

The Slovenian Government  
The Slovenian Labour Ministry  
The Slovenian Economic Social  
Council

[Letter sent by e-mail]

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## **RE: Weakened Social dialogue in Slovenia**

Dear Sir/Madam,

On behalf of millions of workers across Europe working in private and public sectors, we are writing to you about an issue of great concern which is the decline of social dialogue in Slovenia.

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and the European Trade Union Federations (ETUFs) recall that defending the interests of workers and contributing to well-functioning labour markets with decent working conditions and equal societies has to happen throughout Europe by active social dialogue and collective bargaining at all levels.

At the European level, the ETUC and the ETUFs, together with the employers' organisations, take part in social dialogue committees chaired by the EU Commission. Representatives from each side and from each Member States, including Slovenia, have the right to participate in these Committees.

We are all deeply concerned by reports from our member organisations from Slovenia illustrating a worrying situation where Trade Unions and Social Dialogue are totally ignored. We have learned that the Slovenian Government and the National Assembly recently have adopted a number of decisions that will have a lasting impact on the socio-economic position of workers and employees. It is utterly concerning that these decisions breach the established decision-making process, which stipulates that such decisions should only be made through dialogue with the social partners.

Social Dialogue cannot be by passed and Social Partners must be consulted by their national governments when designing and implementing policies in a timely and constructive manner.

Over the last three decades, social dialogue in Slovenia has primarily taken place through the Economic and Social Council (ESS), a tripartite body of the social partners and the Government of the Republic of Slovenia. ESS has been a venue used to discuss, negotiate and align legislative proposals, strategic documents, social agreements and other legal acts and adopt decisions of fundamental importance to society, primarily in the socioeconomic domain. Social dialogue standards have gradually developed over the years, generating a sense of mutual trust between the social partners.

We cannot accept that the political authorities of Slovenia deliberately attempt to exclude social partners, suspend social agreements, avoid social dialogue, and undermine its very foundations. To prevent this and to turn the page, we urge you stop these recent practices and to return to the thirty-year long tradition of active involvement of the social partners in labour market and social issues, to the best for your country, including its workforce.

Yours sincerely,

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