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## Promoting proper working conditions in the European meat industry

On 20 September 2018, European trade unions met in Madrid to discuss a range of challenges in the meat sector in Europe. The event was organised by EFFAT's Spanish member organisations at the Spanish Economic and Social Committee.

While significant efforts have been made by EFFAT and its affiliates over the years to advance labour rights, working conditions and health and safety at work in the European meat industry, campaigning against the social and economic distortions caused by social dumping, we must acknowledge that progress has been uneven. Certain inappropriate practices persist in some segments of the meat sector: differences of treatment between workers, unfair, non-transparent recruitment, coercive and threatening behaviour by some agencies and companies, ineffective complaints procedures. Much work still needs to be done at all levels, to reduce the causes of vulnerability and promote fair living wages, equality of treatment, and good labour relations in the sector.

EFFAT and its member organisations resolved to build on the work trade unions are already doing in recruiting and supporting migrant workers with

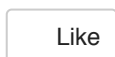
organising campaigns aimed at vulnerable workers, enabling workers to gain the benefit of trade union activities and fostering more dialogue through European and international trade union cooperation to achieve better terms and conditions.

Fragmentation of the meat sector, complex contractual relationships, bogus self-employment with low pay and vulnerable conditions, individualisation, and a vacuum in representation for both employers and employees create a more challenging environment for good employment relations. "Social progress is a question of trade union power. Trade unions are capable to wield power in times of crisis and we will do all we can to raise further awareness, influence legislation, encourage more and better controls, inspections and ultimately enforce meat workers' rights" concluded Mr. Harald Wiedenhofer, EFFAT General Secretary.

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