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Onderwerp: Creation of quality jobs: enough talking, it's time for action

CREATION OF QUALITY JOBS: ENOUGH TALKING, IT'S TIME FOR ACTION

17 January 2011

At the informal meeting of Employment Ministers on 17 January in Gödöllő (Hungary), the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) welcomed the new employment strategy aimed at creating more quality jobs, respecting labour standards and social rights.

European Trade Union Confederation [ETUC]
Confédération européenne des syndicats [CES]



The ETUC welcomes the focus placed on the creation of jobs, in particular for young people, as being crucial to exit the economic crisis. Such a focus supports European initiatives such as "Youth on the move" and "New skills for new jobs" both of which appear to be going in the right direction. In particular, The ETUC applauds the "youth guarantee" which seeks to ensure that after a maximum period of 6 months, young people are offered a decent job or training.

However, the European trade union movement warns against repeating the political errors of the past. There is a risk that these laudable initiatives will never be put into practice unless an appropriate framework and adequate funding is put in place.

The ETUC calls on the European Commission to adopt a transversal approach to the issues of employment, education and vocational training in all its sectoral policies. This means implementing programmes which anticipate the structural changes in employment patterns promote job creation and protect workers from the adverse economic and social effects of the transition towards a low carbon economy.

The will to (re)create a sustainable job creation strategy should prioritise the quality of employment. That is why the ETUC condemns the current policy of widespread cuts: pay cuts, cuts in dismissal protection in social benefits, pensions and public services. Eventually, the combination of wage and fiscal austerity and growing inequalities could well drag the economy into a new recession and higher unemployment.

"The EU needs a coordinated policy for the common development of demand in order to foster growth and employment simultaneously. It is a question of getting together to find additional European resources through the issuance of Eurobonds and the collection of taxes on financial transactions to help all Member States face the irrationality of the world financial markets" said Jozef Niemiec, ETUC's Confederal Secretary.

Furthermore, recent proposals from the ECOFIN Council and the Commission may cause serious and immediate damage to workers' conditions as well as question the independence of trade unions and their right to collective and wage bargaining which is clearly unacceptable to the ETUC.

Last but not least, the ETUC considers that economic governance is much too important to be left to the finance ministers alone. That process should be driven by the European Council with the participation of the ministers of social affairs and employment and of the social partners.

The ETUC exists to speak with a single voice, on behalf of the common interests of workers, at European level. Founded in 1973, it now represents 83 trade union organisations in 36 European countries, plus 12 industry-based federations.

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