

# [ ETUC newsletter ]



## Contents

- 2** ETUC in action
- 2** Trade Union Agenda
- 3** Photo gallery of the demonstration in Wroclaw
- 4** Focus on the EU
- 5** EU agenda
- 6** You may be interested

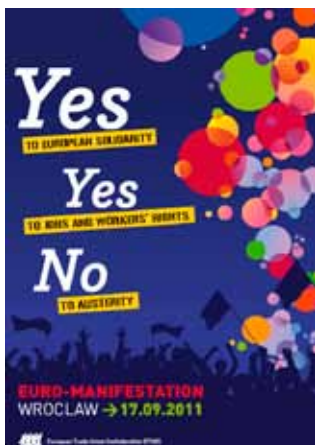
## Figure of the month

# 187%

The average annual bonus of the FTSE-350 British companies' top managers increased by 187% between 2000 and 2010.

(Source : Métro)

## Note



**Dear Readers,**

After a summer fraught with danger on the European economic front, the coming months will also be risky if Europe does not change course soon. An extraordinary European Council was held on 21 July. It adopted a rescue plan for Greece but Member States are dragging their feet on putting it into place. At their latest Ecofin Council on 17 September, Europe's finance ministers again postponed certain urgent measures, turning their back on Greece. The United States and the emerging countries are examining the European patient to see how they can come to its rescue, because a collapse of the single currency would have a devastating impact on the rest of the world. Europe's political leaders have decided not to decide and the crisis is growing worse. Today's European leaders are not likely to be judged positively by tomorrow's historians.

For the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), there can be no solution without solidarity. This is the message we conveyed to the Ecofin Council with our Euro demonstration on 17 September. More than 50,000 trade unionists from 18 countries marched in the streets of Wroclaw to say that the solution to the crisis is not more and more austerity, but more and more solidarity. Nor does the solution lie in the closing of borders and withdrawing.

Austerity measures have demonstrated their lack of effectiveness. They corrode the economy and lead to social despair due to the insecurity they generate. Yet they continue to be decided on and implemented. They are even being put in place under the orders of European authorities, who interfere in national policies by making financial aid contingent on further reductions in public and social expenditure. This was the subject of the letter that the President of the European Central Bank sent to Italy and Spain during the summer. The ETUC protested against such orders.

This trend towards greater austerity was confirmed by the very recent legislative package on economic governance adopted by the European Parliament at its latest plenary session. These rules will only push down salaries in Europe, impose greater austerity and increase inequalities. The ETUC is opposed to the package.

We are also extremely concerned about the attacks on social and trade union rights taking place in certain countries. This is the case in Hungary in particular, where a recent labour code reform directly targets fundamental rights.

The ETUC will unfailingly stand up to any and all attacks on fundamental rights, social protection or trade unions.

**Bernadette Ségol**  
General Secretary

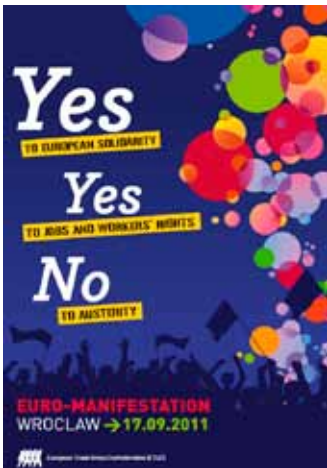




# [ETUC in action]

## ETUC CAMPAIGNS

### Euro demonstration in Wroclaw: more than 50,000 people demand more European solidarity



17/09/2011 - More than 50,000 European trade unionists from 18 countries demonstrated in Wroclaw (Poland), following the call by the ETUC and its Polish affiliates Solidarnosc and OPZZ, to say 'no' to austerity and to demand more European solidarity. This Euro demonstration was organized on the occasion of the Economy and Finance Ministers (ECOFIN) meeting dedicated to the debt crisis affecting the euro zone. During the Euro demonstration, Bernadette Ségol, ETUC General Secretary, declared: **"Now is the time to demonstrate real European leadership and to take the right decisions to bring about a change of course. After two years of devastating crisis,**

**European leaders must choose solidarity and not leave the financial markets and ratings agencies in command. Economic governance must have the goal of improving employment and living conditions. Austerity plans have failed"**.

[Videos of the Euro demonstration](#)  
[Photos of the Euro demonstration](#)

(A photo gallery of the Euro demonstration is available at the following page)

## MAJOR MEETINGS

### The Steering Committee of the ETUC adopts a statement in favour of a stronger Europe full of solidarity

16/09/11 - The social and economic crisis was the main item for discussions within the ETUC Steering Committee which met in Wroclaw. The ETUC Steering Committee adopted a statement addressed to EU Finance Ministers demanding a stronger Europe of sustainable growth and social cohesion.

The forthcoming ETUC campaigns were also discussed.

