What employment policies are needed in Poland?

It should be stressed that the Polish National Plan for Reconstruction addresses the challenges identified in the Pillar of Social Rights only to a limited extent. The National Plan for Reconstruction includes mainly investments in digitalization and adaptation to climate change, which we consider important, but the Plan itself was criticized by OPZZ precisely because it does not include social investments, including in education and improvement of the quality of employment. Improvement of the quality of employment, high quality jobs, stable and with decent wages are crucial for the implementation of the Pillar and overcoming a number of development challenges of the state, including social challenges. The state should increase its activity in controlling the observance of labour law on the labour market.

One of the challenges facing Poland is the implementation of a comprehensive employment policy supporting the employment of older people. We are of the opinion that the following specific solutions are needed to implement this policy:

1. subsidising investments to adapt workplaces to the needs of older people,

2. introduction of solutions which would facilitate the employment of older people, such as exemption of employers from the obligation to pay contributions from older people to the Labour Fund and the Guaranteed Employment Fund, the possibility of obtaining reimbursement of costs of training courses or their part, to which older workers would be sent in order to retrain or increase their skills

3. the implementation of a so-called mentoring contract to reward older workers for passing on knowledge, experience and skills to younger workers;

4. promotion of health within and outside the workplace (e.g. extended prevention, measures against routine/professional burnout), more effective verification of health and safety regulations in the workplace and the observance of employees' working time;

5. introduction in the Labour Code of an additional break from work included in the working time and the requirement to obtain the consent of a senior employee to work overtime due to special needs of the employer and to perform night work.

The implementation of the Pillar of Social Rights is also an issue of fair remuneration for workers. It is necessary to take action for a faster increase of the minimum wage and to increase the role of collective bargaining in the economy in shaping remuneration systems in enterprises.

We also see the need for an increase in spending on public services and the salaries of public administration employees. Access to quality lifelong education and health care, especially preventive care, is crucial for fulfilling the objectives of the European Pillar of Social Rights.

The basis for effective implementation of the Pillar's objectives is social dialogue, which in Poland needs to be deepened. Compliance with the legal obligation of social consultation is fundamental to the functioning of social dialogue, therefore negative practices in this area must be halted. The Council for Social Dialogue should be a real forum for agreeing state policies on economic and social issues. The state should also ensure that the right to form and operate trade unions in the economy is respected in Poland. The above-mentioned measures are social investments of a costless nature and at the same time of key importance for the sustainable development of the country.