

Joint Declaration of the European Social Partners in the Insurance Sector

Ten key factors of an attractive sector with high-quality jobs, valuable skills and fair employment opportunities

Introduction

The European insurance sector plays a vital role in society, providing financial security, social cohesion, risk management and long-term stability to individuals, businesses and communities. Many people choose to work in insurance for the job security and diverse career opportunities it offers, along with the ability to help individuals and contribute positively to society. It is an industry undergoing significant transformation, with growing demand for insurance coverage and related services, new challenges and risks, climate change, an ageing population and digitalisation, driving the need to offer adapted insurance products, solutions and services.

To remain relevant and competitive in a rapidly evolving world, Europe's insurance industry must attract, retain and develop a motivated, engaged and empowered workforce. The European Insurance Social Partners believe in a responsible, sustainable, innovative and inclusive industry that is a top employer – resilient, competitive and attractive for current and future employees.

The ability to participate in social dialogue and key decision-making processes is a crucial factor in enhancing the attractiveness of the sector and managing changes within the industry. The European Social Partners recognise the value of open and constructive social dialogue, and its key role in ensuring fair and transparent employment relations and in addressing sectoral challenges through collective agreements. We commit to jointly engaging in meaningful social dialogue at all applicable levels, as a key factor for securing and upholding quality working conditions, shaping joint workplace policies, supporting sustainable labour practices and developing the sector's performance for an industry that is fair, competitive and attractive.

To this end, ten important factors could be considered by employers and employees:

Values-oriented and sustainable work

A career in insurance is purposeful, making a positive impact on people's lives. Europe's insurance industry is committed to being innovative and competitive, values-oriented, sustainable and resilient, with strong employment terms, high-quality working conditions, job security and well-structured career progression.

The industry's varied business models play an important role in shaping the sector's attractiveness. In an era of accelerating climate change –an issue that significantly impacts the insurance industry – the long-term sustainability of business models has become a crucial factor. To remain attractive, particularly to the younger generation, corporate cultures and values should aim to align with evolving social expectations. The European Social Partners recognise the importance of sustainability and the value orientation of business models.

We support joint workplace policies that prioritise social responsibility, environmental sustainability and ethical business practices. By championing green initiatives and integrating sustainability into day-to-day operations and organisational culture, the sector strengthens its long-term relevance and makes it an attractive, desirable and future-proof career choice for those who want to contribute to a more sustainable world.

To attract younger workers in particular, the industry can showcase its opportunities in modern, cutting-edge areas such as InsurTech, combined with digital aspects and human expertise, sustainable practices and social responsibility, positioning itself as an innovative and forward-thinking career choice. Redesigning entry-level positions and embracing non-conventional roles can also help to attract diverse talent with fresh perspectives, fostering both inclusivity and innovation.

High-quality working conditions

The European Social Partners promote good and fair financial and non-financial working conditions (including a healthy work environment) in the insurance industry as an important incentive for encouraging workers to seek and retain employment in the sector. Compensation packages are often diverse, extending beyond competitive salaries to include other benefits such as tailored compensation and benefits schemes, healthcare services, health

insurance and other insurance products. Supplementary pensions, in addition to the mandatory ones guaranteed by each State, are also frequently part of these packages.

We fully adhere to EU and international principles on decent work, social protection and equal pay.

Varied and innovative work with a responsible use of AI and digital tools

A sector's attractiveness is largely determined by the nature of the work itself. Prospective employees may seek diverse, dynamic and innovative tasks within a participatory and modern work environment. The European Social Partners therefore invite employers to maintain a regular dialogue with employee representatives when taking initiatives aimed at aligning corporate information technology with employee needs, ensuring high levels of user-friendliness.

In the Joint Declaration of 12 October 2016, the European Social Partners committed themselves to monitor the social impacts of digitalisation in the sector and in the Joint Declaration of 16 March 2021¹, laid out key principles on the responsible use of artificial intelligence. Building on the principles outlined in these declarations, the European Social Partners recognise that artificial intelligence in the workplace is a factor that is becoming increasingly important. We support the principles of trustworthy, transparent and ethical AI. We refer to the EU AI Act and the 2020 European Social Partners Framework Agreement on Digitalisation,² and advocate for a digital transformation that respects workers' rights, promotes skills development and fosters social dialogue. We also promote non-discrimination in the use of AI and digital tools and decisions free from bias.

AI, digitalisation and technological changes in general are reshaping the insurance sector's working environment. The European Social Partners recognise the transformative potential of AI and digital tools in customer service and innovation. Processes are streamlined and digitised, enabling tasks to be completed without diminishing job satisfaction. To ensure technology serves as a tool for progress, its responsible use is guided by ethical principles, transparency and respect for workers' fundamental rights, without compromising job security, job quality or the well-being of the workforce. In accordance with national legislation, social dialogue and, where applicable, collective bargaining, information and consultation during the introduction and implementation of AI and digital tools and continuous monitoring are central.

The European Social Partners consider essential the protection of employees' privacy and security, in compliance with the EU GDPR and the AI Act, including the relevant privacy risks associated in the employment context.

