



# EFBWW NEWSLETTER

## News from the EFBWW

**14th EFBWW  
General Assembly  
12-13-14 December 2023  
Helsinki, Finland**

EFBWW Congress that will be held in Helsinki, Finland, from 12 to 14 December. The deadline to amend the statutes and submit resolutions is behind us. The first meeting of the resolution committee will take place on 22<sup>nd</sup> September. In the meanwhile, we are finalising the activity report and the strategic plan, preparing the side events on gender, organising, and communication.

### Liaison Forum announces raise for project unit costs

The EFBWW took part in the Social Partner's Liaison Forum, which took place in July. The review of the EU sectoral social dialogue was discussed and new important changes were announced. There will be no

project-based social dialogue meetings. Instead, the decision was to subcontract the management of the Social Dialogue to an external service provider. This arrangement will start from 2025 and a formal communication will be sent to the social partners soon. There are changes in the unit costs in projects: these will be increased by 25% and will also be applicable for projects which were already running on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023.

### ELA webinar focuses on undeclared work

Undeclared work's pervasive presence in sectors like construction has triggered concerns across Europe's labour market. The recent online webinar hosted by the European Labour Authority on 6<sup>th</sup> July, garnered attention from the EFBWW emphasising its resolute focus on addressing the repercussions of the cost-of-living crisis on undeclared work. The webinar featured insightful discussions led by experts like Prof. Ioana Horodnic (University of Iasi, Romania) and Prof. Friedrich Schneider (Johannes Kepler University Linz, Austria), who delved into the relationship between economic factors and undeclared work. Daphne Nathalie Ahrendt (Eurofound) provided insights into the rising cost of living in the EU. The construction sector's vulnerability to undeclared work is particularly concerning to EFBWW.

### EFBWW supports ETUC campaign: On the Road for a Fair Deal for Workers

The EFBWW supports ETUC's campaign against austerity: On the Road for a Fair Deal for Workers. It is important to demonstrate that this is a Europe wide mobilisation by trade unions and workers. We ask all affiliates to inform the ETUC about initiatives organised in the period September – October 2023 and the national mobilisation/

**Building our way to the congress! Save the dates: 12-14 December 2023, Helsinki, Finland.**

Three and a half months to go! Time to step up our preparations for the

#### Contents:

News from the EFBWW	1-2
News from the affiliates	2-4
Miscellaneous	5
Calendar	6

events organised on 13 October. A major mobilisation moment will take place in France on Friday 13 October.

### Seminar on Green transition in wood & forestry

The ETUI, together with the EFBWW, is organising a seminar on “Green transition in wood and forestry and the potential for an inno-

vative trade union CBA agenda”. The aim of the seminar is to exchange views on the impact of the EU Green Deal on forest-based industries, as well as identify strategies that trade unions can implement to ease the transition. To complement the experience, a company visit is foreseen to investigate the good examples of collective bargaining on the green

transition in the wood sector. The seminar will take place on 17-18 October in Ghent, Belgium, and targets members of the EFBWW Standing Committee Wood, Furniture, and Forestry. [Registration](#) is open until mid-September!

## News from our affiliates



### Finland



#### Inspection detects bogus self-employment in subcontracting chain

An inspection carried out by the Regional State Administrative Agency for Southern Finland detected six cases of bogus self-employment involving Ukrainian war refugees in a subcontracting chain. The case happened at a construction site contracted by Hausia Oy in Espoo, with Ukrainian war refugees working under the Tiling and Saneeraus Ra-Ve Oy, a subcontractor responsible for tiling work. "Disguising employment as bogus

self-employment is an increasingly common practice in the construction industry that aims to circumvent compliance with the universally applicable collective agreement and employer obligations. Ukrainian war refugees are highly vulnerable to this kind of exploitation. Typically, the subcontracting chain is long and complex, which makes it difficult to sort things out," says Toni Malmström, head of Contracts at the Finnish Construction Union. EFBWW general secretary, Tom Deleu, reacts: "this is one more case showing how subcontracting chains are a major risk factor for labour exploi-

tation. The EU must act and limit subcontracting chains!" More info [here](#) and [here](#)

### Italy



#### UNHCR rewards trade unions for agreement to integrate refugees in construction work

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) rewarded Feneal-UIL, Filca CISL and Fillea CGIL and representatives of construction companies for the excellent results obtained by the three-year protocol signed in May 2022 by the Ministries of Labour

and the Interior and the social partners. The pact provides for the inclusion, in three years of 3,000 refugee citizens in construction work. An agreement that immediately set in motion the machine of the construction schools (40 territorial bodies in 15 regions), coordinated by the joint body Formedil, and within a year transformed 700 refugees into construction workers. The text provides for the identification of recipients thanks to territorial training bodies and the public reception circuit (Sai and Cas). Refugees are then placed in the training courses of construction schools and gain field experience with internships directly with companies, and at the end of the path almost all of the participants were hired. The trade unions underline that "this path demonstrates that with appropriate labour policies it is possible to manage the integration of migrant citizens in a positive way".

