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Onderwerp: Falling wages casts doubt on recovery warn trade unions

ETUC Press release

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Falling wages casts doubt on recovery warn trade unions

19/03/2014

Austerity is not working, and a new path for Europe is urgently needed, European trade union leaders warned at an unprecedented union summit in Brussels today.

“Real wages have fallen over the last five years in most EU countries” said Bernadette Ségol, Secretary General of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC).

Real wages (wages adjusted with inflation, and not taking into account increased direct taxes) have gone down in 18 out of 28 member states countries since 2009 – 23% down in Greece, 12% in Hungary, over 6% in Spain and Portugal, over 4% in the Netherlands and UK.

“Austerity is not working” said Ségol “Europe needs a new path. It needs investment to create jobs.”

The ETUC estimates that €250bn over 10 years could create 11m new jobs, and that such an investment represents just a quarter of what was spent to save the banks, and a quarter of what is lost annually through tax evasion and fraud.

The ETUC points to the fact that

- Over 26 million Europeans are not working - 10 million more than in 2008.
- 7.5 million young people are neither in work, nor in education, nor training

Ségol told the trade union summit *“Tomorrow the European Council will discuss economic, industrial and energy policy. These policies could create growth. But they will not - because the industrial policy does not have the instruments to generate jobs, the energy policies lack ambition and the economic policies are based on austerity and deregulation: they are the wrong economic policies.”*

She warned ‘With current EU austerity policies *“Europe faces a lost decade, a lost generation – lost to unemployment, migration, and lost hope.”*

The trade unions’ message will be delivered in person by ETUC General Secretary Bernadette Ségol and other union leaders to the Presidents of the European Commission, European Council and Council Presidency who they will meet tomorrow morning at the Tri Partite Social Summit just ahead of the meeting of the European Council.

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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More information:

Communication Department

Julian Scola

Phone: +32(0) 486117394

Daniele Melli

Phone: +32(0) 473942563

Bonacina Emanuela

Phone: +32 (0) 473942647

@: media@etuc.org



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