



ETUC NEWSLETTER

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Dear Readers,

In the name of "international competitiveness" - a much abused expression - some European decision-makers systematically call into question not only workers' rights but the whole European Social Model. In several countries, poverty is on the increase, as is insecurity about the future. The recent demonstrations in France and in other European countries are a symbol of European citizens' anger about measures that make employment more insecure and weaken workers' rights.

We are convinced that European citizens' anxieties demand a different response to those that have been put forward so far, and we have some proposals to make. For these reasons, we will be demonstrating alongside the French trade unions on 4 April during the day of action, to demand the withdrawal of the new recruitment contract (*contrat première embauche* - CPE) and the opening of negotiations on employment and career opportunities for young people. Dialogue with the social partners is fundamental to meeting the challenges of globalisation in a socially acceptable manner.

We delivered this message to European decision-makers at the recent European Spring Summit on growth and employment.

We welcome the support of the European Council for the compromise on the draft Services Directive, for which we have been campaigning. We hope, at the present time, that the Commission will respect this compromise and the guidance of the European Council, in its proposal on 4 April.

This is an opportunity that must not be missed to rebuild citizens and workers' confidence.

John Monks
General Secretary

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EU NEWS

● **European Globalisation Adjustment Fund: a strong role for the social partners is essential – 01/03/2006**

The European Commission published [its proposal](#) for a **European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (GAF), to help workers sacked as a result of industrial restructuring linked to globalisation**, on 1 March. It offers financial assistance for workers who need to find a new job in the European labour market.

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) welcomed this proposal but called on the Commission to involve the social partners in this system of support and reinsertion. At present the Commission anticipates merely informing the social partners about the measures involved in implementing the fund. **When it comes to restructuring, it is vital for the social partners to be consulted and for their input to be taken into account.**

The European trade union movement is also critical of the Commission's approach in restricting the support offered under the GAF to workers hit by relocation outside the European Union, and not within its borders. According to the Commission's impact study, **some 35,000 to 50,000 workers a year might benefit from the aid allocated by the fund.** On the other hand, on the basis of the **report by the European Restructuring Observatory** in 2005, **the number of workers losing their jobs following restructuring operations has topped the 570,000 mark.** The ETUC stresses the need to ensure co-ordination between the various existing instruments so as to increase the coherence and effectiveness of the aid available to workers.

[ETUC press release](#)[ETUC press release](#)

● **European Gender Pact is essential to realise women's full potential – 08/03/2006**

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) fully supports the initiative taken by six Member States for a **European Pact for Gender Equality**. It aims at enhancing **women's participation in the labour market**, fostering measures to **improve work-life balance for women and men**, and **promoting gender equality**.

The [recent EU report on gender equality between women and men](#) shows that women are paid less than men, hold fewer political jobs and are very poorly represented in top management positions in companies. *"European women are still losing out to men, especially when it comes to pay. Women earn 15% less than men for every hour worked, and this pay gap shows no significant signs of closing,"* says Viviane Goergen, President of the ETUC's women's committee. *"Faced with poor quality jobs and difficulties in reconciling work and family life, women are either having to stay out of the labour market or have fewer children, and neither option is good for Europe's future."* On International Women's Day, the ETUC calls on its affiliates **to put pressure on their national governments to support the European Pact for Gender Equality**, for enabling women to realise their full potential.

[ETUC press release](#)

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● The time has come to launch a broad debate on Europe's energy policy – 08/03/2006

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) welcomes the [publication of the green paper](#) on a more integrated European energy policy. "Faced with the challenge of climate change, in particular in the context of globalisation, it is essential for us to ensure independence in terms of energy and the security of supplies," stated John Monks.

"Four priorities need to guide the European Union. The reinforcement of public control and democracy in the energy sector; the reduction of energy consumption; securing the supply side and diversification in the energy on offer."

It is fundamentally important to ensure the right of access to the energy service for all, and **this implies the existence of a European public service** taking into account the following elements:

- **progress towards self-sufficiency in terms of supply**, notably via an external policy guaranteeing the link between economic trade, fundamental rights and democracy;
- **the struggle against global warming** caused by the intensive use of fossil fuels;
- **management of resources threatened with exhaustion**;
- **avoidance of the inflationary impact of energy on salaries**.

