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ETUC Press release

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**COHESION POLICY 2014-2020:
MORE QUALITY JOBS AND SOCIAL INVESTMENT
WITH A STRONG EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND**

15/07/2013

The European Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission should confirm, in the framework of the trilogue negotiations the obligation to allocate a minimum share of at least 25% of the Cohesion envelope to the ESF.

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) welcomes the positive vote of the European Parliament's Employment Committee, which ensures a minimum share of 25% for the European Social Fund (ESF) in the next programming period 2014-2020.

However, the vote of the European Parliament's Committee on Regional Development (REGI) on the future General Regulation of the Structural Funds, is not fully satisfactory because it endorses the 23.1% minimum share for the ESF as proposed by the European Council in the last meeting of the trilogue, and also not accepted by the Commission.

A minimum share of 23.1 % of the Cohesion envelope would correspond to merely € 71 billion in the next programming period 2014-2020, which would mean €7 billion reduction in comparison with the current ESF envelope. Moreover, it will represent an even greater reduction in comparison with the €87 billion initially proposed by the European Commission.

This is unacceptable to the ETUC. All the more given the ever-increasing demands placed on the ESF by subsequent European Council conclusions (Youth Employment Initiative, EURES network, Food for deprived people instrument, European Alliance for Apprenticeships).

There are still two particularly contentious points that need to be settled with the European Council, notably the use of a performance reserve, and the resorting to economic macro-conditionalities.

It is crucial that the European Parliament sends a positive signal during the Plenary session of September. European citizens living in countries who are suffering the consequences of the ongoing economic crisis and the austerity measures imposed by the European Council will expect this signal to be coherent with the ambitious objectives fixed by Member States in the 2020 Strategy. If not, this will lead in an increase in euroscepticism.

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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