



European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)
Confédération européenne des syndicats (CES)

ETUC day of action and solidarity for a Social Compact for Europe

Declaration adopted by the ETUC Executive Committee at their meeting on 17 October 2012

The ETUC Executive Committee meeting on 17 October 2012 call for a day of action and solidarity on 14 November 2012, including strikes, demonstrations, rallies and other actions, mobilising the European trade union Movement behind ETUC policies as set down in the Social Compact for Europe.

They express their strong opposition to the austerity measures that are dragging Europe into economic stagnation, indeed recession, as well as the continuing dismantling of the European social model. These measures, far from reestablishing confidence, only serve to worsen imbalances and foster injustice.

While supporting the objective of sound accounts, the Executive Committee consider that the recession can only be stopped if budgetary constraints are loosened and imbalances eliminated, with a view to achieving sustainable economic growth, and social cohesion, and respecting the values enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Fiscal consolidation had a sharper effect than originally estimated by Institutions, including the European Commission and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Indeed the IMF now admits that they grossly miscalculated the impact austerity measures have on growth. This miscalculation has an unmeasurable impact on the daily life of workers and citizens the ETUC represents, and brings into question the whole basis of austerity policies advanced by the Fiscal Treaty and imposed by the Troika.

The Executive Committee note mounting opposition among citizens and workers in the countries concerned and reaffirm their support for affiliated unions fighting for decent working and living conditions. This situation results from the lack of coordination of economic policies and the absence of minimum social standards throughout Europe. In the context of free movement of capital, this gave free rein to competition between states, in particular in the field of taxation, labour costs and social conditions.

They reiterate that social dialogue and collective bargaining are central to the European Social Model. They strongly oppose the frontal attacks on these rights, at national and European level. The ETUC Executive Committee urgently calls for immediate adoption and transposition of the European social partners agreements currently before Council.

They recall that the Union is treaty-bound to “work for the sustainable development of Europe based on balanced economic growth and price stability, a highly competitive social market economy, aiming at full employment and social progress, and a high level of protection and improvement of the quality of the environment”. They further recall that the ETUC’s support for the Lisbon Treaty was mainly predicated on the full application of those objectives.

They note that discussions are currently under way among Institutions and governments

about the desirability of further treaty changes. A change of direction is necessary and priority should be given to resolving the crisis in line with the three pillars of our proposed Social Compact for Europe, which is gathering increasing support. This is articulated around social dialogue & collective bargaining, economic governance for sustainable growth & employment, and economic, tax & social justice.

They insist that active solidarity, social progress and democratic accountability must be an integral part of the European project. They consider as essential that a social progress protocol to be included as an integral and operative part of any new treaty. The ETUC will evaluate any new step in European integration on this basis.