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Tour of the EU Capitals: Spain - European leaders must respond to the expectations of the European people

24/06/2013

The last stops on the ETUC Tour of EU Capitals, to promote the social dimension of the EU, ahead of the June Summit, are crucial. Leaks in the press, about the draft conclusions of the next European Council, are suggesting that nothing new or concrete will be taken to address the expectations of ordinary people. Bernadette Ségal, ETUC General Secretary and Spanish trade union leaders will raise this question today, at their meeting with Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy in Madrid.

The need for a strong social dimension in the EU, the necessity for a European recovery and investment plan and the fight against unemployment, in particular youth unemployment, are the demands that European and Spanish trade unions will raise at the meeting with the Spanish Prime Minister. These demands took form, last week, with more than 50 demonstrations in the main cities of Spain. While policy-makers pay lip service to the importance of Europe's 'social dimension', their policies ratchet up the pressure to continue on the path of ruthless austerity. Ordinary people are still paying for the crisis.

"Europe needs a change of course, European citizens demand a change of course, EU leaders can no longer ignore it. More than 25 million people are unemployed in the EU. In some countries, like Spain, 1 in 2 young people is unemployed without hope for the future. We cannot afford it! Europe's future cannot be based on unemployment and social unrest. We demand all political leaders to address these challenges, instead of simply using a hollow jargon, synonymous with inaction. If you listen to some EU leaders you would

believe that the economic crisis is all but over”.

The ETUC tour will continue throughout the run-up to the June European Summit, with Bernadette Ségol meeting political leaders from Austria and Italy.

Useful links:

- Tour of Eu capitals: <http://www.etuc.org/a/11184>
- ETUC position on the social dimension of the European Union:
<http://www.etuc.org/a/11136>

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. The ETUC is also on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) and [Flickr](#).

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