

[ETUC newsletter]



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ETUC in action



Dear Readers,

On 29 September, more than 100,000 of us demonstrated in the streets of Brussels to say « No to austerity ». This Euro-demonstration was a huge success for workers and a clear signal to European leaders: in the absence of a change of direction, austerity measures could have disastrous social and economic repercussions.

I would like to thank our member organisations that contributed to this success, many of which travelled long distances, who came to Brussels to demonstrate your concerns in the face of austerity. In Brussels and in numerous other European cities, we made our voice and our demands heard: there is still time to change direction, time not to choose austerity. The proposed measures will not have a beneficial effect and will exacerbate an already dismal economic and social situation. This is evidenced by the situation in Greece and Ireland, two countries where austerity plans are already being implemented. No positive effects on growth and employment are being seen in either state. We are entering an era of very brutal austerity. Workers are being subjected to double jeopardy: they have already paid for a crisis they did not cause and now they have to bear the cost of austerity, even though certain banks, which were kept afloat with public funds, are making workers redundant in spite of earning tremendous profits. Citizens and workers can no longer bear such injustice, this threat of an ever more dreary future, and they made that clear on 29 September. There is an alternative to austerity measures: we want a tax on financial transactions, a European programme for young people, who are particularly affected, investments in renewable energy technologies and an industrial policy capable of creating jobs for the future. It is urgent to invest in the future and to do so together, with the strong helping the weak in this crisis. That is the message we transmitted to the European leaders we met after the demonstration. We also warned at these meetings against the stringency plan adopted by the European Commission to tighten budget discipline in Europe. By proposing stricter sanctions against so-called poor budget management, the Commission is playing the role of a 'Grand Inquisitor'.

Our day of action marks not the end, but only the beginning of the struggle.

John Monks
General Secretary

Figure of the month

81 million young people

In the world, 81 million young people aged from 15 to 24 were unemployed at the end of 2009
(source : International Labour Organisation)

Note



European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)

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

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

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



[ETUC in action]

ETUC CAMPAIGNS

European Day of Action to say 'No' to austerity measures: a resounding success for workers

29/09/2010 – Some 100,000 people took to the streets of Brussels and thousands of others did the same in many other cities across Europe to express their concerns about the economic and social situation, which will be exacerbated by austerity measures. With this European Day of Action and particularly its key event –the Euro-demonstration in Brussels – the ETUC gave a voice to workers and made it clear to the European leaders that workers are not will-

ing to be sacrificed on the altar of austerity. John Monks declared *"This day is a resounding success for European workers and a clear signal to the leaders of Europe: you can no longer merely listen to the market, you can no longer ignore the anger and concern of the workers"*.



You will find a photo gallery of the Euro-demonstration at the end of the newsletter

[All about the European Day of Action](#)

Supporting the national day of action on pensions organised by French trade unions

07/09/2010 – John Monks took part to the in the French inter-union demonstration, on 7 Septem-

ber in Paris, to support trade union organisations in their opposition to the proposed pension reform,

which does not respond to society's present and future challenges. [ETUC press release](#)

Austerity : John Monks calls for mobilisation

09/09/2010 – Addressing more than 15.000 trade unionists in Madrid, John Monks called for Europe's workers to mobilise against austerity on September 29 in the framework of the European Day of Action. *"This is the worst economic crisis in the post war history of Western Europe. Our campaign is against austerity, and, instead, for jobs and growth"* he declared. On 15 September, on the occasion of the annual TUC congress in Manchester,



[ETUC General Secretary repeated his demand to mobilise European workers.](#)

[ETUC press release](#)



[ETUC in action]

REACH and CLP : ETUC launches an information campaign

13/09/2010 – The ETUC and the European Chemical Workers' Federation (EMCEF) launched an **extensive information campaign aimed at companies that market or use chemical** in order to raise awareness of employers' obligations under [REACH \(Registration, evaluation et authorisation of chemicals\)](#) and [CLP \(Classification, Labelling and Packaging\)](#) regulations on chemical substances.

[This campaign](#), supported by the European Chemicals Agency and by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, was necessary because **too many firms in the EU, especially small and medium-sized enterprises, are still not aware of these obligations** and could end up being fined or having some of their production lines stopped if they do not fulfil them on time.

An interview with Tony Musu, ETUC expert on chemicals, is available at the following page.

[ETUC press release](#)

MAJOR MEETINGS – CONFERENCES – PROJECTS

EWCs are more than necessary

01/09/2010 – During a conference on sound corporate governance, John Monks pointed out the **tremendous importance of the European Works Councils (EWCs)** in this field. Since 1994, the EWCs have given millions of European workers the right to be informed and consulted on company decisions.

