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European trade union news n°76 - April 2013

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**The social dimension of the EU**  
**Interview with Bernadette Ségol**



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### **FIGURE OF THE MONTH**

#### **One trillion euro**

According to the European Commission, this is the annual cost of tax evasion in the European Union (EU). This amount is equivalent of half Italian national growth product. Source: (Presseurop.eu)

### **Trade union news**



**Towards a strong social dimension for the EU**



## European citizens and workers need a strong social dimension



The European Council of June 2013 will focus on the social dimension of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). The ETUC welcomed the European Council's intention to discuss these pressing issues. On the basis of its Social Compact for Europe (June 2012), the European trade union further developed its contribution to this debate by adopting a position on the social dimension of the European Union at the meeting of its Executive Committee on 23 April.

For the ETUC, a change of course is needed if social Europe is to become a reality. Without this change, European citizens' support is not guaranteed.

ETUC position on the social dimension of the EU: <http://www.etuc.org/a/11136>

More information: <http://www.etuc.org/a/11052>

## World Day for Safety and Health at Work

### The ETUC demands an ambitious European strategy

On the occasion of the World Day for Safety and Health at Work on 28 April, the ETUC emphasised the point that health at work is an essential priority for the trade union movement. For the European trade union, the adoption of a European strategy in this field cannot wait anymore.

More information: <http://www.etuc.org/a/11119>

## Fight against tax havens

### ETUC calls on the EU to act

For the ETUC, the research on the secretive world of offshore companies and trusts in tax havens around the globe that was undertaken by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) is a milestone in the fight against tax evasion. *"I am calling on the European Institutions to step up their action plan on tax fraud and tax evasion. Annual tax revenues of €1 trillion per year or 10% of GDP could be collected by the tax authorities, provided they are given the means to do so,"* said Bernadette Ségol.

More information: <http://www.etuc.org/a/11089>

## A dark day for European climate action

The ETUC reacted strongly to the decision by a small majority of MEPs to reject the back-loading proposal. The vote (334 vs 315 votes) may call into question the emissions trading scheme (ETS itself and has certainly dented the credibility of the EU climate policy framework as a whole. For the ETUC, this vote shows that there is a majority which is ready to use the current crises to impose a short-sighted vision of competitiveness and on these grounds oppose progressive proposals in the fields of environment or social protection.

More information: <http://www.etuc.org/a/11108>

## **Corporate social responsibility**

### **The Commission is taking the first step in the right direction**

More than ten years after the launch of the "Corporate social responsibility" initiative, the European Commission finally introduced the obligation for big companies to include a 'non-financial' part in their annual report. For the ETUC, the Commission's desire to impose greater transparency on businesses with regard to the socio-environmental information that they supply is a step in the right direction. However, the European trade union regrets the weakness of the planned implementation.

More information: <http://www.etuc.org/a/11116>

## **Greece**

### **Council of Europe condemns – again – austerity measures**

The decisions of the European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR), the main supervisory body monitoring the implementation of the (revised) European Social Charter of the Council of Europe in five collective complaints against Greece were made public. The complainant Greek trade union organisations had criticised the massive reductions in social security benefits imposed both in the private and public sector, particularly in relation to pension rights. The ECSR concluded that Greece is in violation of the right to social security enshrined in the European Social Charter.

More information: <http://www.etuc.org/a/11140>

### **Fostering Youth Employment in Public Services: Time to act**

The ETUC and the European Centre of Employers and Enterprises providing Public services (CEEP) presented their results of their joint project "Fostering Youth Employment in Public Services" at a conference in Brussels. With more than 22% of young people unemployed in the European Union, the ETUC and the CEEP demand European Leaders not waste any more time, by proposing concrete and urgent actions.

More information: <http://www.etuc.org/a/11142>

## European trade union agenda - May 2013

**03-07/05** : Congress of the Norwegian Confederation of trade unions (LO-Norway) (Oslo)

**22/05** : **Meeting of the Group II "Workers" of the European Economic and Social Committee (Brussels)**

**29/05** : Congress of the European Transport Workers Federation (ETF) (Berlin)

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