The insurance industry faces strong competition for talent from other sectors for all categories of skilled professionals and in particular, those skilled in the area of data science and IT. An adapted and supportive workplace is important for the success of the company and employees in the insurance sector and ultimately, for the benefit of the customer. In this context and in all functions, people with human empathy, technical, economic and legal skills and insurance know-how collaborate closely with people who can offer IT support or who have mathematical and data science-related skills.

The European Social Partners also promote a fair distribution of AI efficiency and productivity gains amongst the whole workforce, so that technological advancements benefit everyone not only financially but also in terms of improved job quality.

Work-life balance and modern working arrangements

The European Social Partners acknowledge the importance of work-life balance for employee well-being, effectiveness and long-term job satisfaction.

Achieving a healthy balance between work and personal life can be, for both the (potential) employer and the (potential) employee, an important factor for making a working environment attractive. Since individuals have different expectations of what constitutes a good work-life balance, offering a variety of employment models and

¹ See [Joint declaration on Artificial Intelligence by the European social partners in the insurance sector](#)

² [European Social Partners Framework Agreement on Digitalisation](#)

working arrangements that cater to diverse lifestyles and life stages can be considered. This should, in accordance with national legislation, also be discussed with the trade union workplace representative and could also be a topic of social dialogue.

In the Joint Declaration on teleworking of 10 February 2015, the European Social Partners emphasised that flexible work arrangements at the local level serve the mutual interests of both companies and employees. Such models can be a key tool for enhancing workplace quality of life while simultaneously improving the performance of companies.

The insurance industry offers various working models tailored to employees' needs. This has traditionally focused on flexible working hours but since the COVID-19 crisis, it has increasingly extended to remote and hybrid forms of work. The European Social Partners promote remote work arrangements that are voluntary, reversible and based on mutual agreement, with equal rights and fair working conditions for all employees, regardless of their working location. For some tasks, however, it is recognised that on-site presence is important.

Digitalisation should not lead to a situation where employees are obliged to be connected at all times. Open communication and teamwork will also allow for a collaborative and supportive environment where employees feel engaged and connected, regardless of their working arrangements.

The European Social Partners recognise that ensuring work-life balance can be even more important for employees with children or caregiving responsibilities. Balancing career aspirations with family obligations can be essential in this context. Providing parental leave and caregiving leave can play an important role in fostering a family-friendly workplace.

Promoting active and healthy ageing can also be important for work-life balance. In the Joint Declaration of 26 January 2010 on the demographic challenges of the insurance sector, the European Social Partners outlined key measures necessary to promote a sustainable work-life balance for all employees.

Job security

The European Social Partners recognise that a high level of employment security is an important factor in making the insurance industry an attractive employer.

The European Social Partners promote quality contracts and the prevention of job insecurity, precarity and an excessive use of temporary contracts.

The insurance industry's business model is rooted in long-term stability and sustainability. Jobs in the insurance industry have traditionally been considered relatively secure. Through robust social dialogue, proactive upskilling measures and a focus on augmenting jobs (rather than just automating and replacing them), the sector has successfully navigated the digital transition in a socially responsible way. The European Social Partners commit to continuing this approach to prevent future job losses. In the Joint Declaration of 15 February 2019 on the social effects of digitalisation, the European Social Partners reaffirmed their commitment to managing digital transformation in a way that prioritises social responsibility. Safeguarding jobs and maintaining employees' employability remain top priorities. The European Social Partners encourage investments to be made in prevention, training and preparing employees for future challenges.

Equal opportunities, diversity, inclusion and non-discrimination

Equal opportunities, diversity, inclusion and the fight against discrimination are fundamental pillars of the European value system. The European Social Partners in the insurance industry outlined key principles on these issues in the Joint Declaration on Diversity, Inclusion and Non-Discrimination in the Industry, adopted on 9 March 2022³. We place great emphasis on the effective implementation of these measures, recognising their importance in fostering an inclusive and attractive work environment and their role in contributing to the attractiveness of the sector.

As affirmed in the Joint Declaration, the European Social Partners agree that the principle of equal pay for work of equal value must be implemented in full. Collective bargaining agreements play a central role in establishing clear and objective salary structures, ensuring fair and transparent pay and preventing gender-based pay disparities.

³ See [Joint declaration of the European Insurance Social Partners on Diversity, Inclusion, and non-Discrimination in the sector](#)

Job postings, the application and selection process, as well as access to training and career development, must be free from discriminatory criteria and based on factors such as skills, qualifications, competence and experience. Respectful, tolerant and inclusive workplaces are representative, lead to less turnover, and are key for employee satisfaction, engagement and empowerment, as well as for the sector's growth, success, innovativeness, creativity and sustainability – enhancing the industry's overall reputation and attractiveness.

Access to training and professional development

Sustainable employment relationships are those that are designed to last for a prolonged period of time. As organisations and technologies (including AI) continue to evolve, the need for adequate training opportunities and effective motivation mechanisms for lifelong learning becomes increasingly important.