However, the ETUC deplored the fact that the green paper fails to take account of the social dimension of energy policy, which is at odds with the fundamental objectives of the constitutional treaty. The only way for Europe's energy system to be sustainable is if it has a clearly identified social content which is supported by appropriate social policies.

The ETUC is demanding a **broad debate** on these questions, and is ready to play its part in it.

[ETUC press release](#)[European Commission press release](#)

● We need to end the 'cycle of madness', to protect recovery in the European economy – 12/03/2006

On the eve of the EU [Eurogroup](#) meeting, the European Trade Union Confederation urged finance ministers to improve the coordination of fiscal policies and monetary policy.

By systematically hiking indirect taxes and administrative prices, they are artificially keeping inflation above 2%, declared the ETUC. This is giving the European Central Bank (ECB) an **alibi** to engage in [a series of interest rate increases](#), **thereby endangering the long-awaited recovery** in the European economy. In recent years, **workers and trade unions have made their contribution to maintaining price stability by exercising extreme wage moderation**, accepting zero real wage growth.

Other policy actors now have to make an effort.

An inflationary fiscal policy and interest rate rises are the key elements of current European macro-economy policy. **It is a 'cycle of madness'**, slowing the budding recovery and thereby pushing deficits back up. The cycle is complete when governments react by hiking indirect taxes further. **This has to end!**

The ETUC is calling for:

- a moratorium on indirect taxes and administrative prices, which would show underlying inflation to be only around 1.2% and falling.
- better EU-wide coordination between fiscal and monetary policies, to boost domestic demand and support robust economic growth.

[ETUC press release](#)

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ETUC welcomes moves by some Member States to lift restrictions on worker mobility – 16/03/2006

The ETUC welcomed the announcements by Spain, Portugal and Finland that they will open their labour markets to workers from the newer Member States from 1 May 2006. "We are in favour of a more open approach," affirmed John Monks, "but it must be based on the **principles of equal treatment and upward harmonisation of working conditions and social protection.**"

The ETUC has declared its support for an open EU labour market on **four conditions:**

- **equal pay and conditions for work of equal value on the same territory;**
- **respect for national collective bargaining systems;**
- **equal access for workers to social benefits;**
- **effective measures for monitoring and enforcement.**

The last ETUC Executive Committee adopted [a position on the implementation of the Posting Directive](#), demanding a higher commitment from Member States to its monitoring and enforcement. The ETUC calls on the European Commission to take additional steps at EU level to support Member States and social partners in their efforts.

 [Read More](#)[ETUC press release](#)

Spring European Council: ETUC welcomes backing for the compromise on the Services Directive - 27/03/2006

Following the conclusion of the EU Spring Summit in Brussels, the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) warmly welcomed the European Council's **commitment to respect the European Parliament's compromise proposal on the Services Directive**, and to work for rapid progress towards a final agreement.

"We call on the European Commission to take good note of the Council's support for the outcome of the Parliament's first reading, and to reflect this in its forthcoming amending proposal," declared John Monks.

The ETUC also noted **the Summit's recognition of the key role of the social partners in implementing the revised Lisbon Strategy**. The ETUC reiterated its demand for a stronger trade union input in the monitoring and implementation of National Reform Programmes (NRPs).

On the Energy Policy for Europe (EPE) initiative, **the ETUC reaffirmed the need for a coherent energy policy**, and found the Council's conclusions inadequate in this sense. **This policy must explicitly include a social dimension.**

Finally, **the ETUC welcomed the Council's approval of the European Pact for Gender Equality**. This pact is essential to enabling women to fulfil their role in the labour market and promoting a better work-life balance for men as well as women.

 [Read More](#)[ETUC Press release](#)[Conclusions of the European Council](#)

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ETUC News

● **ETUC and NGOs urge EU leaders to make the renewed Lisbon Strategy work for truly sustainable development - 06/03/2006**

On 6 March, the [European Trade Union Confederation \(ETUC\)](#), the [European Environmental Bureau \(EEB\)](#) and the [Platform of European Social NGOs](#) held a conference in Brussels on the Lisbon Agenda: 'Does the Lisbon process produce Sustainable Development?'.

Representatives from the European trade union movement and social and environmental NGOs urged European leaders to make the renewed Lisbon Strategy work to achieve truly sustainable development. José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, and Martin Bartenstein, Austrian Minister of Economic and Labour Affairs took part. The organisers of the event wrote a [joint statement](#) with a set of proposals to help steer the economy in the right social and environmental direction, while promoting prosperity and employment.



