



Commissioner Nicolas Schmit
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Amazon spying

Dear Commissioners Schmitt,
Dear Commissioner Breton,

As leaders of some of the largest labour unions in Europe, representing over 12 million workers, we believe that Amazon's recently exposed efforts to spy on workers for lawful union activities in Europe calls for regulatory scrutiny on an EU-wide basis. Amazon's plans to ramp up surveillance of workers across Europe and globally are yet another reminder that EU Institutions should closely investigate Amazon's business and workplace practices throughout the continent, as we suspect them to be in breach of European labour, data and privacy laws that our citizens expect to enjoy.

On 1 September 2020, Vice reported that Amazon was hiring two Intelligence Analysts to work in an Amazon facility located in the Phoenix, Arizona area of the United States¹. The purported role of these jobs was to monitor various perceived threats to Amazon including organised labour. The posting even went so far as to include trade unions alongside hate groups, terrorists, and hostile state actors as threats to Amazon. This posting sought an Analyst fluent in languages including French and Spanish, suggesting that European workers would be surveilled.

On 2 September, Vice published another piece on how Amazon surveilled Amazon delivery drivers by accessing their private Facebook groups. Workers' names and comments were logged by Amazon employees without regard to their rights to privacy.

As European trade unionists, we know that workers' rights to union representation, to freedom of assembly, online and offline, and to collectively call for reforms within their workplaces are fundamental aspects of the European project and core principles of the social model that the European institutions are mandated to uphold. Indeed, UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Association and Assembly, Clément Voule, expressed in his 2019 Report that "The use of surveillance techniques for the indiscriminate and

¹ Though Amazon quickly deleted the job postings, they are still available in archived form: <https://archive.fo/ttBP5#selection-509.2-509.167> , <https://archive.fo/jUGDA>

untargeted surveillance of those exercising their right to peaceful assembly and association, in both physical and digital spaces, should be prohibited².” Further, we don’t want to see the growth of a union busting industry in Europe as we have seen in the US.

Whether in warehouses, delivery vehicles, or offices, we are proud to stand with the thousands of Amazon workers who want to make the company more responsible and to defend their rights to unionisation. For this reason, we call on the European Commission to open an investigation into Amazon’s potentially illegal activities against Amazon workers in Europe.

Sincerely,

Country	Signatory
European	Frank Bsirske, President, UNI Europa
European	Livia Spera, General Secretary, ETF
European	Anu Koljonen, General Secretary, Nordic Transport Worker’s Federation NTF
European	Oliver Roethig, Regional Secretary , UNI Europa
Belgium	Felipe Van Keirsbilck, General Secretary, CNE - CSC
Denmark	Simon Tøgern, President, HK Privat
Denmark	Susanne Ottesen, Head of Public Affairs, HK Handel
Denmark	Per Tønnesen, President, HK Handel
Denmark	Jan Villadsen , President, 3F Transport
Finland	Jorma Malinen, President, PRO
Finland	Marko Piirainen, President, Finnish Transport Workers’ Union AKT
Finland	Annika Rönni-Sällinen, President, Service Union United PAM
France	Christine Besseyre, Secretary General, FO
France	Olivier Guivarch, Secretary General, CFDT-Services
France	Laurent Berger, General Secretary, CFDT
France	William Maunier, General Secretary, CGT Spectacle
Germany	Frank Werneke, President, ver.di
Germany	Stefanie Nutzenberger, Member of the Federal Board, ver.di
Hungary	Melinda dr. Mészáros, President, LIGA Trade Union
Hungary	László Kordás, President, Hungarian Trade Union Confederation (MASZSZ)
Ireland	Brian Forbes, National Officer, Mandate
Italy	Andrea Borghesi, General Secretary, NldiL Cgil Nazionale
Italy	Massimo Mensi, President, APIQA CGIL
Netherlands	Tuur Elzinga, Vice President, FNV
Poland	Alfred Bujara, Chairman, National Secretariat of Banks, Trade and Insurance NSZZ "Solidarność"
Slovakia	Alena Macková, President, Odborový zväz Moderné Odbory AIOS
Spain	Unai Sordo Calvo, Secretary General, CC.OO
Sweden	Valle Karlsson, President, SEKO
Sweden	Ulrika Lindstrand, President, Sveriges Ingenjörer (The Swedish Association of Graduate Engineer)
Sweden	Martin Linder, President, Unionen
Sweden	Linda Palmethofer, President, Handels
Switzerland	Vania Alleva, President, Unia
Switzerland	Anne Rubin, Executive Board Member, Unia

² https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/FAssociation/A_HRC_41_41_EN.docx

Switzerland	Daniel Münger, President, syndicom
United Kingdom	Paddy Lillis, General Secretary, USDAW
United Kingdom	Mick Rix, National Officer, GMB
United Kingdom	Dave Ward, General Secretary, Communication Workers Union