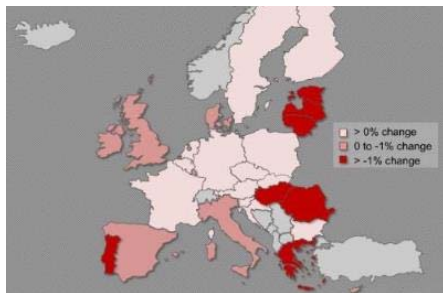


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Trade union news



Open letter to Commissioner Olli Rehn



Sticking to austerity and cutting wages is not the answer

In an [open letter](#), the ETUC rejects Commissioner Rehn's proposal for wage erosion in Spain to emulate the Irish and Latvian "success stories". This proposal was initially called for by the International Monetary Found (IMF), backed up by the Commissioner, and concerns a "social agreement" between business and trade unions accepting a 10 % wage cut over two years to reduce unemployment in Spain. The ETUC's open letter also denounces the race to the bottom that the Commission's wage competition is provoking in many Member States. *"As we predicted, austerity is not working. We are in favour of policies that stimulate activity, accompanied by salaries and pensions that encourage consumption"* declared Bernadette Ségol.

More information: <http://www.etuc.org/a/11507>

Stop attacking minimum wages

The ETUC supports the Slovenian trade union confederation

The current minimum wage in Slovenia is €599,73, lower than the at risk-of poverty threshold. The EU is pursuing its ideological conviction of applying pressure to bring down the national minimum wage arguing that it will support competitiveness and job creation. The ETUC strongly protested against this unacceptable intervention in national wage setting systems in a letter sent to President Van Rompuy and President Barroso. *"The EU has no competence to intervene in wages (article 153-5). What does the EU hope to achieve by bringing down minimum wages in Slovenia? This step would, inevitably, lead to an increase in the number of working poor in this country"* said Bernadette Ségol.

More information: <http://www.etuc.org/a/11580>

Restructuring

ETUC formal complaint to EU Ombudsman about Commission's lack of action

The ETUC has made a [formal complaint to the EU Ombudsman](#) on the treatment of the European Parliament's report calling for legal action on restructuring and anticipation of change. It is the first time the ETUC has turned to the EU Ombudsman. *"Members of the European Parliament recognise that legislative action is urgently needed at European level to address the anticipation of change and ensure effective management of restructuring"*, states the ETUC complaint. *"We are calling for the Commission to respect the Treaty and propose a legal instrument as demanded by the EP, to respect democracy at European level and ensure a framework of rights"* stated Bernadette Ségol.

More information: <http://www.etuc.org/a/11511>

Trade in Services Agreement risks jeopardising universal access to high quality public services

In the context of a European Commission (EC) consultation, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the ETUC submitted a [joint statement](#) related to negotiations on a plurilateral Trade in Services Agreement (TiSA). For the unions, the direction the TiSA negotiations have taken risks jeopardising universal access to high quality public services and must be changed.

More information: <http://www.etuc.org/a/11524>

Financial Transaction Tax

EU Member States must not bow to financial markets

The ETUC disagrees with the EU Council's legal services' claim that the Commission proposal on a Financial Transaction Tax (FTT) is not in line with EU law. *"This just goes to show how strong the forces against the FTT are. This is yet another attempt to try and discredit the tax and water down the proposal which is being discussed by those countries that are committed to the enhanced cooperation process"*, said Veronica Nilsson, ETUC Confederal Secretary.

More information: <http://www.etuc.org/a/11533>

The ETUC supports Polish trade unions' days of action

On 11-14 September 2013, all three Polish trade union confederations – FZZ, NSZZ "Solidarność", and OPZZ, members of the ETUC – held nationwide Days of Action against worsening living conditions and pension systems, high unemployment and the recent anti-social labour law reforms. The ETUC supports its Polish members in their protests and fights for a fairer society. Józef Niemiec, ETUC Deputy General Secretary, took part in the massive demonstration on the streets of Warsaw on 14 September.

More information: <http://www.etuc.org/a/11536>

The European Parliament confirms the need for more and better transnational company agreements

By a large majority the European Parliament has adopted a Resolution on cross-border collective bargaining and transnational social dialogue. This confirms that social dialogue is at the heart of the EU social model and shows the way forward for more and better transnational negotiations with multinational companies.

More information: <http://www.etuc.org/a/11556>

European trade union agenda - October 2013

03-04/10: Congress of the General Workers' Union (Malta)

22/10: ETUC Steering Committee

22-23/10: ETUC Executive Committee

reserved.

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