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Onderwerp: EU Member States in Breach of the Council of Europe's Social Charter

ETUC Press release

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EU Member States in Breach of the Council of Europe's Social Charter

On Thursday 29 January 2014, the European Committee for Social Rights (ECSR), the main supervisory body for the Council of Europe's Social Charter, presented within the framework of its annual reporting system, its so-called Conclusions 2013. The ECSR found no less than 180 cases of violations of the Charter concerning health, social security and social protection. In particular Greece, Poland and Romania received a high number of negative conclusions.

They relate to cases of non-conformity with the Charter and in particular its articles on the right to health and safety at work (article 3), the right to social security (art 12), the right to social and medical assistance (article 13), the right to social services (article 14), the right of the elderly to social protection (article 23) and the right to protection against poverty and social exclusion (article 30).

It is clear that the economic crisis and the austerity measures, imposed upon Member States via the Troika, or under the loan agreements and the European semester, have had an extremely impact on human rights and in particular, on social and economic rights. There are also clear signs that in several countries the protection of health and safety at work is being downgraded, notably in SMEs.

"This is again clear proof that the austerity measures pursued in the Member States have a devastating impact on the living and working conditions of all citizens in Europe, in particular, on vulnerable groups like the elderly and migrant workers", says ETUC Confederal Secretary Veronica Nilsson.

“The Troika programmes must be urgently revised. All measures to be taken within the context of financial assistance programmes should be screened to ensure that they fully respect fundamental social rights. Moreover, increased involvement and consultation with the Council of Europe and the ILO in that process are urgently needed.”

That is also what the ETUC called for during the recent European Parliament hearing on the activities of the Troika. (<http://www.etuc.org/a/11966>). Also EU institutions within the framework of the European semester should make sure that they fully respect fundamental social rights - they are for example, bound by the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

The ETUC also urges all members of the Council of Europe to ratify the latest version of the European Social Charter and to sign up to the complaints' mechanism which helps to ensure that it is put into practice. Moreover, the ETUC asks that the EU takes the necessary steps to also adhere to these instruments.

Within the framework of the presentation of these Conclusions, the ETUC also met with the President and Vice-President of the ECSR, Mr. Quesada and Mrs. Schlachter, to discuss how to improve the Charter's effectiveness. In May, the negative conclusions will be discussed at the Governmental Committee where the ETUC has full observer status.

ECSR

Conclusions

2013:

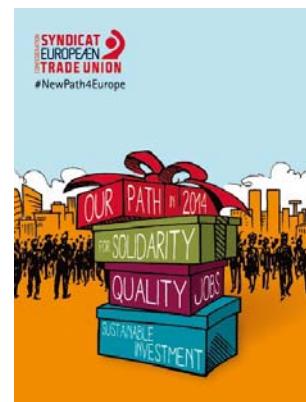
http://www.coe.int/T/DGHL/Monitoring/SocialCharter/NewsCOEPortal/Conclusions2013Publication_en.asp

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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