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ETUC Press release

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Sticking to austerity and cutting wages is not the answer: ETUC open letter to Commissioner Rehn

Brussels, 29/08/2013

In an open letter, the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) rejects Commissioner Rehn's proposal for wage erosion in Spain to emulate the Irish and Latvian "success stories". This proposal was initially called for by the IMF, backed up by the Commissioner, and concerns a "social agreement" between business and trade unions accepting a 10 % wage cut over two years to reduce unemployment in Spain.

In its open letter, the ETUC stresses that Latvia and Ireland, having shed 20 and 15% of all jobs, can hardly be seen as an example to follow. The only lesson to learn from Latvia is that action to restore growth must come first! Europe should delay applying a 3% deficit limit until economies return to health and a strong recovery is secured— probably around 2016-2017. The ETUC's open letter also denounces the race to the bottom that the Commission's wage competition is provoking in many Member States

"As we predicted, austerity is not working. We are in favour of policies that stimulate activity, accompanied by salaries and pensions that encourage consumption" declared Bernadette Ségol, General Secretary of the ETUC.

- ETUC Open letter: http://www.etuc.org/IMG/pdf/300813_Commissioner_Rehn.pdf

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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