

[ETUC newsletter]



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You may be interested

Figure of the month

31 millions

31 millions European workers
(15% of the total) earn a poverty
wage.

(Source: Eurostat)

Make a note



Dear readers,



The month of May is traditionally the month of the Tripartite Social Summit, the top-level meeting that brings together trade unions with employers, the European Commission and the Presidency of the European Union. At the recent Tripartite Social Summit, the ETUC called on European leaders to put good quality work at the heart of the political agenda. This is urgent. As shown in the new ETUC study on precarious work, 31 million European workers are earning poverty wages, and this is unacceptable. Confronted with this situation, policy-makers need to react by reinvigorating Social Europe, which has been sidelined for too long. The first step must be to strengthen the European social acquis.

The climate change and energy package was a central theme of the European Spring Council. We invited heads of state and government to take account of social and employment factors so that measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions will contribute to the creation of good quality jobs rather than constituting a threat. At the same time, programmes are needed that will allow for the structural changes linked to the battle against climate change to be fully anticipated.

We are already only a few days away from the Euro-demonstration in Ljubljana on 5 April – the day of the informal ECOFIN Council – to demand higher wages and purchasing power and more equality for European workers. At a recent hearing in the European Parliament, the President of the European Central Bank (ECB) repeated his plea for wage moderation, as the only means of adjustment to fight inflation. We don't agree with him. In the view of the European trade union movement, boosting workers' purchasing power would stimulate demand and contribute to the creation of good quality jobs. This is the direction Europe should be going in.

Together, we will ensure that European decision-makers hear our message on 5 April in Ljubljana.

John Monks
General Secretary



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[ETUC in action]

ETUC Executive Committee

04-05/03/2008 – The ETUC Executive Committee met in Brussels. On the agenda were the **trade union response to the Laval and Viking rulings**, the [Euro-demonstration for better wages in Ljubljana](#), the revision of the European Works Council Directive, and the EU climate change and energy package.

The Committee adopted a [statement of support for the ETUC's affiliate in Andorra](#), the Usd'A, in its struggle for recognition of trade union rights, as well as a [declaration calling for a return to peace negotiations](#) between Israel and the Palestinian authorities.



End the pay gap between men and women!

08/03/2008 – The European trade union movement celebrated International Women's Day. To mark the occasion, the ETUC announced the results of its **first annual 8 March Survey**. This study reveals that the number of women joining trade unions is growing. But, on the other hand, they are still **inadequately represented in leadership positions**. Another issue highlighted in the survey is the **persistent wage gap, averaging 15%, between men and women in Europe**. This problem is one of the priorities of the current ETUC pay campaign.




[Trade Union Agenda]

March 2008 – April 2008

03/03/2008	PERC Executive Committee (Brussels)	
04/03/2008	ETUC Steering Committee (Brussels)	
04-05/03/2008	ETUC Executive Committee (Brussels)	
12/03/2008	Meeting of the Group II "Workers" of the European Economic and Social Committee (Brussels)	
05/04/2008	Euro-demonstration on pay and purchasing power (Ljubljana)	Euro-demonstration Programme
09-11/04/2008	ETUC conference on services of general interest and internal market (Lisbon)	
15/04/2008	ETUC Steering Committee (Brussels)	
22/04/2008	Meeting of the Group II "Workers" of the European Economic and Social Committee (Brussels)	



[Focus on the EU and trade union positions]

Tripartite Social Summit: the EU needs a real social dimension

13/03/2008 – Representatives of the European trade union movement took part in the [Tripartite Social Summit](#).

The ETUC pointed out that over the **last decade, Social Europe has been on the back burner**, so it's no surprise that the voices calling for protectionism are becoming more strident. During the debate, the **ETUC raised three important issues**:

- the damaging impact on the right to collective bargaining and strike action of the **Laval and Viking rulings** in the European Court of Justice;
- the need to put **good quality work, and the struggle against insecurity**, at the heart of the new European Employment Strategy;
- **involving the social partners** in dealing with the impact on workers of measures to **fight climate change**.



Wanja Lundby-Wedin, ETUC President and John Monks, General Secretary, at the Tripartite Social Summit (Source: Slovenian EU Presidency)

[ETUC press release](#)

[Slovenian EU Presidency press release](#)

Spring Summit: climate change and energy package must contribute to create quality jobs

13–14/03/2008 – Heads of State and Government of the 27 EU member countries met in Brussels for the [Spring Summit dedicated to the climate change and energy package](#). The ETUC asked that **social and employment considerations be taken into account** so as to make emissions reduction policies an opportunity to **create quality jobs rather than constituting a threat**. **Compulsory consultations with European social partners** are also necessary. **The ETUC proposes setting up “fair employment transition” programmes**, which will allow the structural changes in employment and skills resulting from ambitious mitigation measures to be fully anticipated, managed and financed.

[ETUC press release](#)

[European Council conclusions](#)

The strengthening euro: the ECB must intervene



06/03/2008 – The ETUC called on the European Central Bank (ECB) to **cut interest rates in response to the ever-stronger euro exchange rate against the dollar**.

But unfortunately the ECB Governing Council decided to leave key interest rates unchanged. The European trade union movement believes that the ongoing appreciation of the euro will lead to the loss of European jobs, coming as it does on top of other setbacks to growth.

[ETUC press release](#)

[ECB press release](#)

Economic crisis: no time to bury our heads in the sand

18/03/2008 – The ETUC reacted to the political messages coming from the joint [Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development \(OECD\) and International Monetary Fund \(IMF\) Conference on Structural Reform](#). The ETUC believes that in the face of the **economic crisis** unfolding in the United States – threatening a damaging impact in Europe as well – **we need demand-side policies and instruments to regulate financial markets**.

