

# [ ETUC newsletter ]



## Contents

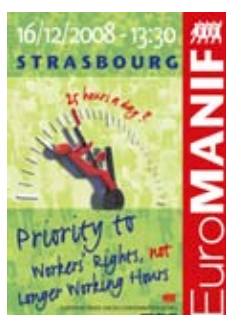
- 2** ETUC in action
- 3** Trade union agenda
- 4** Focus on the EU and trade union positions
- 5** EU agenda
- 7** You may be interested

## Figure of the month

### 8% – 18 million working poor in the EU

In 2008, 8% of workers in the European Union are working poor. It represents 18 million people – a number which could rise with the actual economic recession. (Source: Employment in Europe 2008 – European Commission)

## Make a note



Dear readers,

The economic crisis is now a reality. It is already having highly visible social consequences with many job cuts and bankruptcies.

An effective European response is needed to cope with this crisis.

The European Commission has just announced a useful although modest (compared the USA) coordinated stimulus plan aimed at keeping the crisis from turning into a long and deep recession. We are convinced that social dialogue has a crucial role to play in this context of rekindling the economy. That is why the European social partners have asked the current EU Presidency to organise a special tripartite social summit to be held on the eve of the forthcoming European summit of 11 and 12 December.

Trade union organisations must seize this opportunity and bring all their influence to bear to help redirect global economic governance so that what we are experiencing today will never occur again.

European trade unions will demonstrate in Strasbourg on 16 December against any weakening of the Working Time Directive. That day marks the eve of the European Parliament's vote in plenary and we intend to influence the vote through this European trade union mobilisation. Other issues that are important for us will also be on the agenda of this session of Parliament, including the European Works Councils and the Climate and Energy Change Package.

**John Monks**  
General Secretary



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# [ETUC in action]

## ‘Priority to workers’ rights, not longer working hours!’

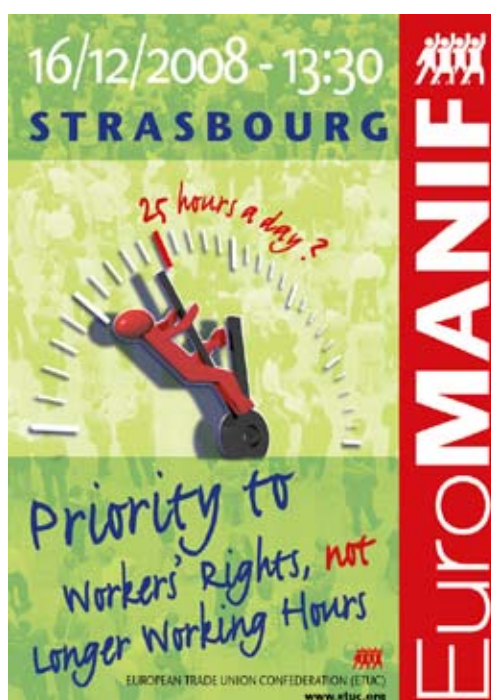
### Euro-demonstration – Strasbourg – 16 December 2008

ETUC is organising a Euro-demonstration in Strasbourg, on 16 December 2008, on the eve of the European Parliament’s vote on the revision of the Working Time Directive.

This vote is fundamental for European workers, because if the proposals made by the EU Council of Ministers in June are maintained, it will weaken the directive currently in force, by allowing a proliferation of opt-outs and on-call work. This will restrict workers’ rights and it represents a blow to Social Europe.

[The European trade union movement](#) is opposed to the proposals made by the [Council of Ministers](#) and is asking the European Parliament to adopt amendments that ensure:

- protection against long working hours that



are a threat to the health and safety of all workers, whatever their level of responsibility

- the end of all abuse in the form of excessively long working hours (opt-out)
- recognition of on-call time (attendance time) at the workplace as working time
- the role of collective bargaining, and information and consultation of workers in the organisation of working time
- workers’ right to adapt their working hours in terms of their needs

If the Parliament does not secure an absolute majority for its position ([Report of Alejandro Cercas, Member of the European Parliament](#)), the Council’s proposals will have force of law. This has to be avoided at all costs and the commitment of all of us is fundamental !

