

[ETUC newsletter]



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Figure of the month

9,2%
22 million workers

In the European Union, the unemployment rate reached 9,2% which means more than 22 million unemployed persons. It is the highest rate in 9 years.

(Source: Eurostat)

Note



Dear Colleagues,



The month of October saw major developments in a number of European issues.

First, the Treaty of Lisbon now has every chance of entering into force by the end of the year. The ETUC supports this treaty, and in particular its Charter of Fundamental Rights, which will give European workers new social and economic rights.

Second, just weeks ahead of the Copenhagen conference, the European Council meeting on 29–30 October worked out a compromise on financing the drive to curb climate change. At the Executive Committee on 20 and 21 October, the ETUC adopted a resolution on «Climate change, new industrial policies and ways out of the crisis», which will constitute our core demands at the Copenhagen conference, where we will be present. The climate change issue must be addressed from both a social and environmental perspective. We need a binding and ambitious agreement to limit the global rise in temperature. We also need stronger Community policies in the industrial and research fields that take the different economic and industrial realities into account, particularly in new Member States. The social aspect is also fundamental and we must ensure a fair social transition to provide support for those concerned by the transformation of their job.

The employment situation in Europe is still very troubling. The latest figures released by Eurostat speak for themselves: with unemployment of 9.7%, the European Union has regressed to the level of employment of nine years ago. These figures illustrate the urgency of putting in place a second recovery plan to protect jobs and safeguard social protection systems, based on a European investment programme totalling 1% of the gross domestic product. This was the message we addressed to European decision-makers at the Tripartite Social Summit that preceded the European Council in October.

Lastly, I would like to welcome the recent appointment of Maria Helena André as Minister for Labour and Social Protection of Portugal. On behalf of the ETUC, I thank Maria Helena for her important work in the Confederation and I wish her all the best in her new responsibilities.

John Monks
General Secretary



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[ETUC in action]

Maria Helena André appointed Portuguese Labour Minister

26/10/2009 – Maria Helena André, Deputy General Secretary of the ETUC, has been appointed **Minister for Labour and Social Protection** in the new government of Portugal led by José Socrates.

[The ETUC welcomes this appointment](#) and is convinced that Maria Helena André will be equal to the new duties entrusted to her.



ETUC CAMPAIGNS

‘Protecting the climate also means creating sustainable and quality jobs’

05/10/2009 – Looking ahead to the [Copenhagen Summit on climate change](#) (from 7 to 18 December 2009) the ETUC launched a campaign calling for policies that take account of protecting the climate, from both an environmental point of view and a social point of view. The campaign was launched at a conference organised by the ETUC in London. The study '[Climate disruptions, new industrial policies and ways out of the crisis](#)' was also presented.

According to Joël Decaillon, ETUC Confederal secretary in charge of the climate change dossier, 'it is essential for the decisions to be taken at Copenhagen to incorporate this social and human dimension. Ensuring a fair social transition means setting up proper social negotiations at every level with instruments for that negotiation process, the necessary funding, and new training to help in the transformation of employment. Only if we can do this can the anxieties

and threats be transformed into opportunities to create sustainable, quality jobs and curb social inequalities.'

[Web pages dedicated to the campaign](#)

[The challenges of climate change – ETUC video \(Available only in French\)](#)



MAJOR MEETINGS – CONFERENCES – PROJECTS

ETUC Executive Committee

20–21/10/2009 – The ETUC Executive Committee met in Stockholm. Many subjects were discussed, notably climate change in the perspective of the forthcoming Copenhagen Summit (7 to 18 December), financial markets regulation, the revision of the Posting of Workers Directive and the Lisbon Strategy after 2010.



[Trade Union agenda]

October – November 2009

05/10/2009	ETUC Conference on Climate Change (London)	
07/10/2009	World Day for Decent Work	
20/10/2009	ETUC Steering Committee (Stockholm)	
20-21/10/2009	ETUC Executive Committee (Stockholm)	
20-21/10/2009	EFFAT Congress (Berlin)	Congress Programme
04/11/2009	Meeting of the Group II 'Workers' of the European Economic and Social Committee (Brussels)	
05-06/11/2009	Congress of the Finnish Confederation of Professionals (STTK) (Helsinki)	
13-14/11/2009	Congress of the Hungarian National Federation of Workers' Councils (MOSZ) (Budapest)	
16-17/11/2009	EUROCADRES Congress (Brussels)	Congress Programme
19/11/2009	ETUC Steering Committee (Brussels)	
20-22/11/2009	Congress of the Luxembourg Christian Trade Union Confederation (LCGB) (Luxembourg)	



[Interview]

Joël Decaillon, ETUC Confederal Secretary,

talks us through the issues for the forthcoming Copenhagen Summit on climate change and the demands of the European trade union movement.

1) What are the issues for the forthcoming Copenhagen Summit on climate change?

