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Onderwerp: EU 2020 country recommendations: ETUC demands full respect for autonomous collective bargaining

**EU 2020 COUNTRY
RECOMMENDATIONS: ETUC
DEMANDS FULL RESPECT FOR
AUTONOMOUS COLLECTIVE
BARGAINING**



Brussels, 08 June 2011

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

Yesterday (7 June 2011), the Commission published recommendations on the economic policies the Euro Area is to pursue. The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) regrets that the Commission is, once again, targeting wages in a negative way and is ignoring what is a key principle in Europe: the autonomy of social partners and collective bargaining.

The ETUC takes issue with the following points:

- The decision to adjust wage setting mechanisms and how to do so lies with the social partners themselves. It is not up to governments and certainly not up to the Commission to decide on a reform of the wage setting machinery. The autonomy of social partners to bargain extends way beyond the Commission's call of simply 'consulting' social partners.

- Wages must not be caught within competitive 'beggar-thy-neighbour' strategies. In the integrated marketplace of Europe, member states should avoid competing against each other on the basis of wages since gains in wage-levels in some member states will be reflected in competitive losses in others.

- Wages and collective bargaining strategies should instead reflect productivity and inflation, as well as the principle of 'equal pay for equal work', while reversing the trend of high and rising inequalities.

The ETUC calls upon the European Council to change track and to consider wages as an engine for growth and jobs and not as the enemy of the economy.

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 82 trade union organisations in 36 European countries, plus 12 industry-based federations.

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