#### PROGRAMME OF THE EVENTS

- > Tuesday 16 December at 13:30:  
Start of the Euro-demonstration
- > Tuesday 16 December at 16:00:  
Press conference at European Parliament  
Address: 1, avenue du Président Robert Schuman  
F-67070 Strasbourg

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# [Trade Union Agenda]

November – December 2008

07-08/11/2008	DEOK Congress (Cyprus)	
13/11/2008	ETUC steering committee (Brussels)	
13-14/11/2008	KOZ SR Congress (Slovakia)	
17/11/2008	CNSLR-FRATIA Congress (Romania)	
26-27/11/2008	ELA-STV Congress (Spain)	
27-29/11/2008	Cartel Alfa Congress (Romania)	
03/12/2008	Meeting of the Group II 'Workers' of the European Economic and Social Committee (Brussels)	
03/12/2008	ETUC steering committee (Brussels)	
03-04/12/2008	ETUC executive committee (Brussels)	
16/12/2008	Euro-demonstration on working time (Strasbourg)	<a href="#">Euro-demonstration programme</a>
17-20/12/2008	Comisiones obreras Congress (Spain)	<a href="#">Congress Programme</a>



# [Focus on the EU and trade union positions]

## Economic crisis: the European Commission's recovery plan has to be implemented rapidly

26/11/2008 – ETUC welcomed the [European Commission's Economic Recovery Plan](#), in which action to boost the demand side of the economy is central. For the European trade union movement, it is **fundamental that this plan is implemented rapidly, in particular the 170 billion package that the Member States are supposed to provide**. ETUC believes that **social dialogue and social partners' input have a key role to play to avoid social recession and downwards wage spirals**. In this connection, ETUC, together with employers' organisations, ETUC calls for an exceptional Tripartite Social Summit to take place before the next European Summit on 11 and 12 December.

[ETUC press release](#)

[ETUC Action for recovery report](#)

[European Commission press release](#)

## Working time: ETUC welcomes the vote in the EP Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

05/11/2008 – ETUC welcomed the fact that the European Parliament Committee on Employment and Social Affairs adopted the [Cercas report on Working Time Directive](#). This report disavows the decision taken by the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO) last June, which was a disastrous move for European workers. **ETUC calls on the European Parliament to adopt a firm position with regard to the Commission and Council at the vote in plenary on 17 December**. The European trade union movement will organise a **Euro-demonstration on 16 December in Strasbourg** to ask the European Parliament to reject the Council's decision and to confirm its position adopted at first reading.

[ETUC press release](#)

*On page 2 you will find more information on the Euro-demonstration*

## Financial crisis: ETUC writes to Presidents Sarkozy and Barroso

06/11/2008 – On the eve of the extraordinary European Council in Brussels, and of the G-20 meeting in Washington, on 7 and 15 November respectively, ETUC wrote a letter to Presidents Nicolas Sarkozy and José Manuel Barroso, asking them to do all that is necessary to face the challenge of putting the financial sector back at the service of the real economy. For ETUC, the casino capitalism model, based on the principle 'borrow to speculate', has to end. For the European trade union movement, it is **fundamental to deeply and structurally reform the World financial system, to not let the real economy down and to ensure workers get a fair deal**. At the same time, ETUC asked G-20 members to take fully into account the [International trade union Declaration](#), issued at the Washington summit.

[Open letter to Presidents Nicolas Sarkozy and José Manuel Barroso](#)



# [Focus on the EU and trade union positions]

## Barcelona process: the role of the social dialogue

19/11/2008 – ETUC and its Euromed Trade Union Forum participated in the [first Euro-Mediterranean ministerial conference on employment and work in Marrakech, Morocco, on 9–10 November 2008](#). **ETUC welcomed the adoption of a framework of action which provides for the creation of a Euromed social dialogue forum** : *'For the first time since the process of Barcelona has started, there is scope for a sustainable and coherent social policy. ETUC and its Euromed Trade Union Forum will do their best to use the "Social dialogue forum" as a driving factor'*, declared Maria Helena André, ETUC Deputy General Secretary.

[ETUC press release](#)

## International day for the elimination of violence against women

25/11/2008 – On the **International Day for the elimination of violence against women and girls**, ETUC denounced and deplored all forms of violence against women and girls.

For ETUC, despite efforts across the EU, we have failed to put an end to violence against women and girls. **ETUC called on EU Member State governments to take action to ensure that this problem is tackled in a serious manner**, as an indispensable part of wider policies on gender equality.

