

Press release

European Social Partners joint statement on Digital Transformation in workplaces in the European Furniture Industry

The European Furniture Industries Confederation (EFIC) and the European Federation of Building and Woodworkers (EFBWW) - recognized European social partner organisations for the Furniture sector – issue their joint recommendations on how to anticipate, design, implement and manage industrial change driven by digital transformation.

The process of digitalisation will affect the work of every trade and profession. It will affect all areas of activity, from the safety of workers and consumers to technic design; it will have effects on processes, work organisation and labour market, as well as in the skills needed and business models. Digitalisation entails challenges, but also many opportunities. Companies and trade unions will work together actively and discuss, as equal partners, the new demands on companies and their workers.

In this context, **Social Partners' action will focus on the following aspects:**

- ✚ Restructuring and retraining measures and a range of safety nets, which are needed to facilitate a socially responsible transformation of our subsectors, trades and professions;
- ✚ A digitalisation strategy for micro and small enterprises, craftspeople and specialized professions in all European regions;
- ✚ Arranging, in collaboration with the European Commission, workshops that will address every aspect of digitalisation and automation in the furniture sector;
- ✚ Mapping good practices to raise awareness on digital transformation in companies and to provide social partners with orientation on the developments at company level;
- ✚ Collaborate with other stakeholder at the European level.

Taking into account the prominent role industrial relations and more specific the institutionalized social dialogue plays in the European Treaty, the European Commission must involve the concerned social dialogues in its policy developments and in the design of related actions. The social partners ask the European Institutions to study, evaluate and influence cross border effects of digitalisation on the various aspects of the Woodworking and Furniture sector's economic activity.

Furthermore the social partners expect from the European policy makers to join forces at the domestic, European and international levels via:

- ✚ **Ambitious research on progressive forms of work organization;**
- ✚ **A professional programme for social technic design;**
- ✚ **Legal backing of the process;**
- ✚ **Sector specific strategies and platforms;**
- ✚ **Science: the drawing up of an international research plan on procurement, value chains, the manufacturing processes, design concepts or skills needs and training approaches requested for our sector;**
- ✚ **Access to data and, as a flip side of this particular coin, its privacy.**

Download the full paper [here](#).

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