

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

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World Day for Decent Work: Youth, Lost in Globalisation?

Brussels and Berlin, 6 October 2011 (ITUC OnLine): On the eve of the fourth World Day for Decent Work, during a joint international event organised by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) and the German Confederation of Trade Union's youth organisation (DGB Jugend) in Berlin, more than 70 young trade unionists from around the world are debating how to promote decent work for young people now that the economic and financial crisis is rising in its second wave.

The situation for young workers is worsening. Jobs are no longer a guarantee for the livelihood of the future generations. Precarious work has become a reality for large numbers of young workers, which does not permit them to live in dignity. New forms of exploitation are the everyday reality of young workers who ultimately experience nothing but part-time work, home-working, temporary work, etc. More than 150 million young people in developing countries are considered as working poor.

Since the economic and financial crisis has started, global unemployment figures have increased by more than 20 million people. Young people were among the first to experience the effects of the crisis. They are usually the first to be laid off by companies, as they are the workers with the least seniority. According to the International Labour Organisation, more than 80 million young people are currently unemployed.

"Millions of young people are now out of work and many more are trapped in short-term, low-paid jobs, or in the informal economy. An entire generation of young people is being left behind, and the consequences of this for society will be severe. Governments have to act urgently to get job-creation moving, by maintaining economic stimulus where it is needed rather than by cutting public expenditure," said ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow.

During their two days' meeting, young trade unionists are exploring how to mobilise and voice their interest on global issues such as youth employment, sustainable development, and trade union renewal. Young trade union representatives in Berlin are urging governments to take all the necessary measures to improve the access of young people to decent jobs and quality education and training.

The ITUC represents 175 million workers in 305 affiliated national organisations from 151 countries and territories.

Website: <http://www.ituc-csi.org> and <http://www.youtube.com/ITUCCSI>

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