

Press Release

80 years of holidays with pay – a social right to safeguard !

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The International Social Tourism Organisation (ISTO), the European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions (EFFAT) and the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) celebrated 80 years of paid leave during a conference that was held on 17 June in Brussels at the EESC.

On 24 June 1936 the International Labour Organisation (ILO) adopted the first international convention (No. 52) on holidays with pay, which, as well as being a major social right for thousands of workers, contributed significantly to the development of tourism.

As recalled by the speakers from the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and the ILO, legislation on paid leave exists in most countries – apart from six, including the USA. However, this social right, which has enabled millions of people to go on holiday, is being increasingly challenged in developed countries and is often inexistent in developing countries, where the majority of workers are part of the informal market.

Against this backdrop, social policies with regard to tourism implemented in a number of countries by trade unions and tourism operators who promote “tourism for all” have been crucial, as highlighted by the Spanish trade union representatives (CCOO and UGT), the French Works Councils (CEZAM) and the Belgian Bureau for Annual Paid Holidays (ONVA).

EFFAT and ISTO, through ISTO President Jean-Marc Mignon and with the support of the members of the Trade Union Task Force on Social Tourism, take advantage of this anniversary to launch an appeal to all stakeholders to promote “Accessible, sustainable and inclusive tourism” and to bring forces together to make sure that the right to paid leave becomes real for a larger number of people.

If you would like further information, please note that the presentations given at the conference will be available on the ISTO and EFFAT website.