Joël Decaillon (JD): The Copenhagen negotiations are very important: the point is that the conference to be held on 7 to 18 December this year will seek to extend the Kyoto protocol beyond 2012, putting the battle against climate change on a global footing. There is a new factor in these negotiations in Copenhagen, in that the United States and China have opened the debate with a view to attaining objectives of driving down greenhouse gas emissions. This is an extremely important element compared to the past. Over 190 countries will be represented in Copenhagen, with very diverse economic interests, widely differing economic and social situations and above all, some major inequalities in the face of the consequences of climate change. Against such a complex background, we will need to find the makings of a fresh dialogue between the developed countries, the emerging countries and the developing countries. We are facing an enormous challenge, but one that it is essential for us to tackle if mankind is not to find itself in a catastrophic plight twenty years down the line.

2) What is the international situation like? Why is an inter-



national agreement on climate change so difficult to achieve?

JD: Extending the Kyoto protocol beyond 2012 and securing a fresh agreement remain two objectives which are extremely difficult to achieve. The arrival of the new administration in the United States is a positive development in creating new conditions, but the contradictions between environmental protection, social protection and economic development are still not being addressed. There are two key points: Firstly, the financial crisis has shown the predominance of the financial system over the real economy. In this unchanged situation, the idea of setting in place a radical economic and industrial

transformation, which implies a medium and long-term perspective, remains all but impossible to square with the demands of a return to double-digit growth rates. We are also faced with a second difficulty: it is crucial to take account of the fact that climate change exacerbates not only the inequalities between the various regions of the world, but also the inequalities within individual regions. This is what the ETUC stressed in its 2007 [Study on climate change and employment](#).

The political, economic and environmental acceptability of the results of the Copenhagen negotiations will depend on combining reductions in greenhouse gases (GHG) and environmental protection measures as well as measures on social treatment, poverty and social inequalities.

3) What is the ETUC calling for?

JD: The ETUC has recently confirmed its demands in a resolution which it adopted on 20 October at its Executive Committee meeting in Stockholm. In this document, the European trade unions reassert their backing for an ambitious, exhaustive international agreement designed to limit the global rise in temperatures to a maximum of two degrees, in accordance with the scenarios laid down by the Intergovernmental



[Interview]

Joël Decaillon, ETUC Confederal Secretar (following)

Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), reducing developed countries' emissions of GHG by at least 25%-40% by 2020 compared to 1990 levels. At its meeting on 21 October, the Council of EU Environment Ministers backed the principle of these objectives.

needs to support coordinated global initiatives on research and development, the pooling of scientific knowledge, and the development and dissemination of green technologies at the worldwide level. We need a European low-carbon industrial policy based upon a

nologies, and new green skills. We also need to bolster the negotiations and coordinate those negotiations at European level, so as to ensure that we anticipate the socio-economic transitions while reinforcing dialogue between the social partners and public authorities. In this framework the EU must commit itself to the challenges of industrial restructuring with which the new member states are confronted. This is why anticipation instruments need to be put in place on the strength of much more searching impact studies, in particular in terms of social consequences.

“ Tomorrow’s green growth must help to maintain and create quality jobs and social progress.”

The contribution made by Europe to the funding of global climate change mitigation remains another key factor in the debate. The most thorny issues surround the financial contribution that the European Union will have to make in order to resolve the problem, and therefore the financial solidarity instruments. In that regard, we call for the creation of an international fund and a European fund to facilitate the development of technologies producing low carbon emissions and of technologies based on energy efficiency and renewable energies in the developing countries, as well as the development of employment policies based on social protection, the promotion of decent work and public services. We also call for improvements to European governance by implementing stronger Community policies in the industrial and research fields. Europe

strategy of Community industrial coordination enabling us to move beyond intra-European divisions and the damaging effects of demands for short-term profitability on industrial investments. To achieve these objectives, this European low-carbon strategy needs to be based upon a transition relying on the principles of just transition.

4) What are the principles behind this ‘just transition’? Does the greening of the economy have to be seen as an opportunity or a threat for Europe’s workers?

JD: The principles of just transition are dialogue between Government, industry and trade unions and other interest groupings on the economic and industrial changes involved; green and decent jobs; investment in low-carbon tech-

In that connection, the study on [‘Climate disruptions, new industrial policies and ways out of the crisis’](#) unveiled by the ETUC in London on 5 October clearly shows that we need to consider employment in all its dimensions. There are opportunities for job creation in sectors such as those linked to renewable energy sources, as well as in energy efficiency, in particular in the building sector. Our study demonstrates that this transformation is something that affects every sector and every job. For all these reasons, the social dimension must be intimately involved in the European policies contributing to the development of the industrial strategies responding to the requirements of a low-carbon economy and workers’ social aspirations. Tomorrow’s green growth must help to maintain and create quality jobs and social progress.



