



PRESS RELEASE

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EUROPEAN SOCIAL PARTNERS SIGN AN AGREEMENT TO FIGHT AGAINST HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE AT WORK

Today, in the presence of Commissioner Spidla, the secretaries general of ETUC, BUSINESSEUROPE, UEAPME and CEEP officially signed an autonomous framework agreement to fight against harassment and violence at work. Negotiated during ten months, the text commits the members of the signatory parties to combat all unacceptable behaviour that can lead to harassment and violence at the workplace,

With this agreement, the European social partners firmly condemn harassment and violence in all their forms and recognise that harassment and violence can potentially affect any workplace and any worker, even if in practice some groups and sectors can be more at risk. Amongst other, the agreement provides a method to prevent, identify and manage problems of harassment and violence at work, which

- requires enterprises to have a clear statement outlining that harassment and violence at the workplace are not tolerated and specifies the procedure to be followed in case of problems,
- recognises that the responsibility for determining, reviewing and monitoring the appropriate measures rests with the employer, in consultation with workers and/or their representatives,
- allows the provisions of the agreement to deal with cases of violence by third parties where appropriate.

This framework agreement is the sixth signed by the European social partners since the beginning of the European social dialogue 20 years ago. Negotiations started following an official Commission consultation of the social partners on harassment and violence in January 2005, as required by the Treaty prior to presenting European social legislation. The successful conclusion of this negotiation is a major achievement for the European Social Dialogue work programme 2006-2008.

Members of BUSINESSEUROPE, UEAPME, CEEP and ETUC committed themselves to implement the provisions of this autonomous agreement before April 2010, in accordance with the procedures and practices specific to management and labour in their country.

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