Labour 7 Communiqué

The Labour 7 is the official engagement group of the G7 representing the views of trade unions in G7 countries and the European Union

"Strengthening Social Dialogue in times of crises"

In 2022, G7 Leaders met in Elmau under the German presidency and committed to "*promote continuity and prioritise coordinated action across the G7 on critical labour, social, and employment issues*" by "*establish[ing] a standing Employment Working Group (EWG) within the G7*".[1]

Only three years later, the work of the G7 labour and employment track is being called into question precisely when the world of work needs it most. While we welcome that the Canadian Presidency convened the EWG and organized a virtual LEMM before it concluded its work in 2025, the L7 deeply regrets that no formal Declaration nor policy outcomes have been negotiated and adopted this year. Furthermore, the L7 has serious concerns that the work of the EWG be discontinued in the future, including next year under the French presidency, given that - to date - still no labour and employment track has been announced in the upcoming Presidency's workplan in 2026.

The L7 wishes to recall that addressing the "social dimension of globalization" has been central to the G7 in its modern form, thereby contributing to asserting its ambition as a multilateral platform over the years. At a time when the legitimacy of the G7 is being questioned by many actors, refusing to take up its responsibility as the group of largest economies and address fundamental social and labour issues would seriously undermine both the relevance and credibility of the G7.

The L7 has actively engaged in the work of the G7 for many years. Through this engagement, and as workers' organizations representing the largest democratic and social movements across the G7, the L7 has strived to anchor the work of the G7 in the real economy and in the reality of societies by bringing in the views and priorities of working people.

However, despite repeated commitments from G7 members to respect and promote international labour standards, including fundamental principles and rights at work, recent evidence shows an alarming decline in respect for labour rights in the G7 and globally.[2] Concrete action from the G7 is urgently needed.

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[1] G7, Leaders Declaration, Elmau, June 2022.
[2] ITUC Rights Index, 2025

In particular, gaps in collective agreements coverage, the absence of meaningful engagement with workers' organizations and restrictions on the right to collective bargaining remain common across the G7.

While the world of work is deeply affected by profound megatrends such as digitalization, the advancement of AI, climate change and demographic shifts, collective bargaining and social dialogue must constitute pillars of democracies and indispensable tools to enhance social cohesion and promote full employment and inclusive economic growth.

In this regard, we urge G7 Labour and Employment Ministers to scale-up their work and reaffirm their commitment to ensure respect for labour rights and promote decent work for all through serious follow-up of previous G7 commitments, robust engagement in the EWG and high-level political stewardship in the context of the LEMM.

Building on the discussions held under the EWG this year on how to ensure "workforce resilience", the L7 urges the G7 to work towards the adoption of concrete, measurable and action-oriented targets that will make a difference in people's life, such as:

1. **The adoption of a "G7 target on Zero In-Work Poverty":** while millions of workers across G7 countries still live below the poverty line, in particular women and youth, G7 members should share best practices and discuss different approaches, including on how they set the poverty line, on how to distinguish voluntary from involuntary part-time work, and more importantly on the achievement of minimum living wages as the most effective tool to lift workers out of poverty. Following the model of the G20 Brisbane-eThekwini Target and the G20 Nelson Mandela Bay Youth Employment Goal, a G7 target on the eradication of in-work poverty could uphold the role of minimum living wages and collective bargaining in rebalancing the labour income share and therefore make a concrete and tangible contribution to the eradication of poverty and the promotion of social cohesion.

2. **The adoption of a specific G7 target on collective bargaining:** significant collective bargaining coverage gaps and persistent legal and practical barriers to affiliation exist in G7 countries. The absence of coverage by collective agreements leaves millions of workers who are not unionized without adequate protection and exposes them to violations of their labour rights, unacceptably low wages and poor or even hazardous working conditions, while also undermining economic productivity. Through this new collective bargaining target, G7 members could regularly track efforts to:
    - promote workers' affiliation to trade unions and compliance with ILO Conventions n°87 and 98 (first by removing barriers to affiliation, in law and in practice, and by creating an enabling environment for collective bargaining, including by addressing some of the structural drivers that undermines trade unions density, such as informality and precarious work);
    - support broad-based collective bargaining and extend collective agreements' coverage to ensure adequate protection and respect for fundamental labour rights in all sectors.

3. **<u>The adoption of a "G7 Social Dialogue Roadmap" and the creation of a "G7 Social Dialogue and Collective Bargaining Platform":</u>** through this tool, G7 members, in collaboration with the L7 and B7, could share experience and showcase best practices of agreements reached at company, sectoral or national levels. The policy roadmap would reaffirm G7 members commitment to social dialogue and the fundamental rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining. More specifically, it could address specific themes, such as social dialogue for a just transition; social dialogue for gender equality and the eradication of violence and harassment in the world of work; or shaping the advancement of AI through social dialogue.

4. **<u>G7 Policy Roadmap on "Upholding workers' fundamental rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining globally":</u>** through this instrument, G7 members could acknowledge their responsibility as global economic powers to respect, protect and promote fundamental labour rights at the international level. More specifically, this Roadmap could highlight the need to ensure policy coherence at global level and identify key policy levers such as:
    - ***Development cooperation:*** how official development assistance, by relying on trade unions in donor and recipient countries, can help advance respect for fundamental labour rights in developing countries.
    - ***Trade policies:*** how can G7 members' trade policies contribute to ensure respect for fundamental labour rights and decent jobs creation, in the G7 and globally.
    - ***Responsible Business Conduct:*** how can G7 members enhance RBC as a key tool to ensure respect for workers' rights throughout supply chains.
    - ***A human-centric Approach to AI*:** Following up on the G7 Action Plan adopted in Cagliari, and building on the joint L7-B7 statement, G7 members could promote policy and regulatory frameworks that foster a human centric approach to AI, and discuss the most effective policies to mitigate risks and reap potential benefits, including reskilling and lifelong learning policies, investment in social protection and the participation of workers and their representatives in shaping the advancement of AI, including in the design, implementation and ongoing oversight of algorithmic management.