



20<sup>th</sup> CONFERENCE, 23 and 24 February 2021

Online

Opening speech by Christina Theochari,

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the 20<sup>th</sup> ECTUN Training Conference on the: **“Labor recovery from the pandemic and developments in the European Capitals”**

It is a great pleasure and a relief at the same time to seeing all of you present, healthy and in good spirit. This Conference is supported by the ETUI, the ETUC and with the help of the CGTP Lisbon. The ICG (Integrated Consulting Group) has undertaken the task to technically support and facilitate this online event. A special welcome and thanks to **Luca** for joining us and for the stable support, and also to **Vera** from the ETUI.

*Dear Colleagues,*

Last year by this time we were leaving Helsinki, with an important outcome with specific aims and timeline for first time, called **“Action on Climate change and just transition”**, we would never imagine what would follow. The appointment at Belgrade this year was cancelled due to the global virus pandemic that occurred, which provoked since then millions of life losses all over the world, and which still haunts our lives.

In addition to the threat to public health, the economic and social disruption threatens the long-term livelihoods and wellbeing of millions.

Obsolete terms such as quarantine came back to our vocabulary, together with the physical distancing, the masks etc.

An asymmetric threat put in knee the world of work which is being profoundly affected. Obviously, we express our solidarity to the families of the victims anywhere they might be.

However, in this nightmare a hope was given by science, research and thousands of volunteers worldwide, who contributed to have in short time the necessary weapons to battle the disease, the vaccines that give the possibility to come out of the tunnel of desperation.

Given this situation the topic of this Conference couldn't be other than the impact of the pandemic to labour in our capital cities, and the way our Labour Union Organizations cope up against.

The aims of the Conference are:

- To explore the situation in our capital cities one year after the sanitary crisis started.
- To evaluate the impact to the society focusing on labour.
- To elaborate proposals, initiatives and joint actions of the Capitals Trade Unions.

This will happen with the contributions of our distinguished speakers and also the work of all of us during the Sessions and the Workshops.

So, in the Program we have welcome addresses and speeches by **Liberio Dominges**, General Secretary of CGTP Lisbon, **Vera Dos Santos Costa**, ETUI Director of the Education Department, **Luca Visentini**, General Secretary of the ETUC and **Liina Carr**, Confederal Secretary of the ETUC.

There will be two Workshops with topics dedicated the 1<sup>st</sup> to the present situation one year after the outbreak of the pandemic and the multitude of repercussions to workers in European Capitals and the 2<sup>nd</sup> dedicated to the post-pandemic time and ECTUN proposals, priorities and joint actions.

Our ambition is to come up with a plan of joint actions that will be implemented until the next Conference in Belgrade.

Hoping that we'll have a fruitful cooperation as always, that justifies the role of our Network either at regional or European level, I thank you.