[ETUC - EEB - Platform of European social NGOs joint press release](#)



● **ETUC Executive Committee - 14-15/03/2006**

The Executive Committee of the European Trade Union Confederation met on 14-15 March. The future of European Social Dialogue and developments in the EU and the ETUC were on the agenda.

Members of the Executive Committee welcomed the [new Work Programme of the European Social Partners \(2006-2008\)](#). On the eve of the forthcoming Spring European Council, the Committee discussed and adopted a resolution entitled '[Move Social Europe Up a Gear](#)', focusing on European macro-economic policies and the implementation of the revised Lisbon Strategy.

Resolutions on [Corporate governance](#) and a [European Energy Policy](#) were also adopted. The meeting approved a proposal on improving the Open Method of Coordination in the field of social inclusion and social protection. The Committee members welcomed the recent success of the Strasbourg Euro-demonstration against the Bolkestein Services Directive and the compromise agreed by the European Parliament. [They called on the Commission and the Council not to weaken this compromise](#).

The Executive Committee dealt with a number of ETUC issues. The Secretariat presented the timetable for preparations for the forthcoming ETUC Congress in Seville in 2007. In addition, members welcomed the proposed new ETUC Strategy on trade union recruitment and organisation.

The ETUC also has two new trade union affiliates: applications from the [Union Syndicale de Monaco](#) (USM) and the [All-Poland Alliance of Trade Unions](#) (OPZZ) were approved.

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● **European social dialogue: the social partners present their work programme for 2006-2008 – 23/03/2006**

On the occasion of the Tripartite Social Summit ETUC, **UNICE/UEAPME and CEEP presented the new EU social dialogue work programme for 2006-2008**. The aim of this work programme is to contribute to growth, jobs and the modernisation of the EU social model. The work programme 2006-2008, building on the achievements of the previous programme (2003-2005), is the **second multi-annual work programme of the EU social dialogue**. It reflects a joint wish to further establish the social partners' autonomy. **The new work programme includes a joint analysis of the key challenges facing Europe's labour markets, the negotiation of a framework of actions on employment and one autonomous framework agreement.**

[Read More](#)[ETUC – UNICE/UEAPME – CEEP joint press release](#)[Read More](#)[Work programme of the European Social Dialogue for 2006-2008](#)

● **Workshop on the European Constitution: future strategies of the ETUC – 27-28/03/2006**

The ETUC and its institute, the ETUI-REHS, organised a **discussion workshop on the future of the European Constitution** in Berlin on 27-28 March. Representatives of the Austrian, Finnish and German governments took part in the event, as well as academics and trade union leaders. The workshop explored new ways to break the current deadlock that has existed since the no votes in the French and Dutch referendums.

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EU Agenda

March - April 2006

09/03/2006	Environment Council (Brussels)	Council agenda
10/03/2006	Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (Brussels)	Council agenda
13/03/2006	Competitiveness Council (Brussels)	Council agenda
13-16/03/2006	Plenary session at European Parliament (Strasbourg)	Plenary session agenda
14/03/2006	ECOFIN Council (Brussels)	Council agenda
15-16/03/2006	Plenary session at European Economic and Social Committee (Brussels)	
16-17/03/2006	Informal Meeting of Education Ministers (Wien)	Meeting agenda
20-21/03/2006	General affairs and External relations Council (Brussels)	Council agenda
22-23/03/2006	'Mini-plenary' session at European Parliament (Brussels)	Plenary session agenda
23/03/2006	Tripartite Social Summit(Brussels)	
23-24/03/2006	European Council (Brussels)	European Council agenda
29-31/03/2006	Informal Meeting of Youth Ministers (Bad Ischl)	Meeting agenda
3-6/04/2006	Plenary session at European Parliament (Strasbourg)	Plenary session agenda
7-8/04/2006	Informal ECOFIN Meeting (Vienne)	Meeting Agenda
10-11/04/2006	General Affairs and External Relations (with Development Cooperation Ministers) Council (Luxemborg)	Council Agenda
20-21/04/2006	Plenary session at European Economic and Social Committee (Brussels)	
21-22/04/2006	Informal Meeting of Competitiveness Ministers (Graz)	Meeting Agenda
25-26/04/2006	Informal Meeting of Health Ministers (Vienne)	Meeting Agenda
26-27/04/2006	'Mini-plenary' session at European Parliament (Brussels)	Plenary session agenda

