



European Steel Action Day - 1 October 2020

EESC Workers' Group President - statement of solidarity

On the European Steel Action Day, the EESC Workers' Group President Oliver Röpke expressed solidarity with thousands of steel workers across Europe: "we give our support and solidarity to steel workers across Europe demanding urgent action to safeguard this strategic sector which is the bedrock of European industry and provides millions of quality jobs. Just as steel laid strong foundations for the construction of the European Union, it must continue to play a key role in its future. *Europe needs steel and steel needs Europe!*"

Steel is at the heart of European industry and vital to other sectors that are key for the EU's economy including construction, automotive, mechanical and electrical engineering, aerospace, and medical devices. These industries stand for what we want: a Social Europe with quality jobs and decent wages based on collective agreements and strong workers' voice. The greening of EU industries also requires commitment and effort in modernising and investing in European steel companies. Typically, steel production and consumption represent a circular economy: 100% recyclable steel production is the starting point for many applications in our daily lives and the basis for its sustainability.

The European steel industry was already facing important challenges and the COVID-19 pandemic has plunged it into another deep crisis. Steel production has declined by 40%, orders have been cut by as much as 70-75%, and it is estimated that at least 45% of the workforce is facing (or threatened by) layoffs and job cuts. Without urgent action from the EU and the EU member states, this industry could run out of breath and around 50% of steel production capacity could be lost. We need an offensive industrial policy, investing resources into supporting the recovery of productive steel sites across Europe.

This is why steel workers and their trade unions across Europe are mobilising and calling on political and industrial leaders to safeguard their jobs, act against unfair trade and provide a pathway towards green and sustainable steel, made in Europe. The EESC Workers' Group supports this call and industriALL Europe's [European Steel Action Plan](#), which sets out a recovery plan that is crucial for the sustainable future of the European steel industry. **#SteelNeedsEuropeNeedsSteel.**