In the context of the current crisis, EWCs are more necessary than ever to exercise a right of scrutiny over corporate management practices and to prevent abuse.

[John Monks' speech](#)

ETUC calls for a “Youth Guarantee” in employment

02/29/2010 – In the framework of a conference on Youth employment, the **ETUC Youth Committee has reiterated its concern regarding youth unemployment and precarity levels**. For two thirds of young Europeans, work means a fixed term contract, part-time work, temporary work, seasonal work or undeclared work. The ETUC Youth Committee confirmed its support to ETUC statement “the New Social Deal”, proposing a **youth guarantee** which offers education, training and quality jobs, for example through the use of employment subsidies to encourage the recruitment of young people.

[ETUC press release](#)





[ETUC in action]

Labour market : the development of qualifications is tomorrow's challenge

02-03/09/2010 - In the framework of the European Commission's 'New qualifications, new jobs' initiative, ETUC organised a conference 'A trade union version of the New Qualifications, New Jobs initiative' in Brussels. For the European trade union movement, **if this initiative**, designed to anticipate and match the needs of the labour market with the needs for professional qualifications **is to succeed, proposals for ways out of the crisis must be linked in with structural transformations of living and production conditions.**

[ETUC press release](#)

Workplace Europe : ETUC conference on migrant workers

27-28/09/2010 - The ETUC organised a conference on "**Workplace Europe – Trade Unions supporting mobile and migrant workers**". The aim of this conference was to have an overview of the migrant workers' situation in Europe and to define trade union actions to guarantee their equality both in rights and working conditions whatever their origin. Several trade union leaders from all of Europe took part in the conference.

[Conference Programme](#)

Trade Unions alert their members to act as REACH and CLP ambassadors in companies

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) together with the European Mine, Chemical and Energy Workers' Federation (EMCEF), are launching a large campaign in autumn to raise awareness of companies on their REACH and classification and labelling obligations. ECHA and the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work are supporting the campaign. The trade unions intend to reach more than 60 million workers through their elected representatives in companies. Dr Tony Musu, Senior Researcher at ETUC and ECHA Management Board member, explains in the interview why the trade unions start the large campaign.

MMr Musu, why is this large campaign necessary?

Tony Musu (TM) : The starting point is that most of the companies in Europe are still unaware of their obligations under REACH, especially small and medium-sized enterprises. The idea is to use the workers' representatives in companies to try to raise awareness of their management. Not all companies

are members of industry associations, but most of the companies have a trade union representation. The idea is really to use those people in companies to try to reach them and to tell them: *"Please inform your employer that now we have the REACH and CLP Regulations and your company has now some obligations under them."*



Why is it relevant for the trade unions to promote REACH and CLP?

TM : We want to tell the workers that if their company fails to comply, it might put the production company at risk, and to avoid that, they should inform their management on the new obligations. The idea is also to pass the message that REACH is good for health and safety at the workplace. The goal is to have a better control of chemical risks. That is why trade unions have been working on REACH for many years now. We have a lot of dis-



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ees at the work places caused by chemicals. ETUC made studies based on Eurostat data in 2004, and we found out that one occupational disease in three at the work place is caused by chemicals. That is a huge number! The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work in Bilbao estimated in 2009 that every year, 74 000 workers die in Europe because of the use of hazardous chemicals at the workplace. We really believe that REACH will improve the situation at the workplace.

And the Classification and Labelling Regulation CLP?

TM : The most important sources for the workers are labels and Safety Data Sheets. Most of the time, they only have the labels and no Safety Data Sheets, even though it is a legal requirement to have them. And we know that there is often lack of information and sometimes even wrong information on labels and on Safety Data Sheets. Of course we expect the

CLP Regulation and REACH to improve the situation. Safety Data Sheets are extremely important, because now, thanks to REACH, they will contain additional information: the risk management measures that the producers of the chemical recommend for each identified use. That is completely new! The worker will be able to find in the Safety Data Sheet the risk management measures that are targeted for his own use of the substance.

The situation varies between companies. We really want to target with our campaign those small and medium-sized companies which may not have an agreed culture of health and safety but most often have at least a workers' representative in the company. We would like to reach them and tell them with the campaign leaflet: be informed that we now have REACH and that your company needs to comply with those new rules.