[ETUC press release](#)



[EU Agenda]

March 2008 – April 2008

03/03/2008	Environment Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda
03/03/2008	Eurogroup (Brussels)	Meeting Agenda
04/03/2008	ECOFIN Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda
10–13/03/2008	Plenary Session at the European Parliament (Strasbourg)	
10–11/03/2008	General Affairs and External Relations Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda
11/03/2008	EU Troika – Ukraine (Brussels)	Meeting Agenda
12–13/03/2008	Plenary Session at the European Economic and Social Committee (Brussels)	
13/03/2008	Tripartite Social Summit (Brussels)	Meeting Agenda
13–14/03/2008	European Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda
28–29/03/2008	Informal Meeting of EU Ministers of Foreign Affairs (Brdo)	Meeting Agenda
04–05/04/2008	Informal Meeting of Ministers for Economic and Financial Affairs (Brdo)	Meeting Agenda
07–08/04/2008	Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Luxembourg)	Council Agenda
09–10/04/2008	“Mini-Plenary” Session at the European Parliament (Brussels)	
11–13/04/2008	Informal Meeting of Environment Ministers (Brdo)	Meeting Agenda
14–16/04/2008	Informal Meeting of Ministers for Competitiveness (Brdo)	Meeting Agenda
17–18/04/2008	Informal Meeting of Ministers for Health (Brdo)	Meeting Agenda
17–18/04/2008	Council Justice and Home Affairs (Luxembourg)	Council Agenda
21–24/04/2008	Plenary Session at the European Parliament (Strasbourg)	
22–23/04/2008	Plenary Session at the European Economic and Social Committee (Brussels)	
28–29/04/2008	General Affairs and External Relations Council (Luxembourg)	Council Agenda



[Euro-demonstration]

“ More Pay, More Purchasing Power, More Equality! ”

EURO-DEMONSTRATION – LJUBLJANA 5 APRIL 2008

In the framework of its [campaign on wages](#), the ETUC is organising a **Euro-demonstration in Ljubljana (Slovenia) on 5 April**, the day of the meeting of EU Member State finance ministers.

The drop in **purchasing power, wage moderation and wage inequalities** are hitting more and more European workers.

For these reasons, the **European trade union movement** has decided to go on the offensive and campaign for:

- ➔ **improvements in purchasing power for European workers**, to end poverty and boost demand;
- ➔ **decent minimum wages** in all European countries and a narrowing of the earnings gap between countries;
- ➔ **greater equality** between the boardroom and the shopfloor, and between men and women;
- ➔ **a fair deal for all workers**, including in the public services.



Programme of the events:

- ➔ **Friday 4 April at 11.00: press conference**
Address: ZSSS Trade Union House, Dalmatinova 4, 1000 Ljubljana, 6th floor conference room.
Translation into English will be available.
[Follow the press conference live by Internet](#)
- ➔ **Saturday 5 April at 14.00: start of the Euro-demonstration.**
Detailed route: see next page.

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PARCOURS EUROMANIF ROUTE OF THE EURODEMO



EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ETUC)



Arrivée bus + bus aéroport / Arrival bus + bus airport



Rassemblement et composition du cortège / Meeting point for the line-up of the procession

Trajet / Way

Départ bus pour retour aéroport / Departure bus for return airport



Départ bus pour retour / Departure bus for return





[You may be interested]

Media



Press conference on the quality of work

12/03/2008 – On the eve of the EU Spring Summit, the ETUC organised a press conference on the **quality of work in Europe**.

ETUC General Secretary John Monks and Confederal Secretary Walter Cerfeda presented a [Study on quality jobs at risk in the EU](#), carried out among national affiliates, which clearly shows the increase in the proportion of precarious and low-paid jobs in Europe. The trade union representatives called on the Spring Council to [take steps to promote good quality work by revitalising the European social acquis](#).

The new **Resource Centre** is ready!

The ETUC has completed a **major updating** of its [Resource Centre](#), the internet portal dedicated to the distribution of information and practical support for the social partners – and specifically trade union organisations – on activities linked to the European social dialogue. The portal, available only in English, was developed in the framework of the European Social Dialogue Work Programme.

[Resource Centre portal](#)



EDITORIAL TEAM: MANAGING EDITOR: John Monks
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: Patricia Grillo
EDITORS: Daniele Melli, Kate Holman

Publications

Restructuring in Europe

Two new publications about restructuring in Europe are now available on the ETUC web site. The publication “**ETUC overview of restructuring in Europe**” is available



in [English](#), while the publication “**Toolkit restructuring**” is available in [French](#), [English](#), German, Portuguese, Spanish and Czech.

Study on precarious work

The ETUC has published a study on ‘[the incidence and rise of precarious work in Europe](#)’. Based on research carried out among national affiliates, this report clearly shows the growth in insecure jobs in Europe. The publication is currently available in English only.

Recent European Commission documents

The following reports are now available:

- [Communication “Western Balkans: Enhancing the European perspective”\(05/03\)](#);
- [Report “Women and men in decision-making 2007”\(06/03\)](#)

Please pass this newsletter on to your colleagues and contacts

EUROPE'S WORKERS NEED A PAY RISE

Look at the facts!



Highest paid 20 top managers gain 300 times more than the average EU worker

And 40 years on, European women are paid 15% less than men

EURO DEMO

05.04.08
LJUBLJANA SLOVENIA



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