L7 - W7 - C7 Joint Statement to the G7 Labour Ministerial Meeting

The world is experiencing multiple transitions that are changing the labour market's foundation, mainly in terms of workforce participation, requested skill sets and diverse range of career paths. While these transitions may present new opportunities, they also bring to light latent risks. The latest World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index reveals a persistently negative situation for women in the G7 members, with only 2 countries having managed to improve their conditions slightly, while the others have even regressed in ranking. Globally, the picture is even more concerning. First, the gender employment, salary, and pension gap remain a significant concern, as women still face challenges in accessing new job opportunities on an equal footing with horizontal and vertical segregation for women in the labour market persisting in G7 economies. According to the ILO's latest data, twice as many women as men are outside the labour force. Women represent a large share of informal workers and access to decision-making positions in any sector remains too limited to allow significant change.

Moreover, it is important to consider the joint effects of the demographic challenge and the digital and green transitions on the labour market and on requested employee profiles, given the revolution brought about by AI and recent research that points to women and girls' particular vulnerability to job loss due to their overrepresentation in clerical occupations, services and sales, education and care sectors and lack of ICT training. While AI has the potential to enhance productivity, it also sets the scene for considerable employee reskilling/upskilling needs, exacerbating gender divide and reproduction of gender bias if misused and not properly regulated.

Therefore, we call on G7 Leaders and the G7 Labour Ministers to:

1. **Abandon ineffective austerity measures and implement reforms to ensure increased women's labour participation and equal access to career opportunities, as well as decent wages and pension**s by:
    a) revising job evaluation and pay scales in female-dominated sectors to ensure the economic independence, guarantee equal pay for work of equal value across sectors and avoid at the same time critical labour shortages due to low pay and bad working conditions;
    b) promoting work-life balance for everyone (e.g., remote work; flexible working arrangements), increasing sharable parenthood leave (equalising mandatory earmarked maternity and paternity leave) and dedicated welfare services according to social and economic circumstances such as childcare available to every parent at an affordable cost; envisage similar benefits and caregiver leave for those who are involved in elderly people care. More generally, it's urgent to adopt measures to actively enable promote a culture of respect and equality by rebalancing the burdens of family and care tasks to break the prejudices that negatively impact women's choices at work and in private life, which also

affect health sexual and reproductive rights of women, still at risk or even denied in many countries, even within the G7.

c) adopting care policies to bring care services, and most notably public, free, universally accessible and quality gender-transformative care services, to ensure the right to care and further autonomy, investing in developing in priority public infrastructure for child care, elderly and mental health, and people with disability, guaranteeing access to effective, safe and legal abortion and post-abortion care, creating decent jobs for paid and unpaid care work, improving working conditions and increasing wages for those providing these services (including migrant and informal health and care workers and fostering their meaningful participation in decision-making on care policies); also implementing gender-transformative policies that tackle entrenched social norms in order to 'defeminise' caregiving and changing gender norms around caring responsibilities;

d) fostering social dialogue and collective bargaining to incentivize workforce participation of women in all their diversity, marginalised and disadvantaged social groups, thus supporting and accelerating the transition from informal to formal economy, as well as revising social protection systems and deploying dedicated Active Labour Market Policies (ALMPs);

e) ratifying, effectively implementing and mainstreaming the ILO convention 190 to eliminate violence and harassment, including gender-based violence (GBV), and its accompanying recommendation;

e) developing and supporting women-centred mandatory policy frameworks, both for private and public sectors, taking as reference the ILO convention 190 to eliminate and prevent gender-based violence (GBV) in the workplace, focusing on protecting marginalised groups, through dedicated systems such as gender responsive public procurement mechanisms or temporary special measures including quota, and special mechanisms for hiring or providing equal and proportional promotions, especially for senior positions;

f) mainstreaming economic empowerment culture and opportunities among girls and women through government backed programmes, which provide access to public and private financial incentives with high focus on working mothers, the latest tech skillset training, and dedicated mentorship; g) ensuring fair recruitment and promotion processes, financially supporting the creation and adoption of transparent and non-discriminatory AI algorithms to prevent gender bias;

h) dedicating funds at all levels, including working places, public and private, to address and prevent violence against women and the LGBTQIA+ and adopting initiatives such as whistleblowing, and ensuring consistently adequate protections among others in line with ILO Convention 190; develop measures aimed at helping women workers who are suffering GBV a right to remedy and to be able to denounce and follow the legal process, with the assistance of trade unions' or workers' representatives in their absence, including through reduction of working time, dedicated leave and geographical mobility.

i) developing programs to reintegrate women into the productive labour market, as older women constitute the majority of participants in elderly learning programs; this can represent an opportunity to balance gender-specific impacts by creating conditions to

support the creation of quality employment on multiple fronts within national policies.

l) ensuring the full implementation of the principle of Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value and providing active political and financial support to the Equal Pay International Coalition led by the ILO, the OECD and UN-Women.

2. **Foster women and girl's engagement within the new landscape enabled by AI** by:

a) involving women in decision-making processes including budgeting and in developing responses to current major challenges such as digital and climate change;

b) ensuring public funding to guarantee an effective right to education and training, as well as widespread access to basic education, and showcasing women role models, including workers, thus demystifying careers with low female participation;

c) advocating for comprehensive strategies that address systemic barriers to women's participation in STEAM and AI fields, such as gender stereotypes and unconscious bias, actively involving women at a high level of education in policy decisions in order to enhance the design and implementation of education and training programmes crucial for ensuring their relevance and effectiveness in preparing women and girls for careers in STEAM and AI fields;

d) ensuring the effectiveness of the right to education and lifelong learning for all women and ensure further coherence with current and future market demands in terms of skills and qualifications; designate resources to sustain a lifelong learning approach in terms of STEAM and AI programmes:

- at corporate level, encouraging companies and employers, in the public and private sectors — to invest in training throughout women's entire careers including when returning to work after care or maternity leave to keep up with job developments;
- increasing the number of women engaged in cybersecurity activities and occupations in companies

3. **Ensure that new and existing AI tools are gender-transformative and equitable, and are co-developed by women, mitigating gender bias and prejudice by ensuring that any AI tool does not infringe the right to individuals' privacy and by establishing a specialised independent National Office that has the right to request any AI ecosystem actors** to:

a) enhance AI accountability and transparency, by providing AI Transparency Reports with comprehensive documentation on the AI training dataset to assess periodic data legitimacy;

b) advocate for comprehensive training programmes on diversity and inclusion for AI developers and researchers, being this crucial for embedding inclusivity into the AI development process;

c) promote traceability, allowing the tracing back of decisions made by AI systems to specific input data. Such a national body should be supported by strong legislation on AI.

d) establish regulatory frameworks for auditing Algorithmic Impact Assessments, ex ante and throughout the lifecycle of the AI product and certification processes to verify compliance and ensure adherence to human rights, gender equality and legal standards.

4. **Ensure adequate access to information and training and safeguard against bias by setting inclusivity standards and preventing conscious Algorithmic Impact assessments throughout the AI product lifecycle from design to deployment and unconscious prejudice in AI algorithms**, by:

a) ensuring the right to information and consultation but also collective bargaining when introducing AI in the workplace, as well as establishing mechanisms for users to report anonymously biased AI systems that may disproportionately impact women, girls and LGBTQIA+ persons in all their diversity;

b) implementing common global policies, drawing on expertise from diverse backgrounds (STEAM, humanities, and creative fields), encompassing diversity and inclusion AI programmes (e.g., how to craft inclusive and unbiased prompts, to develop unbiased and inclusive AI systems) alongside risk evaluation frameworks to assess their related risks.