

[ETUC newsletter]



Dear Readers,



The entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty has relieved the institutional log-jam that had long been paralysing European integration. The ETUC welcomes the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty, specifically for the implementation of the charter of fundamental rights. The charter, which is now legally binding, institutes economic and social rights for European workers. It is a huge advance for which we have fought relentlessly.

Our priority remains the situation with regard to employment and strategies to get us out of the crisis.

We hear all kinds of official statements hailing the end of the crisis. We ourselves are convinced that without a recovery in employment, there are no grounds to say that the crisis is over. We have been hoping that the irresponsibility that led to this crisis would lead to the end of the old neoliberal practices of speculation and short-term thinking. But what do we see? Some financial institutions are once again starting to hand out excessive bonuses. It seems as though no lessons have been learned from what has happened, which is why the ETUC is intending to campaign for proper financial regulation.

Another cause for concern is that unemployment, and in particular youth unemployment, is on the rise in all countries. According to the latest Eurostat figures, youth unemployment has reached 20.2 % across the European Union. Millions of young people are using the term 'sacrificial generation' to describe their situation.

With government budgets being squeezed, we fear budget cuts, particularly in the field of social protection, at the very time when the reverse should be case given the brutal crisis context that we are experiencing. Cutting down on spending on social protection would be liable to exacerbate precariousness and social exclusion. The European Commission will be making 2010 the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion, a campaign that we shall be supporting.

Finally, in a few days' time we shall be seeing the start of the Copenhagen Summit, in which an ETUC delegation will be participating to defend our positions on global warming, which include social measures to tackle the necessary changes.

John Monks
General Secretary



Contents

- 2 ETUC in action
- 3 Trade union agenda
- 4 EU agenda
- 5 Focus on the EU and trade union positions

Figure of the month

73% - 89%

73 % of European citizens interviewed think that poverty is a major problem in their country. 89% of them would like their government to take urgent action to solve it. (Source: Eurobaromètre)

Note



European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)

Boulevard du Roi Albert II, 5 | B-1210 Bruxelles (Belgique)

Telephone: +32 (0)2 224 04 11 | Fax: +32 (0)2 224 04 54

E-mail: media@etuc.org | www.etuc.org



[ETUC in action]

MAJOR MEETINGS – CONFERENCES – PROJECTS

22 Turkish trade unionists released from prison

24/11/2009 – The High Criminal Court in Izmir released 22 trade unionists of the Confederation of Public Sector Trade Unions (KESK), affiliated to the ETUC, who have been in prison for six months. They strenuously contest allegations that they are members and/or supporters of terrorist organisations.

[ETUC press release](#)

Enlarged ETUC Steering Committee

19/11/2009 – The enlarged ETUC Steering Committee met in Brussels. The European political agenda and the forthcoming campaigns of the European trade union movement were the main topics of the meeting.

ETUC CAMPAIGNS



« Stop global warming »: a new video available on ETUC YouTube channel

10/11/2009 – In the framework of its « Stop global warming » campaign on the occasion of the Copenhagen Conference, ETUC posted a new video on its YouTube channel. In this video, John Monks assesses the evolution of climate change talks as regards the Copenhagen Summit and he describes the main ETUC demands in this field.

[Web pages dedicated to the campaign](#)





[Trade Union agenda]

November – December 2009

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)	
24-26/11/2009	National Union of Autonomous Trade Unions (UNSA) (Pau)	Congress Programme
01/12/2009	ETUC Steering Committee (Brussels)	
01-02/12/2009	ETUC Executive Committee (Brussels)	
7-11/12/2009	General Confederation of Labour (CGT) (Nantes)	Congress Programme
16/12/2009	Meeting of the Group II 'Workers' of the European Economic and Social Committee (Brussels)	



[EU Agenda]

November – December 2009

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
01/12/2009	Eurogroup Meeting (Brussels)	Meeting Agenda
02/12/2009	ECOFIN Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda
03-04/12/2009	Competitiveness Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda
07/12/2009	Energy Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda
07-18/12/2009	United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP 15 (Copenhagen)	Conference Programme
07-08/12/2009	General Affairs and External Relations Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda
10-11/12/2009	European Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda
14-17/12/2009	Plenary Session at the European Parliament (Strasbourg)	
16-17/12/2009	Plenary Session at European Economic and Social Committee (Brussels)	
17-18/12/2009	Transport and Telecom Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda
22/12/2009	Environment Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda



[Focus on the EU and trade union positions]

ETUC looks forward to the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty

05/11/2009 – After the ratification by the Czech Republic, (ETUC) looks forward to the **entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty** on 1 December, and in particular of the rights guaranteed under the Charter of Fundamental Rights, now part of the Treaty.