## Norway



### EFBWW participates in meeting on social dumping

Fellesforbundet and LO Norway held an event to discuss social dumping, labour crime and the role of public procurement ahead of the municipal elections. The EFBWW took part in a roundtable discussion on how to use public procurement to strengthen workers' and trade unions' rights. It was an opportunity to underline the relevance of the EFBWW campaign that calls for the introduction of a limit on subcontracting tiers and a ban on intermediaries in the construction sector. There was a significant interest and support for our subcontracting campaign, especially because there is a ban on work

agencies in construction in the Oslo area, which has been effective since 1 July. The first results are already visible: more direct employment. We stressed that this is a model that must be replicated and adopted throughout EU Member States. We do not understand EFTA's doubts about these measures, nor the argument that it is against the internal market rules: it is the exploitation in subcontracting chains that is against the internal market rules. Another dimension approached during the event was the strong focus on apprentices in the Oslo model, which also leads to more apprentices and a more attractive construction industry for young people.



## Romania

### Builders protest against Government plans to cut construction workers' wages

The General Federation of Trade Unions FAMILIA (FGS Familia), with the support of the National Trade Union Bloc (NBS), the Federation of Employers of Construction Compa-

nies (FPSC), the Federation of Cement Unions in Romania (FSCR), the Valcea County Road Union, the Social House of Builders, but also representatives of all employers and construction employees, organised a protest against the government's intention to eliminate tax incentives granted to workers in construction. "It is our duty to hold accountable a lying Government that violates its own written commitments! If it happens, the drop in revenues will cause many builders to leave Romania in search of better paid jobs in other countries. We want to build in Romania!", says Ramona Veleanu, FGS Familia Vice-President. FGS Familia and NBS proposed to the government a package of measures to prevent the effects of eliminating tax incentives on September 1, 2023, that includes negotiating and concluding a collective agreement at sector level and with a mechanism for maintaining net earnings for employees in the construction and building materials sectors. More [info](#)



## Poland



### NSZZ Solidarność demands public support for the construction industry to achieve climate neutrality

The Congress of the National Secretariat of the Construction and Wood Industry NSZZ "Solidarność" alerts that steel, cement, lime, ceramic and chemical industries will need public aid from the state and the European Union (EU) to achieve the climate neutrality required by the EU and to maintain jobs in Poland. The union argues that "the EU's climate policy makes it impossible for companies in these industries to finance the necessary investments with own or borrowed funds". As an example, for cement and lime works to be able to continue producing clinker and quicklime from Polish raw materials, it is necessary to capture around 40% of the CO2 emissions generated in cement works. This will double production costs in cement works, electricity consumption will rise by 100 to 150% and it is estimated that additional costs will be made for the transport and storage of each tonne of CO2. When the current EU climate policy is implemented, the union expects the Polish government to organise systemic public aid for the above-mentioned industries by subsidising necessary investments in installations for capturing CO2 in the production process, to organise and finance the entire process of transporting and storing CO2 in Poland from energy plants with high CO2.

## Sweden



### Mälarna re-elected leadership and voted to merge with Byggnads

The federal leadership of the Swedish Association of Painters Mälarna was re-elected in its congress, which took place in August. Mikael Johansson was re-elected as Chairman, Jan-Olof Gustafsson, Vice Chairman and Treasurer, Peter Sjöstrand, Vice Chairman and Contract Secretary. EFBWW general secretary, Tom Deleu, had the opportunity to speak during the event and focused on a green transition based on quality jobs and skills. Deleu also underlined the victory in the asbestos file, an important achievement which will better protect painters. The congress also voted on a motion for a merger with Byggnads in a secret ballot: 66 delegates voted for and 52 against. According to the statutes, another vote is required to dissolve the union. This will take place on 27 November. More [info](#)

## UK



### Unite congress focuses on solutions to compensate rising prices

Unite organised its policy conference in Brighton, UK. focusing on the impact of staggering inflation, on the fall of real wages, and the impact of Brexit on workers' rights. The state of play in negotiations and pay deals that compensate rising prices and productivity of workers were at the centre of the discussions. Sharon Graham, UNITE General Secretary, gave an energising speech focusing on the wave of industrial action rolling over the country and on the leading role of UNITE activists and the fact that industrial action does pay off. "Winning is possible", Graham stressed. The EFBWW took the opportunity to express its solidarity with UNITE and the British workers at strike!



