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### **European alliance calls on EU governments to ratify convention on domestic workers**

An alliance of employers, trade unions, European and international institutions, the European Commission, and civil society organisations has ramped up calls for the protection of Europe's 9.5 million domestic workers, including millions of home care workers.

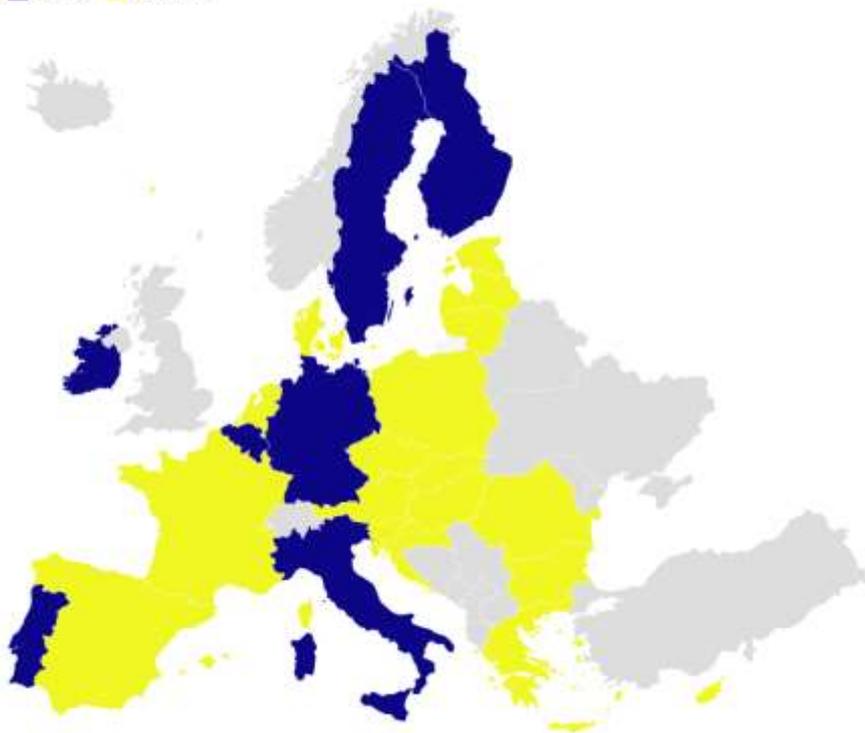
On the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No.189), the EU-wide alliance has written to the governments of EU countries that have so far failed to write the agreed measures into national laws. The convention, which was adopted by governments at the International Labour Organization in 2011, is yet to be written into law in over half of EU Member States.

Ratifying the Convention requires that countries ensure domestic workers have the same rights and freedoms as other workers. Currently, a number of national laws exclude domestic workers from minimum employment standards. In particular, workers' freedom of association and collective bargaining rights would be strengthened.

**European Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights, Nicolas Schmit**, said: "Now is the time to live up to the hopes raised with the adoption of the ILO Domestic Workers Convention ten years ago and move forward with its ratification and implementation. I call on renewed efforts to lift domestic work out of invisibility and unacceptable conditions into recognised, fair and decent work."

## Which EU countries have ratified the ILO Convention on Domestic Workers?

■ Ratified ■ Not Ratified



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Aurelie Decker, Director EFSI said: “Ratifying the Convention is a triple win for governments, businesses and workers, as undeclared work undermines governments’ tax, creates an uneven playing field for business, and leaves workers without rights. Ratification is an important step to raise the profile of the sector and create the structures for sustainable and equitable change for workers.”

Oliver Roethig, Regional Secretary of UNI Europa, one of the ILO C189 Alliance’s members argues: “The EU is usually a leader in workers’ rights. However, when it comes to domestic workers, live-in care workers, and homecare workers, the gaps are evident. Ratifying the Convention will not only make it easier for unions to represent, organise and engage in collective bargaining but also creates the recognition for these mostly migrant women workers.”

Kristjan Bragason, EFFAT General Secretary, said: “EFFAT’s primary goal is to bring domestic workers into the formal labour market and to ensure that they are covered by all EU labour and social legislation, including occupational health and safety regulations, and that they enjoy equal rights & social protection, also if they provide services in non-standard forms of employment or via platforms, with particular attention paid to (undocumented) migrant domestic workers. More EU Member States should ratify and implement ILO C189, and the setting up of social dialogue structures in the domestic work sector at European level should be supported.”

## **Notes to the editor**

Of the approximately 9.5 million domestic workers in the 27 EU member states, 90% are women. Among them, 6.3 million are declared and at least 3.1 million are working undeclared. Among the 6,3 million declared domestic workers, nearly 2 million of them are excluded from the same labour rights and social protection as other workers in their respective country. In Europe, a significant proportion of domestic work is carried out by migrants. In 2013, the ILO estimated that 54.6% of domestic workers in Northern, Southern and Western Europe were migrant workers, a majority of whom are migrant women.

Only 8 EU Member States have thus far ratified the ILO Convention 189. As part of its efforts to get them to ratify the Convention, the ILO C189 Alliance is holding a two-day conference on 28-29 June 2021 to discuss best practices and policies from the sector. The ILO C189 Alliance's event will be livestreamed on 28-29 June 2021. This will be accompanied by an in-depth report on the state of domestic workers today.

## **About the ILO C189 Alliance**

The ILO C189 Alliance is a group of European stakeholders implicated directly and indirectly in the domestic work sector. Partners of the ILO C189 Alliance share the views that the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ILO Decent Work for Domestic Workers marks an important milestone to take stock of the progress made and the remaining issues.

Partner organisations include: European Commission, EASPD, EFFAT, EFFE, EFSI, UNI Europa, International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF), Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM), and the ILO Office for the European Union and the Benelux countries.