



MARCH 2018

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

New measures to stop digital companies from dodging taxes



The European Commission's proposal for a 3% minimum tax on revenues of large digital companies such as the GAFAs (Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon), has met with favour among ETUFs, as it ensures that digital value is taxed where it is created. By setting up subsidiaries in low-tax countries or exploiting tax havens, digital companies have been able to minimise tax on revenues generated in the EU. The EU has lost an alleged €5 billion in tax from Google and Facebook over the last three years. "Taxes should not be paid only by those who cannot evade them," said ETUC Deputy General Secretary Katja Lehto-Komulainen, adding that "Increased tax revenue is, ultimately, in the interests of business itself as a higher total tax revenue can lead to a lower overall taxation". Read [more](#)

GENERAL

International Women's Day 2018



Dozens of campaigns to close the gender gap are appearing from all corners to say that [It's time to deliver on women's rights](#)! With activism for women's equality fuelled by movements like [#MeToo](#), [#TimesUp](#) and [#PressforProgress](#), there is a strong global momentum striving for gender parity. In this view, EFFAT fully supports the [ITUC campaign](#) for an **ILO Convention on Violence and Harassment against Women and Men in the World of Work**, including gender-based violence. EFFAT is tackling this issue particularly in the hotel and restaurant, agriculture and domestic work sectors, where women workers are more exposed to sexual harassment and violence by supervisors, co-workers and clients. Read [more](#)

ETUC kicks off EU-funded project to ensure work-life balance



ETUC is implementing **'Rebalance: Trade unions' strategies and good practices to promote work-life balance'**, the new project co-funded by the EU Commission, in cooperation with national and European trade union confederations. On 15 March 2018, EFFAT attended the first meeting of the Project Steering Committee, where partners discussed methodology and timing for the project. This includes a study on trade unions' and social partners' strategic good practices that seek to adjust the work-life balance for women and men through social dialogue and collective bargaining. To this end, EFFAT member organisations will soon be called upon to fill in a pre-interview questionnaire on how parental, maternity, paternity and care leave as well as childcare and flexible working arrangements have fostered a work-life balance, to be followed by in-depth interviews in selected countries. The findings will be presented at a European conference in early 2019.

EFFAT Youth Committee met in Leuven to set roadmap for next EFFAT Congress



The EFFAT Youth Committee met in Leuven from 12 to 15 March (Belgium) for a three-day training organized by EFFAT in cooperation with the ETUI. Participants came from Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Turkey and the UK. The meeting was an opportunity for many young EFFAT activists to become more familiar with EFFAT's work and strengthen synergies with colleagues coming from other countries. The training focused on the assessment of training needs and on the development of a roadmap to be followed by the Youth Committee in view of the next EFFAT Congress. The Youth Committee expressed the need to establish a Steering Committee that could support EFFAT's Secretariat in following-up the Youth agenda. The next training course organized with the ETUI will take place in the second half of 2018.

European Platform on undeclared work focuses on service vouchers



The UDW Platform plenary meeting on 8-9 March 2018 was centred on tackling undeclared work through preventative and deterrent measures. Several case studies showed that incentives such as the voucher system could help turn undeclared into declared work, providing significant benefits to workers. Another effective tool are creative awareness campaigns, which can change mindsets and increase support for declared work. Read [more](#)

AGRICULTURE

Glyphosate



On 5 March 2018, EFFAT Agricultural Secretary Arnd Spahn met with representatives from EEB, PAN Europe, IFOAM EU Group and Slow Food in order to discuss the issues posed by glyphosate. The participants mostly described the actions undertaken by their organisations against the substance and looked at how to develop further synergies between trade unions and NGOs on this issue. They seized the opportunity to further discuss their role and involvement in the various Civil Dialogue Groups (CDGs) of the COM. On 27 June 2018, EFFAT's agricultural sector will hold a conference in Brussels entitled 'Glyphosate and other dangerous substances'. [Here](#) is EFFAT's position on the use of glyphosate.

FOOD

It's time to combat unfair trading practices in the food sector



Unfair trading practices can lead to negative economic and social consequences including failure to earn a predictable and sufficient income, long working hours and job uncertainty for workers in SMEs. In EFFAT's view, it is essential to encourage fair trading practices by promoting cohesive supply relationships, in order not only to drive efficiency and innovation, but also to secure good working conditions in the supply chain. To this end, European associations in the food industry have written a [joint statement](#) that urges the European Commission to act upon its findings.

EU sugar social partners release CSR report



The social partners in the EU sugar industry, EFFAT and CEFS, have released the 14th edition of the EU CSR report, marking their continued cooperation. The sugar sector plays a crucial role in the rural economy. With 106 factories across 19 EU Member States, the sugar sector provides quality industrial employment where few alternatives exist. Most importantly for this report, sugar companies continue to implement good social practices to adapt to changing realities and improve employees' wellbeing. This is the case in all eight areas of the Code of Conduct where good practices have been collected. The CSR report is a testament to the strong relations between the industry and employees – a model that can be replicated in other sectors. Read [more](#)

TOURISM

EU Horeca social partners agree on priorities



At their Steering Committee meeting on 16 March 2018, the social partners in the European hotel and restaurant sector, EFFAT and HOTREC, discussed further action on their joint [EAfA Pledge](#): “Enhance quality and attractiveness of apprenticeship schemes in the European hotel and restaurant sector”. They agreed on the next steps, such as establishing an Online interactive Risk Assessment ([OiRA](#)) tool for the sector in cooperation with OSHA. Due to new evidence from Ireland and the UK, it was agreed to take up the issue of sexual harassment and violence in the workplace, and to work towards a sector specific seminar as part of the 2019-2020 work programme of the [European Platform on Undeclared Work](#).

Trade Union Task Force on Social Tourism meets in Brussels



At its meeting on 13 March 2018, the Trade Union Task Force on Social Tourism, with representatives from ISTO, IUF, ETUC and EFFAT, discussed a range of topics: the “ILO Guidelines on Decent Work and Socially Responsible Tourism”; a possible cooperation on the “Fair Hotels” initiative of IUF and EFFAT; possible joint initiatives in the fields of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and vocational training in social tourism; and potential joint activities in the run up to the 2019 EP elections.

COMPANY POLICY

EFFAT takes Lactalis to court over contempt of consultation rights



After years of EFFAT and its affiliates attempting to set up a European Works Council in the Lactalis Group, it was decided to take legal action against the French dairy giant for its lack of compliance with the EU Directive on the establishment of EWCs. The hearing will take place in Laval. Both European and national legislation lay down the rules to establish EWCs, which are essential workers' representative bodies. "Information and consultation rights are key elements of the EU social acquis and cannot be neglected by transnational companies. This is why we have decided to bring the Group to court", said Harald Wiedenhofer, EFFAT General Secretary. There is no reason why Lactalis should not respect these rules. Had the EWC existed, EFFAT and its affiliates would have been able to anticipate significant changes that affected the group's sites across Europe. Read [more](#)

Country-by-country reporting to guarantee augmented tax transparency



Earlier this month, EU Member States agreed on the automatic exchange of tax-related financial information of multinational companies, known as country-by-country reporting, or CBCR, subject to UK parliamentary scrutiny. The agreement was reached at a meeting of Economic and Financial Affairs Ministers in Brussels and is a key part of the Anti-Tax Avoidance Package adopted by the European Commission on 28 January 2016. The new rules will apply to multinational companies which operate cross-border in the EU. Once implemented, all Member States will have the information they need to protect their tax bases and to effectively address companies that try to escape paying their fair share of taxes where they make their profits. Read [more](#)



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