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ETUC Agenda

March - April 2006

● 1-4/03/2006	CGIL Congress (Rimini, Italy)	Congress programme
● 04/03/2006	TALO Congress (Tallinn, Estonia)	Congress programme
● 06/03/2006	ETUC conference on Lisbon Strategy and Sustainable Development (Brussels)	Conference programme
● 14/03/2006	ETUC Steering Committee (Brussels)	
● 14-15/03/2006	ETUC Executive Committee (Brussels)	
● 15/03/2006	Employees Group Meeting at the European Economic and Social Committee (Brussels)	
● 05/04/2006	III European Union, Latin American and Caribbean Trade Union Summit (Vienna, Autriche)	Trade union summit programme
● 7-8/04/2006	CMK OS Congress (Prague, Czech Republic)	Congress programme
● 21/04/2006	Employees Group Meeting at the European Economic and Social Committee (Brussels)	
● 24-28/04/2006	CGT Congress (Lille, France)	Congress programme

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Communications

Publications- recent Commission documents

The following reports are now available:

- [Proposal for an European Fund for Global Adjustment](#) (01/03);
- [Action plan for the development assistance](#) (02/03);
- [A roadmap for equality between women and men](#) (03/03);
- [Green Paper on European Energy Policy](#) (08/03);
- Communication « [Making Europe a pole of excellence on Corporate Social Responsibility](#) »

The European Commission plans to issue these publications in April 2006:

- Services Directive revised proposal (04/04)
- Report on implementation of the « Posting of workers » Directive (04/04)

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Dossier

The Organising & Recruitment strategy of the Trade Union Congress (TUC). United Kingdom

Following the article describing the characteristics of, and issues at stake for the European trade union movement (Newsletter No 4), we now enter into the heart of the subject with examples of our members' best practice in the area of recruitment strategies.

We begin with the United Kingdom's Trade Union Congress (TUC). Please send us details of your organisation's recruitment models, so that we can describe them in a future newsletter.

The TUC decided to introduce a new recruitment strategy following the fall in membership that hit the British trade union movement in the 1980s and '90s.

In 1997, the TUC put in place a strategy for renewal of the union movement, called New Unionism. One of the key elements of the New Unionism project was to develop a fresh approach to organising and recruitment. The idea was to encourage the TUC member unions to get involved and invest in recruitment and organisation through special emphasis on the promotion of new services offered to workers. The choice of the term "organising" illustrates the British trade union movement's determination to change.

As part of its Organising & Recruitment strategy, the TUC earmarks 10% of its resources for renewal of the union movement and the development of new projects (*Development Fund Resources*).

One of the key instruments of this new approach was the creation of a centralised training body, the **Organising Academy**.

The TUC Organising Academy

Set up in 1998, the Organising Academy is a **structure that aims to centralise the training of union organisers who work with trade union representatives to recruit new members**.

The Academy offers different courses and training sessions to help organisers acquire and improve their recruitment and organisation skills. The year-long programme offers thorough training, alternating theoretical and practical studies.

The partnership between the TUC Academy and the unions is organised as follows: the federations send members to the Academy for specialised recruitment and organisation training, which lasts a full year. The TUC covers all the costs of the training, while the organisers' salaries are paid by their sponsoring union. Some 90% of the organisers trained by the Academy become full-time organisers in their unions. Practical experience is combined with around three weeks of classroom training organised directly by TUC staff.

The role of the organisers is crucial: they are hired on a full-time basis to help union representatives identify the types of activities that could be most effective for recruitment while taking account of the specific characteristics of different workplaces.

Since its foundation seven years ago, the Academy has trained more than 250 organisers, and during the first five years of the Academy's activity these specialised staff members recruited more than 40,000 new members. They have brought unions into more than 1,000 workplaces where they were previously absent.

The Academy works continuously to renew its services. It now offers a range of short courses for staff already trained in recruitment and organisation, and for union representatives and negotiators.

New services for members: lifelong learning

One of the important features of the new recruitment strategy is the development of new services for members. These new services make it possible both to attract new members and keep old ones (revitalisation).

Lifelong learning is one such service. Learning and skills improvement opportunities are a response to one of workers' important needs. The beneficiaries of these services include individuals who for various reasons have limited training, including low-income workers, non-specialised workers, women, immigrants and older workers. In these specific cases, trade union membership can be perceived as a chance to take their career forward.