[EU Agenda]

October–November 2009

30/09–01/10/2009	Plenary Session at European Economic and Social Committee (Brussels)	
01/10/2009	Eurogroup Meeting (Göteborg)	Meeting Agenda
01–02/10/2009	Informal Meeting of Finance Ministers (Göteborg)	Meeting Agenda
06/10/2009	EU–Brazil Summit (Stockholm)	Summit Agenda
07–08/10/2009	Mini–Plenary Session at the European Parliament (Brussels)	
08–09/10/2009	Transports, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Luxembourg)	Council Agenda
12/10/2009	Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (Luxembourg)	Council Agenda
14–16/10/2009	Informal Meeting of Competitiveness Ministers (Umeå)	Meeting Agenda
19–22/10/2009	Plenary Session at the European Parliament (Strasbourg)	
19/10/2009	Eurogroup Meeting (Luxembourg)	Meeting Agenda
20/10/2009	ECOFIN Council (Luxembourg)	Council Agenda
21/10/2009	Environment Council (Luxembourg)	Council Agenda
23/10/2009	Justice and Home Affairs Council (Luxembourg)	Council Agenda
26–27/10/2009	General Affairs and External Relations Council (Luxembourg)	Council Agenda
29/10/2009	Tripartite Social Summit (Brussels)	
29–30/10/2009	European Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda
03/11/2009	EU–USA Summit (Washington DC)	Summit Agenda
04–05/11/2009	Plenary Session at European Economic and Social Committee (Brussels)	
09/11/2009	Eurogroup Meeting (Brussels)	Meeting Agenda
10/11/2009	ECOFIN Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda
11–12/11/2009	Mini–Plenary Session at the European Parliament (Brussels)	
16–17/11/2009	General Affairs and External Relations Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda
19/11/2009	ECOFIN Council (Budget) (Brussels)	Council Agenda
23–26/11/2009	Plenary Session at the European Parliament (Strasbourg)	
26–27/11/2009	Education, Youth and Culture Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda
30/11–01/12/2009	Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda
30/11–01/12/2009	Justice and Home Affairs Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda



[Focus on the EU and trade union positions]

Tripartite Social Summit: ETUC proposals to exit the crisis

29/10/2009 – At the [Tripartite Social Summit](#) before the European Council, ETUC put forward its proposals to help Europe permanently overcome the crisis. For the European trade union movement, Europe must draw up a **second recovery plan** to meet the challenges it is facing in the short term, by [focusing on a joint effort and on investment](#). A **European investment plan**, the **protection of employment**, **greater European contribution to finance the global drive against climate change**, the **protection of welfare systems** as well as the **regulation of financial markets** are among the proposals ETUC made at the Summit. A joint effort should also be made to know **who would pay the bill**. Special attention should also be paid to **youth unemployment**.



Source: UE Council

[ETUC press release](#)

[Speech held by John Monks at Tripartite Social Summit](#)

European Council: climate change as driver for social progress

29/10/2009 – The funding of climate measures with an eye to the Copenhagen Summit was one of the main topics on the European Council's agenda on 29 and 30 October. For the ETUC, **climate change can and must serve as a driver for sustainable growth and social progress**. In a letter to the heads of State and of government, ETUC has set out its proposals on this matter, notably a **binding agreement to limit the global rise in temperatures to a maximum of 2°**, a **greater European contribution towards the funding of the global reduction in climate change** and an **ambitious European recovery**, by means of enhanced Community policies on industry and research.

[ETUC press release](#)

[Letter to the heads of State and of government](#)

European Commission publications

The following reports are now available:

- [The EU Enlargement Process: A Year of Progress in the Western Balkans and Turkey](#) (14/10)
- [First European Development Report](#) (22/10)
- [Eurobarometer survey on poverty and social exclusion](#) (22/10)



[Focus on the EU and trade union positions]

Strong criticism of the de-regulation initiatives of the Commission

23/10/2009 – ETUC strongly criticised the [recent proposals](#) of the European Commission on de-regulation. The European trade union movement opposes the extension of the mandate of Edmund Stoiber as President of the Group formulating the proposals. According to John Monks *'it has been widely recognised that the financial sector needs greater regulation to avoid future similar crises. Politics must reassert their primacy over markets. In this time of crisis, we need regulation and not de-regulation'*.

[ETUC press release](#)

[European Commission press release](#)

Copenhagen Summit: a successful agreement is also a social agreement

21/10/2009 – In the line of next Copenhagen Summit on climate change and on the occasion of the Environment Council, ETUC adopted a resolution on ['Climate change, the new industrial policies and the ways out of the crisis'](#).

For the European trade union movement, it is crucial to put in place a **European low carbon industrial policy** based on a **dynamic of coordination** transcending intra-European divisions and the damaging effects of the demands for short-term profitability

from industrial investments. Such a low carbon transition strategy must be based on **Just Transition principles**: dialogue between Government, industry and trade unions and others on the economic and industrial changes involved; green and decent jobs; investment in low carbon technologies; new green skills.

[ETUC press release](#)

[Environment Council conclusions](#)

Europe needs an unemployment exit strategy

20/10/2009 – The ECOFIN Council on 20 October called for a substantial consolidation of public finances once the recovery is secured. The European trade union movement criticized this message which ducks the real question of **how to ensure a strong recovery and get unemployment back down**. On the contrary, in a [policy statement recently adopted by its Executive Committee](#), ETUC proposed a **European Investment plan of 1% of GDP**.

[ETUC press release](#)

[ECOFIN Council conclusions](#)

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