

**To: Deputy Permanent Representatives
to the European Union**

CC: Social Attachés

Re: Women on Boards Directive.

Dear Ambassador,

I am contacting you in relation to the Women on Boards Directive following the meeting of the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council on 16 June 2022.

The ETUC welcomes the progress made on the Women On Boards Directive, after ten years of non-action and blockage.

The adoption of the agreement will hopefully clear the path for many women into key decision-making positions throughout the European Union.

However, the Directive needs to be reinforced at national level if it will offer a real perspective for breaking the glass ceiling for *all* women.

The ETUC is calling on Member states in the transposition to:

- 1. Ensure diversity among the women appointed.** It is essential that women from diverse backgrounds and life experiences are appointed. Member States should support this diversity by providing access to training opportunities to ensure a diverse panel of women are available and prepared for appointment and that transparent selection procedures are in place.
- 2. Respect democracy at work.** It must be ensured that where the selection of non-executive directors is made through a vote of the company's workforce and/or employee organisations pursuant to national law or practice, Member States may apply the quantitative objectives separately to shareholder representatives and employee representatives.
- 3. Binding targets for senior management positions** cannot be left out, as they are crucial steppingstones for the advancement of women into higher positions.

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- 4. Promote gender equality in the company as a whole.** This means Directors' duties must be reformed to place a duty on Directors to promote gender equality within the company and the supply chain and to reduce the gender pay gap. Shareholders' interests must not be the only duty of the directors but must rather improve corporate citizenship in the future by making equality throughout the companies' footprint a clear obligation.

Working women and their unions will be very active in meeting with Member states and ensuring an ambitious transposition of the Directive.

Yours sincerely,



Esther Lynch
Deputy General Secretary