The European Social Partners emphasise the vital role of continuous learning and the importance of investing, both by the employee and the employer, in employees' training and re/up-skilling throughout their professional lives. This is essential for job retention, career development, employability, the avoidance of digital divides and the sector's long-term competitiveness and attractiveness. Ensuring that the skills of the existing workforce match the current and future needs and job profiles of the sector allows employees to feel valued, motivated and capable, while also helping to fill vacancies internally before recourse to external candidates.

In an industry with considerable career variety, the European Social Partners promote and support clear career pathways, such as training programmes, mentorship opportunities and transparent career advancement. Providing access to professional development resources, such as certifications, courses and leadership development programmes, can help employees to have the tools they need to grow, succeed and envision their long-term potential in the industry. We encourage access to employer-supported training opportunities for all, in accordance with national legislation and collective agreements.

In the Joint Declaration on Artificial Intelligence of 16 March 2021, the European Social Partners in the insurance industry outlined key elements and conditions that can serve as valuable guidelines in this regard. Additionally, the addendum to the Joint Declaration on the Social Effects of Digitalisation in the Industry of 15 February 2019 recognises training as a crucial tool for addressing emerging challenges. The European Social Partners emphasise that these previously established principles play an important role in enhancing the attractiveness of the sector. Companies in the insurance industry are invited to take into account the agreements concluded at national and company level, if they have not already done so.

Fundamental rights at work

The European Social Partners confirm their commitment to respecting fundamental rights at work, including freedom of association, the right to join and be represented by a trade union, and robust social dialogue and collective bargaining. Employees and their representatives can exercise their trade union rights freely, without restrictions, fear of intimidation, discrimination or retaliation.

Onboarding

Employer attractiveness goes beyond simply attracting candidates to the insurance industry; it also involves fostering a welcoming culture that ensures that (new) employees feel valued and supported. Sustainability in this context means not only recruiting talent but also integrating them effectively into the company. This is particularly important for young professionals, who often reconsider their career paths within the first few years of employment. These initiatives play a vital role in integrating employees and ensuring they have the necessary skills, knowledge and support to succeed in their roles and contribute meaningfully to the sector's growth and innovation.

To address this challenge, professional onboarding management is important. The European Social Partners encourage joint initiatives on effective onboarding and leadership development.

In today's hybrid work environment, building a strong relationship from the outset is crucial. This includes not only familiarising new hires with their roles but also fostering social connections within the workforce. Trade unions and employee representatives can play an important role in this process by facilitating dialogue between staff and management, identifying potential issues early, and implementing measures to help employees integrate into the company's social structure.

The European Social Partners recognise a well-structured onboarding process as an important factor for the attractiveness of the industry and commit to promoting the exchange of experiences and best practices in order to enhance integration and retention efforts across the sector.

Occupational health & safety, including a workplace free from violence & harassment

A safe, healthy and supportive work environment with conditions that take into account both physical and mental well-being is important for the attractiveness and sustainability of the sector, job retention and ensuring a fulfilling professional life. Employers are responsible for the occupational health and safety of all their employees and the social partners should collaborate at all levels to ensure safe and healthy working conditions, in line with existing regulations, best practices and ethical standards.

Employers will continue fostering a workplace culture that prioritises health and safety and could, inter alia, implement initiatives such as corporate health management programmes, sports activities, nutritional guidance, stress management support, employee assistance hotlines and regular medical check-ups or screenings. The European Social Partners encourage the employees to participate in such initiatives.

The European Social Partners support measures to prevent occupational and psychosocial risks (including stress and burnout) and to foster an open culture around mental health, helping employees to have access to confidential, easily accessible mental health resources and to seek support without stigma.

The European Social Partners in the insurance industry provided a detailed perspective on this topic in the Joint Statement of 26 January 2010 on the demographic challenges in the European insurance sector. We place great importance on the measures outlined in that statement, recognising their important role in enhancing the attractiveness of the sector.

To work in a safe, healthy, respectful and inclusive environment, free from any forms of violence and harassment, is a core value of an attractive, ethical, sustainable and forward-looking industry. The European Social Partners are committed to supporting and promoting a harassment-free corporate culture, workplace and working conditions, in which all employees are treated with dignity and respect, and are protected from all forms of work-related violence, abuse and harassment, including through appropriate prevention, reporting and follow-up mechanisms and gender-sensitive approaches.

Follow-up and next steps

Dissemination of the Joint Declaration

The European Social Partners commit to promoting this Joint Declaration through all available channels, including trade unions, industry associations and employers within the insurance sector and beyond.

We will actively encourage national-level social partners to collaborate in publicising and engaging with this declaration. This may include joint discussions on its content, coordinated presentations to national governments and other relevant stakeholders, as well as collaborative studies or research initiatives. We strongly encourage our members to make use of it at the European, national, sectoral and (multinational) company levels, for example via collective bargaining.

Publication of practical approaches

The European Social Partners plan to monitor the implementation of the Joint Declaration by jointly reviewing and exchanging on progress and, where appropriate, sharing and publishing examples of best practices (including figures and statistics) to help track its impact, identify challenges and enhance the attractiveness of the European insurance sector.

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