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ETUC Press release

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Industrial Renaissance Neglects
Industrial Workers



22/01/2014

In its Communication “For a European Industrial Renaissance,” published on 22 January, the European Commission re-emphasises its commitment to foster industrial production so that it contributes 20% to Europe’s GDP by 2020. Although the Commission rightly identifies industrial high-value added sectors as economic drivers of the future, it lacks a convincing plan for financing. In addition, the communication suggests further integration of the European Internal Market and urges European firms to internationalise.

Unfortunately, the Commission fails to put forward a proposal on how this potential for growth could be translated into job creation and states that it expects EU unemployment to remain at 11%, an all-time high, for at least two more years. “The Commission blames low demand and low investment for the lingering crisis but neglects to point out the root of both: the EU’s crisis management policy, with its failure to reregulate the banking system, where

austerity is the overriding rule of the day and where increased competitiveness is seen in terms of cutting wages” says ETUC Deputy General Secretary Józef Niemiec.

Moreover, the Commission still seems to believe that product market or labour market reforms and deregulation can provide a solution. These policies have been applied for years without any tangible results. The deregulation programme (REFIT) is more than controversial, especially as it undermines health and safety standards.

The ETUC and industriAll Europe regard an industrial policy strategy that falls short of delivering quality employment for Europe’s workers, and which does not address the pressing problem of youth unemployment, as largely insufficient.

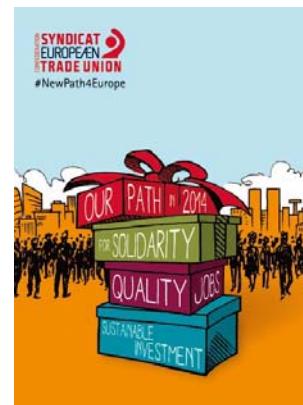
“The social dimension in this proposal that should underpin a productive industry and deliver education, training, social security and workers’ participation is barely touched upon. Any so-called recovery would be a jobless recovery and not the jolt required to jumpstart Europe’s economy. A strong legal framework for anticipation and management of economic change is absolutely necessary”, said industriAll Europe General Secretary Ulrich Eckelmann.

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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