

[ETUC newsletter]



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Figure of the month

2,800,000,000,000\$

This amount of 2.8 trillions of dollars represents the estimated cost of the financial crisis.
(Source: Bank of England)

Make a note



Dear readers,



The real economy is paying a very steep price for the financial crisis. The indicators are alarming: temporary shutdowns of automotive plants in Europe, the collapse of temporary work, rising unemployment and tighter credit. The term 'economic recession' is being used everywhere. A crisis of this scope requires a response equal to the challenge.

The dominant model of casino capitalism is on the verge of implosion. That is why we ask European political leaders to take action that can bring about a radical change in a system that has given free rein to speculation and the greed of certain banks and hedge funds. For the European trade union movement, this implosion offers a unique opportunity to build a better system. When excessive liberalism works, it benefits a handful of people, but when it derails, it is public money that has to come to the rescue. In the future, prosperity must be for everyone, and not just for the privileged few. In the short term, it is workers, small businesses and retired people who will need money, not just banks.

“The dominant model of casino capitalism is on the verge of implosion”

The serious economic and social repercussions of the crisis have prompted the ETUC to move forward more quickly with its decision to conduct a wide campaign for employment, better pay and workers' rights. The first step of the campaign will be the Euro-demonstration in Strasbourg on 16 December to say 'no' to longer working hours. This event will take place on the eve of the European Parliament's vote in plenary on the Working Time Directive.

John Monks
General Secretary



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[ETUC in action]

Meeting of the ETUC Executive Committee

14-15/09/2008

The ETUC Executive Committee met in Brussels. The main topics of the meeting included the economic and financial crisis, the Energy and Climate Change package, as well as the recast of the European Works Councils Directive.

Conferences

Wages in Europe



01-02/10/2008 – As part of its [Pay Campaign](#), ETUC organised a **conference on wages and wage policy in Europe**. Several European leaders, notably Joaquín Almunia, European Commissioner for Economic and

Financial affairs, and Jean-Claude Trichet, President of the European Central Bank, as well as European trade union movement leaders and University representatives took part in the conference.

Launch of the Europe – Turkey trade union cooperation project

20-21/10/2008 – The trade union cooperation project “Civil Society Dialogue: bringing together workers from Turkey and the EU through a shared culture” was officially launched at the opening conference in Ankara. This project,

steered by ETUC, will include a range of activities designed to **help Turkish and European workers meet each other**. The project also aims to ensure better knowledge and understanding of one another among Turkish and

European workers. Three Turkish trade unions – Turk-Is, Hak-Is and DISK – as well as 17 trade unions and seven federations support this cooperation project. [Internet site dedicated to the project](#)



[ETUC in action]

Conferences

Towards a Trade Union Erasmus



16-17/10/2008 – Under ETUC's responsibility, 11 national trade union organisations and three European industry federations officially launched the project "**Towards a Trade Union Erasmus**" in Brussels. The project aims to **develop the sharing of trade union knowledge and practices at European level through the mobility and exchanges of trade unionists**. At the opening conference, ETUC General Secretary John Monks encouraged the trainees

and their tutors to make the best out of this experience, by reminding them of their responsibility in making the Trade Union Erasmus work – an experience which he would like to see repeated. Appointed for working one month in an organisation in another EU country, trainees and their tutors presented a first draft of their traineeship programmes.

Following newsletters will give you regular updates on the project.



[Trade Union Agenda]

October – November 2008

15/10/2008	ETUC steering committee (Brussels)
15-16/10/2008	ETUC executive committee (Brussels)
21/10/2008	Meeting of the Group II 'Workers' of the European Economic and Social Committee (Brussels)
28-31/10/2008	French Confederation of Christian Workers (CFTC) Congress (France)
07-08/11/2008	DEOK Congress (Cyprus)
13/11/2008	ETUC steering committee (Brussels)
13-14/11/2008	KOZ SR Congress (Slovakia)
26-27/11/2008	ELA-STV Congress (Spain)
27-29/11/2008	Cartel Alfa Congress (Romania)



[Focus on the EU and trade union positions]

Tripartite Social Summit: The financial crisis takes its place at the summit

15/10/2008 – A European trade union movement delegation, led by ETUC President Wanja Lundby-Wedin, took part in the **Tripartite Social Summit, which was dedicated to the financial crisis and climate change**. Due to the current global economic situation, the summit's agenda was modified, allowing to deal with the financial crisis in greater detail. ETUC underlined its position in this regard (see following article). On climate change, ETUC proposed the creation of a **European Investment Fund to promote investment in renewable energies, innovation and the launch of a concrete European industry policy**. The presentation of a **White paper on climate change, skills and jobs**, as well as the **establishment of EU instruments to support the transitions of workers displaced by climate change measures**, were part of the suggestions put forward by ETUC at the summit.



SOURCE: EUROPEAN COUNCIL

[ETUC press release](#)
[EU French Presidency press release](#)

Face the financial crisis, Europe must act as one

14/10/2008 – On the eve of the [European Council](#), ETUC called on European leaders to act as one, by giving a European response to the crisis that the financial system currently faces, as well as to the knock-on effects on the real economy. The European trade union movement believes that a strong and co-ordinated political response

should be brought forward. Such a response is required to save Europe from the financial profiteers, the real economy from casino capitalism and wages from the central bankers. Moreover, the creation of a Supervisory Board, including the social partners, is necessary.

[ETUC press release](#)

EWC: ETUC asks the European Parliament to complete the directive revision by the end of the year

16/10/2008 – On the basis of the outcome of the talks with BUSINESSEUROPE, ETUC asked the European Parliament to find a successful, early resolution to the recast Directive on European Works Councils (EWC) by the end of the year. Otherwise, there is a real risk that the issue could fall through due to lack of time.

