

The EESC delegation to COP21

The delegation of the European Economic and Social Committee to COP21:

- **Georges Dassis**, President. Born in Greece and involved in the trade union movement since he was 15, he was an activist during the Greek colonels' dictatorship. He became a permanent staff of the Belgian General Federation of Labour (FGTB) before representing the Greek General Confederation of Labour in the European and international trade union movement. He has been a Member of the EESC since 1981 and has chaired it since October 2015.
- **Isabel Caño Aguilar**, Member for the trade unions' constituency, vice-chair of the EESC's Sustainable Development Observatory and a Member of the EESC since 2010. A teacher by profession, she is a member of the education section of the Spanish General Workers Union (UGT) and head of the UGT office in Brussels.
- **Petr Zarahdník**, Member for the business constituency, Czech economist specialised in the economic policy of the European Union, currently working as an independent consultant and adviser to the president of the Chamber of Commerce of the Czech Republic. A former advisor to President Václav Havel, he is a professor at the Thomas Bata University in Zlín.
- **Lutz Ribbe**, Member for the various interests' constituency, director of the environmental policy section of the EURONATUR NGO. He has been a Member of the EESC since 1998, chairing the Sustainable Development Observatory between 2013 and 2015 and currently serving it as a vice-chair.

Follow us! www.eesc.europa.eu/sdo-cop21

@EESC_NAT @EESC_SDO

hashtag #EESClimate



European Economic and Social Committee

Rue Belliard/Belliardstraat 99
1040 Bruxelles/Brussel
BELGIQUE/BELGIË

Published by: "Visits and Publications" Unit
EESC-2015-77-EN

www.eesc.europa.eu

Contacts:

- **Jean-François Bence**, director for legislative works:
Jean-Francois.Bence@eesc.europa.eu
+32 477880248/+32 25469399
- **Stella Brozek-Everaert**, administrator:
Stella.BrozekEveraert@eesc.europa.eu
+32 479827632/+32 25469202
- **Fabien Porcher**, administrator:
Fabien.Porcher@eesc.europa.eu
+32 479827642/+32 25469098

© European Union, 2015

Reproduction is authorised provided the source is acknowledged.



Print:
QE-01-15-846-EN-C
ISBN 978-92-830-2944-1
doi:10.2864/48937

Online:
QE-01-15-846-EN-N
ISBN 978-92-830-2945-8
doi:10.2864/467833

EN



The European Economic and Social Committee

The Voice of the European Civil Society at COP21



European Economic and Social Committee

Introduction

The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) wants COP21 to be a major milestone to place the international community on the right track to limit global warming to a maximum of 2°C compared to preindustrial levels, while developing appropriate tools to face the adverse effects of climate disruptions. However the EESC's principal message is to strongly advocate in favour of full recognition, involvement and empowerment of civil society organisations, including businesses, trade unions, NGOs and more generally citizens, who are the ultimate drivers of change. A successful implementation of ambitious climate policies will need the full participation and commitment of civil society at large.



European Economic and Social Committee

The European Economic and Social Committee in a nutshell

The EESC is an advisory body in the institutional set-up of the European Union, representing civil society. With 350 members distributed among three groups (employers, workers and various interests), the EESC acts as a vibrant forum for European civil society dialogue – hence, ensuring a broader democratic legitimacy and effectiveness of the European Union.

The EESC has been and continues to be very active on climate- and development-related issues closely following international negotiations linked to sustainable development in a broad perspective, in cooperation with other Economic and Social Chambers and representatives of the United Nations' Major Groups.

Key positions

The European Economic and Social Committee adopted its position on COP21 in July 2015 and formulated a series of key messages for decision-makers:

- **The Paris Agreement should be a legally-binding, ambitious framework** applying to all Parties on the basis of common but differentiated responsibilities; its primary objective should be to keep global warming as far below the 2°C threshold as possible compared to preindustrial levels; it should be made up of firm, clear and comparable commitments for 2030, as dynamic and transparent as possible, with monitoring and regular review mechanisms to strengthen mitigation commitments, while remaining predictable;
- **All economies must move to low-carbon patterns**, including through boosting research and innovation, greening fiscal systems or establishing market-based instruments, thus securing new economic opportunities; similarly, **fossil fuel subsidies should be phased out as soon as possible, in particular with a view to speeding up deployment of renewable energy sources**;
- **Decision-makers must ensure that the transition to low-carbon economies is fair**, creates decent jobs, fosters workers' participation, contribute to greening skills and curricula, considers social consequences and is embedded in social dialogue; trade policies should appropriately take into account climate considerations; all those aspects are key to ensure public support for the transition;
- **The international community must support developing countries, notably the most vulnerable**, and help them move directly to low-carbon economies and strengthen their climate resilience; to this end, appropriate financial instruments need to be made available, including a fully-fledged Green Climate Fund, "loss and damages" arrangements as well as effective technology cooperation;
- **Last but not least, civil society and citizens at global, national and subnational levels need to be fully involved into the development, review and, above all, implementation** of the Paris Agreement to ensure a swift and fair transition towards a resilient, decentralised, low-carbon economy; decision-makers need to agree on a general framework but it is the citizens and civil society which will implement it.