John Monks declared : ‘Now that the ratification process is finally

out of the way, we have to act and open new doors for social rights. The ETUC condemns once more the UK, Polish and Czech reservations to the Charter and will continue to work to ensure that all European workers are treated fairly and equally’. The ETUC insist that **this new perspective be translated into concrete actions to deal with**

the crisis and mounting unemployment.

The ETUC will be campaigning in particular for **robust action to deal with youth unemployment** that is reaching catastrophic levels in many countries, and in defence of public spending on social protection.

[ETUC press release](#)

Is the European economy in the eye of the storm?

02/11/2009 – According to the [Autumn 2009 Economic Forecasts](#) published by the European Commission, Europe will overcome the recession and growth seems to be back on the agenda for the next years. According to [ETUC analyses](#), the economic forces supporting the present recovery are temporary whereas the forces that are dragging down aggregate demand

and economic activity are of a more permanent nature. Policy makers should discuss how to maintain and even **strengthen the fiscal stimulus strategy**, instead of organising a premature fiscal exit strategy.

[ETUC press release](#)

[European Commission press release](#)

ETUC against wage and social spending cuts

09/11/2009 – At [Macroeconomic Dialogue \(MED\)](#), John Monks criticised the recent trend of pronouncing the end of the crisis and cutting public spending. **ETUC is worried about the fact that EU Governments are acting prematurely and choking off the recovery.**

[ETUC press release](#)

[John Monks speech at Macroeconomic Dialogue](#)

Equality Summit: more effective actions are needed

16/11/2009 – At the [Equality Summit](#), organised by Swedish Presidency in Stockholm, the ETUC and Social Platform presented a **joint declaration** to the member states and EU institutions to combat discrimination in the EU. According to their declaration, titled ‘[Fight discrimination and guarantee equality for all](#)’, **equality and non-discrimination policies are an indispensable ingredient of any sustainable perspective** for economies, societies and labour markets in Europe. For Catelene Passchier, ETUC Confederal Secretary, ‘The fight for equality in Europe requires new legal and policy initiatives from the EU institutions and Member States... This cannot be achieved without a greater involvement of social partners and especially trade unions and organised civil society.’

[ETUC press release](#)



[Focus on the EU and trade union positions]

Copenhagen Summit: ETUC's concerns

17/11/2009 – The ETUC is concerned about political announcements predicting that the Copenhagen Summit on climate change in December would not result in a legally binding treaty. According to Joël Decaillon, ETUC Confederal Secretary 'The absence of an agreement would boil down to wasting an extremely important opportunity, particularly in a context of crisis that imposes another concept of development. *The European trade unions also point out that climate change can and must have the ambition of becoming a driver of sustainable growth and of social progress in the fight against poverty and social inequalities*'.

[ETUC press release](#)

ETUC congratulates Herman Van Rompuy and Baroness Ashton

19/11/2009 – In personal letters, John Monks congratulated both Herman Van Rompuy and Baroness Ashton on their achievements of becoming President of the Council and EU High Level Representative for Foreign Affairs. *"Both are excellent candidates for the highest offices with a record of working well with trade unions. We count on them to take the EU forward."* John Monks declared.

[ETUC press release](#)

[EU Swedish Presidency press release](#)

ETUC meets members of the European Parliament

25/11/2009 – In the framework of the Trade Union intergroup at European parliament, an ETUC delegation met several members of the European Parliament (MEPs) in Strasbourg. At the meeting, ETUC presented the demands of the European trade union movement, in particular the economic crisis, employment, climate change and the revision of the working time directive. A reception was organised by the ETUC to get to know the new MEPs.

European Commission publications

The following reports are now available:

- [Consultation on the future EU 2020 strategy](#) (24/11);
- [Employment in Europe 2009](#) (23/11).

Editorial Team

MANAGING EDITOR:

John Monks

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:

Patricia Grillo

EDITOR:

Daniele Melli

Please pass this newsletter on to your colleagues and contacts