

7, rue Alcide de Gasperi
L-1615 Luxembourg-Kirchberg

B.P. 3024
L-1030 Luxembourg

Tél. : +352 26 009-1
E-mail : uel@uel.lu

www.uel.lu

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Dear Leaders of Enterprise,

Many of you will have heard through the recent media coverage about our meeting with the Minister of Labour and the Unions OGBL, LCGB and CGFP. I have deemed it important to write to you in order that you have a full picture of what transpired on the 18th of September.

These exchanges occurred in the context of the Permanent Committee for Work and Employment (CPTE); a meeting held behind closed doors without the attendance of the press. At the outset of the meeting, the UEL took the initiative to propose a new process to make progress on the challenges and opportunities in the working environment. What exactly is this new process? Here is what we proposed to the Minister of Labour and the unions.

1. Central role of the Minister who brings forward legislative initiatives in the area of labour law in accordance to the larger principles contained in the coalition agreement.
2. The Minister would then proceed with bilateral meetings and as such engaging with the UEL and the Unions separately.
3. UEL and the Unions would be free to enter into a dialogue with the Minister on the draft legislative bills he would have presented. The role of the UEL would be to represent the interests of the world of enterprise and propose alternatives.
4. The Minister of Labour would have the responsibility of deciding political arbitrages between his initial idea and taking into account or ignoring the ideas put forward by UEL and the Unions.

We are convinced that this new working methodology would be more efficient and would avoid a political polarisation of the forces at hand. It is true that the nature of what we proposed is new and different when compared to the classical Luxembourg tripartite model. If we are honest, we must acknowledge that this model has run its course and is unfit to help us respond to the current challenges. **Let us be very clear – we remain fervent advocates of the social dialogue, but the natural home of this dialogue is at company level; the place of wealth creation and personnel development.**

The social dialogue at a national level which should strive for balance is nothing short of a tool to allow the Unions to position themselves as a political force. We see no interest in being accessories in a system whose ultimate objective is the finalisation of a codex of laws that will prevent companies from being able to adapt to economic and societal changes in a new world of work.

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For decades, labour law in this country has only gone one way: more rights to employees. In principle, we would not object, would it not be for the total absence of possibilities for companies to adapt. The opposite has happened: more constraints, more red tape, less flexibility, with an underlying vision that views the employee as an individual that requires protection; today from companies and tomorrow from himself.

This is why the UEL in complete agreement with its constituent parts has decided to abandon the old tripartite method whose only outcome is a dialogue of the deaf.

We wish to bring our ideas forward to the decision maker in this whole process and on all subjects. This is the Minister of Labour. It will fall upon him to legislate with the aim to foster economic growth while taking into account the interests and expectations of employees.

What are the next steps?

We will communicate to the press and meet the Prime Minister with his cabinet on the 1st of October to articulate our position and our willingness for dialogue, but differently from the past.

Finally, I would appeal to you all – let's show togetherness, because the challenges ahead of us are formidable; both for companies and the people who work for them. Some will wish to divide us; let's stay united, because progress is only achievable through unity in our ranks.

Please be assured, dear leaders of enterprise, of my utmost respect.

Best regards,



Nicolas Buck
President