In this section the EFBWW gives the possibility to its affiliates to share their stories.  
If you have news or contributions, do not hesitate to contact [pcravina@efbww.eu](mailto:pcravina@efbww.eu).

## Miscellaneous

### **Eurofound analyses the role of social partners in just transition**

Eurofound just published the study: Supporting regions in the just transition: Role of social partners. This report investigates the involvement of social partners in the just transition to a climate-neutral economy, with a particular focus on the terri-

RESEARCH REPORT



Industrial relations and social dialogue  
Supporting regions in the just transition:  
Role of social partners



torial just transition plans. These plans aim to support the regions most negatively affected by the just transition by assisting workers to retrain, relocate and find other jobs, and support industries that need to phase out fossil fuels or other greenhouse gas-intensive activities. An

analysis of social dialogue practices and examples of collective agreements shows the range of topics covered by the social partners. The report also investigates the role of the energy crisis in the just transition and how it has contributed to delays in the implementation of territorial just transition plans in certain Member States. More [info](#)

### **Renovate Europe will discuss Spain as a driving force on Building Renovation**

The Renovate Europe initiative will organise and event: Time to Act: Spain as a driving force on Building Renovation. The debate will take place on 3 October in Madrid together with Renovate España (GBCe, CNC), Ecodes and CAN Europe Translation. Europe's leaky buildings are in the spotlight. Not only do they swallow 40% of all final energy consumed in the EU, emit 36% GHG emissions and contribute to the suffering of over 100 million people living in energy poverty with high energy bills – they are also at the heart of the last piece of legislation in the Fitfor-55 Package: the EU Buildings Directive (EPBD). Spain takes the reins of the EU Presidency at a crucial time for the outlook of

the Green Deal, with the Buildings Directive entering the final trilogue phase in the second half of 2023. This high-level conference will be the moment to take stock of the progress in the Spanish context, take inspiration from good examples on the ground and better understand why an ambitious Buildings Directive is crucial for energy security, climate action and the industrial competitiveness of Europe.

### **Hans-Böckler-Stiftung assesses the role of trade unions in supporting mobile migrant workers**

The Hans-Böckler-Stiftung published the study "Supporting mobile migrant labour - the role of the trade union movement". The study discusses ways for trade unions to manage successfully assumed or assigned tasks in the area of the free movement of workers and cross-border labour migration in the EU. It aims to contribute to the debate on how and in what form trade union activities can better protect the interests of migrant workers based on clear rights concerning workers' mobility. More [info](#)

*EFBWW Meeting schedule 2023*

6 September 2023	Joint EFBWW/FIEC Board meeting	Brussels, Belgium
7 September 2023	Mid-term Conference Resilientwood	Zagreb, Croatia
18 September 2023	EFBWW Presidium	Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
19-20 September 2023	BWI European Conference	Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
2 October 2023 (full day)	Social Dialogue Wood/Furniture - Joint woodworking and furniture session	Brussels, Belgium
2 October 2023	EFBWW Auditing Committee	Brussels, Belgium
3 October 2023 (full day)	OSH Coordination group/Open expert meeting	Brussels, Belgium (EESC)
4 October 2023	SIDE-CIC project, 1st Steering group	Brussels, Belgium
6 October 2023	Cement Skills 2030 project, 1st steering group	Brussels, Belgium
11 October 2023 (full day)	Social Dialogue Construction - WG VET/YOUTH	Online
17-18 October 2023	EFBWW - ETUI seminar woodworking & furniture	Ghent, Belgium
19 October 2023	Resilientwood Workshop I	Sweden (tbc)
9 November 2023 (full day)	Executive Committee	Brussels, Belgium (EESC)
Week of 13 November (TBC)	Resilientwood Workshop 2	Italy (tbc)
14-15 November 2023	DESOCO2 EFBWW-FIEC event on Ukraine	Warsaw, Poland
12-14 December 2023	EFBWW General Assembly	Helsinki, Finland