[ETUC press release](#)



[Focus on the EU and trade union positions]

Work-life balance: Commission should have gone further

01/10/2008 – European Commission adopted a [package of measures](#) aiming to **improve maternity protection and promote childcare provisions**. Overall, ETUC welcomes this package. However, **more concrete action, notably on elder and dependent care is needed** to better support workers and families in reconciling working and family life.

[ETUC press release](#)

[EU Commission press release](#)

A social progress protocol to guarantee workers' rights

08/10/2008 – At the 'Forum on workers' rights and economic freedoms' which was organised by the European Commission, ETUC reiterated its request for a social progress protocol to be attached to the EU treaties. The aim of such a legally binding protocol is to remedy the harmful effects of the European Court of Justice (ECJ) judgements ([Laval, Viking, Rüffert and Luxembourg cases](#)) and to restore the balance between fundamental rights and internal market freedoms.

[ETUC press release](#)

European private company : statute must respect workers' participation rights

21/10/2008 – ETUC called on European policymakers to complement the European private company statute with a **separate directive on employees' information and consultation rights**, as it is the case for the European Company (SE) and the European Cooperative Society. Without those elements, ETUC will not support this project.

[ETUC press release](#)

[ETUC resolution on European private company](#)

ETUC welcomes the adoption of the Temporary Agency Work Directive

22/10/2008 – ETUC welcomed the vote in the European Parliament on the Directive on Temporary Agency Work, following the agreement in the Council on this issue in June. The approved Directive **introduces the principle of equal treatment for agency workers from the first day of their assignment**, with limited possibilities for derogation that must involve the social partners.

[ETUC press release](#)

It is time to act to protect social Europe

23/10/2008 – The European Parliament voted a report drafted by Jan Andersson (European Socialist Party) on challenges to collective agreements in the EU. **The Parliament expressed deep concerns about the rulings of the European Court of Justice in the Viking, Laval, Rüffert and Commission versus Luxembourg cases**. The Parliament underlined the fact that economic freedoms are not superior to fundamental rights, calling the Commission to act in the legislative field, in order to prevent conflicting interpretation in the future. **ETUC welcomed this vote and again called on the European institutions to adopt a social progress protocol to be attached to the EU treaties.** [ETUC press release](#)



[EU Agenda]

October – November 2008

02-03/10/2008	Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (Luxembourg)	Council Agenda
06/10/2008	Eurogroup Meeting (Luxembourg)	Meeting Agenda
07/10/2008	Euro-Med ECOFIN Ministerial meeting (Luxembourg)	Meeting Agenda
08-09/10/2008	Mini-Plenary Session at the European Parliament (Brussels)	
09-10/10/2008	Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Luxembourg)	Council Agenda
13-14/10/2008	General Affairs and External Relations Council (Luxembourg)	Council Agenda
15-16/10/2008	European Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda
16/10/2008	Ministerial meeting on poverty and social exclusion (Marseille)	Meeting Agenda
17/10/2008	EU – Canada Summit (Montreal)	Summit Agenda
20-23/10/2008	Plenary Session at the European Parliament (Strasbourg)	
20-21/10/2008	Environment Council (Luxembourg)	Council Agenda
21-23/10/2008	Plenary Session at the European Economic and Social Committee (Brussels)	
24/10/2008	Justice and Home Affairs Council (Luxembourg)	Council Agenda
25/10/2008	EU – South Korea Summit (Seoul)	Summit Agenda
03/11/2008	Eurogroup Meeting (Brussels)	Meeting Agenda
03-04/11/2008	Foreign ministers meeting from the member countries of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean (Marseille)	Meeting Agenda
04/11/2008	ECOFIN Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda
09-10/11/2008	Euro-Mediterranean ministerial conference on employment and labour (Marrakech)	Conference Agenda
10-11/11/2008	General Affairs and External Relations Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda
14/11/2008	EU – Russia Summit (Nice)	Summit Agenda
17-20/11/2008	Plenary Session at the European Parliament (Strasbourg)	
20-21/11/2008	Education, Youth and Culture Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda
21/11/2008	ECOFIN (Budget) Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda
25-26/11/2008	Informal meeting of the ministers for education and vocational training (Bordeaux)	Meeting Agenda
27-28/11/2008	Justice and Home Affairs Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda



[7 october 2008]

World day for decent work



“ For decent work,
for decent wages
and decent working hours!! ”

To watch the video of John Monks' speech of 7 October at the rally in Brussels,
[please click here](#)



RALLIES IN BRUSSELS AND PARIS



[You may be interested]

Press conference on financial crisis

14/10/2008 – On the eve of the European Council, the ETUC press and communication department organised a press conference on the financial crisis. At this occasion, ETUC General Secretary John Monks and the ETUC economic advisor, Ronald Janssen, outlined the main points of the European trade union movement's analysis of the financial crisis and the knock-on effects on the real economy.



First press and communication working group meeting

20/10/2008 – The first meeting of the ETUC press and communication working group took place in Brussels. More than 20 trade union journalists, as well as the heads of ETUC-affiliated trade union communication services, attended the working group. The two main topics of this working day were the response of the European trade union movement to the European Court of Justice (ECJ) rulings in the Laval, Rüffert, Viking and Luxembourg cases, as well as the ETUC campaign for the revision of the European Works Council (EWC) Directive. At the meeting, participants had the possibility to meet representatives from the European institutions. They also discussed the issue of new communication tools and the way in which interaction between different communication services could be improved.



Publications

European Commission publications

The following reports are now available:

- [Communication on work-life balance](#) (03/10);
- [Proposal for a revised directive on maternity leave](#) (03/10).

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