To be published in the ECHA Newsletter



[Trade Union Agenda]

September – October 2010

13-15/09/2010	TUC Congress (Manchester)	
15/09/2010	Meeting of the Group II 'Workers' of the European Economic and Social Committee (Brussels)	
21/09/2010	ETUC Steering Committee (Brussels)	
29/09/2010	ETUC European Day of Action	Agenda
01/10/2010	Europe – Asia Trade Union Summitt (Brussels)	
07/10/2010	World Day for Decent Work	Agenda
13/10/2010	ETUC Steering Committee (Brussels)	
13–14/10/2010	ETUC Executive Committee (Brussels)	
21–23/10/2010	CSC Congress (Ostende)	Congress Agenda
21–23/10/2010	Solidarnosc Congress (Wroclaw)	Congress Agenda



[EU agenda]

September – October 2010

06-09/09/2010	Plenary Session of the European Parliament (Strasbourg)	
07/09/2010	Economic and Financial Affairs Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda
07/09/2010	Eurogroup meeting (Brussels)	Meeting Agenda
10–11/09/2010	Informal Meeting of Foreign Affairs Ministers (Brussels)	Meeting Agenda
13/09/2010	General Affairs Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda
15–16/09/2010	Plenary Session at the European Economic and Social Committee (Brussels)	
16/09/2010	European Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda
20–23/09/2010	Plenary Session of the European Parliament (Strasbourg)	
30/09–01/10/2010	Economic and Financial Affairs Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda
04–05/10/2010	Asia–Europe Summit (Brussels)	Summit Agenda
06–07/10/2010	Mini–Plenary Session of the European Parliament (Brussels)	
07–08/10/2010	Justice and Home Affairs Council (Luxembourg)	Council Agenda
11–12/10/2010	Competitiveness Council (Luxembourg)	Council Agenda
14/10/2010	Environment Council (Luxembourg)	Council Agenda
15/10/2010	Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Luxembourg)	Council Agenda
18/10/2010	Eurogroup meeting (Luxembourg)	Meeting Agenda
18–21/10/2010	Plenary Session of the European Parliament (Strasbourg)	
19/10/2010	Economic and Financial Affairs Council (Luxembourg)	Council Agenda
21/10/2010	Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (Luxembourg)	Council Agenda
25/10/2010	General and Foreign Affairs Council (Luxembourg)	Council Agenda
26/10/2010	Informal meeting of the Ministers for gender equality (Luxembourg)	Council Agenda
28–29/10/2010	European Council (Brussels)	Council Agenda



[Focus on the EU and trade union positions]

Economic governance: ETUC calls on the European Council to attack inequalities and precarious work

16/09/2010 – The European trade union movement called upon the European Council to identify growing inequalities along with precarious work practices as the fundamental cause of macroeconomic imbalances, instead of proceeding to automatic sanctions against countries which fail to cut wages, social benefits and public services. *"The policy of repressing wages, making labour markets more flexible and weakening trade unions has gotten us into this mess. Returning to a similar policy will make matters even worse"* declared John Monks.

[ETUC press release](#)

Financial Transaction Tax: the time has come for concrete results

07/09/2010 – The ETUC took note of EU Commission President Barroso's announcement to defend taxes on financial transactions and to come up with proposals this autumn. At the same time, **ETUC demands that the ECOFIN Council evolves current debates on Financial Transaction Tax into concrete results.**

[ETUC press release](#)

[Letter to European leaders](#)

Roma expulsions contradict EU Charter of Fundamental Rights

16/09/2010 – In the wake of the different positions taken by the European institutions on the expulsions of the Roma, the ETUC expressed deep concern over the measures being taken to stigmatise the Roma, which provide for their expulsion. **Discriminatory remarks and measures run counter to the European Union's Charter of Fundamental Rights and the Treaty of Lisbon.** For the ETUC, there must be a **European response to the Roma issue.** It is the responsibility of Member States and the EU to promote the integration of all minorities.

[ETUC press release](#)



[You may be interested]

Environment and occupational health and safety clauses in the International Framework Agreements – **A study**

The ETUC, in cooperation with Syndex consulting and Sustainlabour foundation, with the support of the European Commission, carried out a **study on Environment and occupational health and safety clauses in the International Framework Agreements (IFA).** These framework agreements present the result of proposals by unions in order to improve working conditions at global level. The IFAs are therefore tools for social dialogue with a global reach. This study, however, focuses on other aspects of the agreements: the clauses relating to the environment and occupational health and safety.

[Link to the study](#)



WE WERE 100,000 PEOPLE SAYING « NO TO AUSTERITY »



Please pass this newsletter on to your colleagues and contacts

Editorial team: MANAGING EDITOR: **John Monks** • EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: **Patricia Grillo** • EDITOR: **Daniele Melli**