
Warren Kenny, General Secretary, GMB, United Kingdom
John Moloney, Assistant General Secretary, PCS Union, United Kingdom
Len McCluskey, General Secretary, Unite the Union, United Kingdom
Paddy Lillis, General Secretary, USDAW, United Kingdom