

Bucharest, 27 July 2021

## **ETF Statement on the anti-union climate in Romania**

An ETF mission to Romania took place on 26 and 27 July 2021. The objective of the delegation led by ETF president and general secretary was to check facts in the wake of serious attacks against some of the ETF affiliated unions in Romania.

Following talks with more than 10 transport trade unions as well as with representatives of Romanian confederations and of the European Public Service Union, the ETF is deeply concerned about the situation in which trade unions operate, notably:

- the lack of social dialogue that seems to be something systematic in the country and the lack of interest from the government to promote it. The Romanian prime minister as well as the labour and transport ministers did not manifest any interest in meeting with us and discuss the situation;
- Intimidation and criminalisation of trade union leaders are spread practices, as the recent attacks on USLM leadership show;
- Union busting is a recurrent issue, as trade unions are seen as an obstacle to privatisation and restructuring. Examples of this trend occur in aviation, public transport, maritime and railway.
- Lack of sectoral collective bargaining, which is the main reason for the very low level of wages in the country. Road freight transport is a typical example.
- The use of the pandemic, with the adoption of a legal act, to prevent the renewal of collective bargaining agreements and industrial actions

The ETF is taking this situation very seriously and is determined to keep backing up its Romanian members, in a spirit of unity and mutual support. As we did over the last months, we will give a European voice to the breaches to labour and social rights in Romania.

EU initiatives such as on fair minimum wages and the European pillar of social rights are no more than window dressing with such practices persisting in member states.

A detailed report on this situation for transport trade unions in Romania is currently being prepared, and will be made available publicly soon.