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**Spanish member Isabel Caño Aguilar elected as vice-president of the European Economic and Social Committee**

**Isabel Caño Aguilar from Spain**, member of the Workers' Group, will be one of the two vice-presidents of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) for a two-and-a-half year term from 2018 to 2020. She will be responsible for communication matters. She will fill one of the senior positions in the EESC along with the newly elected president Luca Jahier from Italy, former president of the Various Interests' Group, and vice-president Milena Angelova from Bulgaria, member of the Employers' Group, who will be the vice-president for budgetary matters. The new president and vice-presidents were elected on 18 April as part of the Committee's mid-term renewal session marking the half-way stage in its five-year term of office.

After her election, the vice-president in charge of communication, **Isabel Caño Aguilar**, said: *"The EESC is a real point of dialogue, the bridge between the European institutions and Europe's citizens. And in this role, we must listen and speak out. Under my specific communication responsibilities, we will reinforce the communication on what Europe is about and where the Committee's responsibility lies in constructing Europe. I believe we must make our points of view better heard and use local initiatives to report on the real situation on the ground. Only in this way will we be able to contribute to improving living and working conditions on our continent."*

As the Committee embarks on the second half of its five-year term, it will as always be working hard to strengthen the voice of civil society and bring Europe closer to its citizens.

**Background**

* The EESC is made up of 350 members from its 28 Member States. Nominated by their national governments, they are appointed by the Council of the European Union for a period of five years. They then work **independently** in the interests of all EU citizens. These members are not politicians but employers, trade unionists and representatives of various activities, such as farmer, consumer and environmental organisations, the social economy, SMEs, the liberal professions and associations representing persons with disabilities, the voluntary sector, gender equality, youth, academia, etc.

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*The European Economic and Social Committee represents the various economic and social components of organised civil society. It is an institutional consultative body established by the 1957 Treaty of Rome. Its consultative role enables its members, and hence the organisations they represent, to participate in the EU decision-making process. The Committee has 350 members from across Europe, who are appointed by the Council of the European Union.*