Not only has the "learning agenda" prompted new members to join and old members to stay, but it has also improved workers' perception of the trade union movement. In addition, a new category of personnel has been created: union learning representatives are in charge of helping their colleagues access training opportunities at work. By 2010, the TUC plans to increase the number of these union learning representatives to around 22,000.

The diversification of personnel in charge of learning is another important aspect of the strategy. The choice of hiring a certain number of union learning representatives who are Asian or African by birth, for example, has attracted workers from these communities who used to have a very limited presence in unions. Similarly, the capacity to **recruit workers in more distant areas** (especially rural workers) through "mobile learning" systems has helped build a union presence and improve the perception of unions in these areas. Several literacy projects have also been organised for migrant workers, who have become pillars of the workforce in certain sectors.

A greater focus on migrants

In the wake of its 2004 congress, the TUC decided to put into practice a new approach for the recruitment of migrant workers. **The idea is to establish closer contacts not only with the migrant workers, but also with the local community where they live in Britain.**

Specific projects have been developed with the African community at the local level. These seek to address the specific problems of these workers and to show that unions can respond to their needs. Meetings were organised with the African communities. The unions thus became more familiar with the social realities of these workers and provided support for them at their workplaces. Through its permanent network comprising unions, workers and local communities, the TUC has demonstrated that it is a force these people can rely on.

Other projects have been implemented to provide support for Polish workers. These differ from the projects earmarked for the local communities because they concentrate primarily on newcomers to the British labour market. These projects are also pro-active, in support of European integration, in particular in a country that decided from the start not to impose any restrictions on the free movement of workers. **The objective was to inform Polish workers of their rights in Great Britain** so as to limit the danger of abuse of rules on working hours, social security and wages. To recruit these workers, the unions first identified their meeting places and then established a direct contact, providing them with the information they needed. To solve the problem of the language barrier, a special partnership was put in place with representatives of the Polish union Solidarnosc. Through this partnership, bilingual material was developed to inform Polish workers of their rights: the material was distributed at workplaces and through Polish community newspapers.

The TUC brochure entitled "Working in the UK: Your Rights" was also translated into all the languages of the new European Union member countries.

Considerations and new challenges

An initial assessment of the TUC recruitment strategy has to take account of the structure of the British confederation compared to its continental counterparts, in particular the very important role played by individual unions.

Under the New Unionism project, the British confederation has developed an integrated approach to recruitment, geared towards the needs of the different sectors and realities on the ground. Investment in human capital is a key element of the approach.

The strategy also represents a change of mentality that must form part of a long-term approach. The Organising & Recruitment culture is beginning to spread. Different unions have already put in place their own Organising Academy, for example USDAW (Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers). During the first two years of its existence, the USDAW learning structure provided training for 33 representatives, who developed 200 campaigns that resulted in the recruitment of more than 11,000 new members. Similarly, UNISON (Public Service Union), the TUC's biggest member federation, has decided to provide training for some 6,000 of its representatives.

A very important element of the New Unionism project is its capacity to reach under-represented groups, particularly women, young people and migrants. Identifying target groups and adapting services to workers' needs are the keys of the new recruitment strategy. With these projects, unions have been able to reach less unionised sectors.

This recruitment and organising policy has slowed the decline in union membership in Great Britain, but many challenges lie ahead. The rate of union membership is still declining and unions are still under-represented in the private sector. The TUC's priority is to integrate and disseminate these initiatives into other sectors, notably with regard to health and safety at the workplace.

This recruitment strategy complements but in no case replaces the day-to-day activity of trade union representatives on the ground. **The new Organising & Recruitment approach helps to target and recruit workers who previously did not identify with the trade union movement and to offer them new services.**

And over and above that specific aim, the idea is to **initiate a renewal of the trade union movement.**

Useful links:

Assessment of the Organising Academy's first five years of activity:

www.tuc.org.uk/newunionism/5yearson.pdf ;

List of TUC publications relating to Organising & Recruitment :

www.lrd.org.uk/coll.php3?pagid=4 ;

Website for trade union representatives:

www.unionreps.org.uk ;

TUC Learning Services website:

www.learningservices.org.uk ;

TUC Organising Academy website:

www.tuc.org.uk/organisation/index.cfm?mins=367&minors=367

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