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

THE ETUC TURNS 40: CELEBRATE THE PAST, LOOK FORWARD TO THE FUTURE

25 January 2013

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) will soon celebrate its 40th anniversary. The only organisation that represents workers at European level was in fact founded officially on 7 February 1973. The celebration will be held in conjunction with a conference on 28 January in Madrid. This event will be attended by many European trade union leaders as well as officials from the European institutions.

The ETUC's fortieth anniversary will provide an opportunity to discuss issues relating to the role of the trade union movement as an actor in the construction of Europe: What is its future? Which are the priorities for a social Europe? What role should citizens, workers and their trade unions play in an economic and monetary union? What should be changed in economic governance?

A great deal remains to be done if the EU is to have real social foundations, previous attainments notwithstanding. There are 26 million unemployed in Europe today. The labour market has become considerably more precarious, whilst the policies in force are unfavourable to a social Europe. The context of 2013 is no longer that of 1973.

The ETUC remains convinced that a Social Contract for Europe would lay the foundations for a more inter-dependent European Union. The European Union is an unparalleled structure but the economic project is no longer sufficient. European citizens can no longer make head nor tail of it. The European construction must forge ahead with a strong social project.

The ETUC will moreover, avail itself of its 40th anniversary to inaugurate its new visual identity.

The European Trade Union Confederation (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 85 trade union organisations in 36 European countries, plus 10 industry-based federations.

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