[ETUC press release](#)



# [EU Agenda]

November – December 2008

03/11/2008	Eurogroup Meeting (Brussels)	<a href="#">Meeting Agenda</a>
03-04/11/2008	Foreign ministers meeting from the member countries of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean (Marseille)	<a href="#">Meeting Agenda</a>
04/11/2008	ECOFIN Council (Brussels)	<a href="#">Council Agenda</a>
09-10/11/2008	Euro-Mediterranean ministerial conference on employment and labour (Marrakech)	<a href="#">Conference Agenda</a>
10-11/11/2008	General Affairs and External Relations Council (Brussels)	<a href="#">Council Agenda</a>
14/11/2008	EU – Russia Summit (Nice)	<a href="#">Summit Agenda</a>
17-20/11/2008	Plenary Session at the European Parliament (Strasbourg)	





# [EU Agenda]

November – December 2008

20–21/11/2008	Education, Youth and Culture Council (Brussels)	<a href="#">Council Agenda</a>
21/11/2008	ECOFIN (Budget) Council (Brussels)	<a href="#">Council Agenda</a>
25–26/11/2008	Informal meeting of the ministers for education and vocational training (Bordeaux)	<a href="#">Meeting Agenda</a>
27–28/11/2008	Justice and Home Affairs Council (Brussels)	<a href="#">Council Agenda</a>
01/12/2008	EU–China Summit (Lyon)	<a href="#">Summit Agenda</a>
01/12/2008	Eurogroup Meeting (Brussels)	<a href="#">Meeting Agenda</a>
01–02/12/2008	Competitiveness Council (Brussels)	<a href="#">Council Agenda</a>
02/12/2008	ECOFIN Council (Brussels)	<a href="#">Council Agenda</a>
03–04/12/2008	Mini-plenary Session at the European Parliament (Brussels)	
03–04/12/2008	Plenary Session at the European Economic and Social Committee (Brussels)	
04–05/12/2008	Environment Council (Brussels)	<a href="#">Council Agenda</a>
08–09/12/2008	Transports, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Brussels)	<a href="#">Council Agenda</a>
08–09/12/2008	General Affairs and External Relations Council (Brussels)	<a href="#">Council Agenda</a>
11–12/12/2008	European Council (Brussels)	<a href="#">Council Agenda</a>
15–16/12/2008	Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (Brussels)	<a href="#">Council Agenda</a>
15–18/12/2008	Plenary Session at the European Parliament (Strasbourg)	
22/12/2008	UE – Brazil Summit (Brazil)	<a href="#">Summit Agenda</a>



## [You may be interested]

### Press conference on working time

06/11/2008 – The day after the European Parliament Employment and Social Affairs Committee voted on the Cercas report, the ETUC Press and Communication Department organised a press conference on the Working Time Directive. John

Monks, Alejandro Cercas, Member of the European Parliament, and Pepe Galvez, Secretary for trade union action (Federation of Public Services of Comisiones Obreras), explained the stakes and the risks of increasing working hours

if the revision proposed by the Council is adopted. During the press conference, ETUC announced the organisation of a Euro-demonstration in Strasbourg on 16 December, on the eve of the second reading vote.



### Something new on the ETUC website: Equality section improved!

In order to improve communication, the Equality section of the ETUC web site (<http://www.etuc.org/r/1344>) has been reorganised and improved.



## [You may be interested]

### ETUC publications

#### No to long working hours

ETUC published a leaflet on the revision of the Working Time Directive. This leaflet, currently available in English and French, presents a critical analysis of the proposals of the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO), and explains the European trade union movement's point of view.

[Leaflet 'No to long working hours'](#)



#### Do not let the economy down

ETUC published its autumn 2008 report on the economic situation 'Do not let the economy down'. The report sounds the alarm regarding the real economy. According to ETUC analyses, the economy will continue to decline over the next year and unemployment will rise further. With inflation expected to start falling rapidly, policy makers should be extremely careful in avoiding to get trapped in a Japanese-style deflation.

[Report 'Do not let the economy down'](#)

### European Commission publications

The following reports are now available:

- [A European Economic Recovery Plan](#) (26/11) ;
- [Report on the impact of free movement of workers in the context of EU enlargement](#) (18/11) ;
- [Employment in Europe 2008 report](#) (18/11).

### Editorial Team

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**Daniele Melli**

**Please pass this newsletter on to your colleagues and contacts**



16/12/2008 - 13:30

STRASBOURG



25 hours a day.?



Priority to  
Workers' Rights, *not*  
Longer Working Hours



EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ETUC)

[www.etuc.org](http://www.etuc.org)

EUROMANIF