[Statement "For a stronger Europe of sustainable growth and social cohesion"](#)

# [Trade Union Agenda]

September - October 2011

10/09/2011	Travail Suisse Congress (Berne)	<a href="#">More information</a>
16/09/2011	ETUC Steering Committee (Wroclaw)	
17/09/2011	ETUC Euro demonstration (Wroclaw)	<a href="#">More information</a>
21/09/2011	Meeting of the Group II 'Workers' of the European Economic and Social Committee (Brussels)	
03-05/10/2011	Uni-Europa Congress (Toulouse)	<a href="#">More information</a>
19/10/2011	ETUC Steering Committee (Brussels)	
19-20/10/2011	ETUC Executive Committee (Brussels)	
26/10/2011	Meeting of the Group II 'Workers' of the European Economic and Social Committee (Brussels)	
30/10/2011	LO-Danemark Congress (Aalborg)	<a href="#">More information</a>



## Euro demonstration – 17 september 2011

More than 50,000 people in Wrocław demand **more European solidarity**





# [ Focus on the EU and trade union positions ]

## ETUC against depression and wage repression governance

28/09/2011 - At its recent plenary session, the European Parliament adopted a package of six legislative measures which will serve as a framework for budgetary decisions in each of the Eurozone member states. For the ETUC, **these rules are seriously flawed**: they could trigger Europe-wide downwards wage competition, impose brutal and unbalanced fiscal austerity, depress economic activity by increasing unemployment, poverty and inequalities. **The European trade union movement continues to stand against this governance of austerity** and will make the fullest use of the wage and bargaining safeguards guaranteeing social partners' autonomy and freedom to organize.

[ETUC press release](#)

## ETUC welcomes EU Financial Transaction Tax proposals

28/09/2011 - The ETUC welcomed very recent proposals of the EU Commission for a financial transactions tax (FTT) for Europe. Bernadette Ségol declared: *"This is a major step towards meeting a demand that the European trade union movement has been pressing for a long time and vindicates our efforts. We, together with affiliates, shall continue to work to ensure that this initiative is accepted by all Governments across Europe. We will examine carefully further expected proposals about how the FTT revenues can best be used for the common good, particularly sustainable investment"*.

[ETUC press release](#)

## ECOFIN Council turns its back on Greece

20/09/2011 - The European finance ministers' (ECOFIN), meeting in Wroclaw on 16 and 17 September, **did not adopt the urgent measures needed to prevent any worsening of the crisis in the European Union**, and in particular the situation of Greece. The ETUC regrets **this absence of decision which may be fraught with consequences for workers and for Europe**. *"Certain Member States, which are caught up in the logic of national election campaigns, decided that the emergency could wait until tomorrow and did not have to be dealt with today. They turned their back on Greece, at the risk of speeding up a contagion effect in Europe. It is more than deplorable"* said Bernadette Ségol.

[ETUC press release](#)

## Reform of the Hungarian labour code: the ETUC and its Hungarian affiliates met EU Commissioner Andor

02/09/11 - Bernadette Ségol, ETUC General Secretary and the presidents of [six Hungarian trade unions affiliated to the ETUC](#) met László Andor, European Commissioner with responsibility for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, in Budapest, to discuss proposals for reform of the Hungarian labour code. **They expressed their concerns to the European Commission over this reform because it would result in a drastic decrease in social protection and in unions' capacity to negotiate**. The European trade union movement cannot tolerate support by Europe for this type of initiative, which aims to destroy trade union rights and social rights.

[ETUC press release](#)

## Energy efficiency: social dialogue must be ensured

01/09/11 - The ETUC sent a letter to Connie Hedegaard, EU Commissioner for Climate Action, to request a meeting in order to discuss the implications of the social dialogue structures on the European policy on energy efficiency. According to the ETUC, the draft directive on energy efficiency that the European Commission has recently proposed is a step forward, but it does not make provision for initiatives involving the social partners.



# [ Focus on the EU and trade union positions ]

## ETUC backs ILO Director General's insistence on the primacy of workers' rights

14/09/2011 - The ETUC welcomed International Labour Organisation Director General Juan Somavia's insistence on the **primacy of workers' rights** during his speech at the European Parliament. Commenting on Mr Somavia's speech, Bernadette Ségol declared: *"I welcome his statement that "Respect for fundamental principles and rights at work is non-negotiable; not even in times of crisis when questions of fairness abound. This is particularly important in countries having to adopt austerity measures. We cannot use the crisis as an excuse to disregard internationally agreed labour standards": I hope that governments such as that of Hungary which are doing precisely what he deploras, take due note"*.

[ETUC press release](#)

## [ EU Agenda ]

September – October 2011

02-03/09/2011	Informal meeting of Foreign Ministers (Sopot)	<a href="#">More information</a>
12/09/2011	General Affairs Council (Brussels)	<a href="#">More information</a>
12-15/09/2011	Plenary Session of the European Parliament (Strasbourg)	
16-17/09/2011	Informal Economic and Financial Affairs Council (Wroclaw)	<a href="#">More information</a>
19-20/09/2011	Informal Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Wroclaw)	<a href="#">More information</a>
21-22/09/2011	Plenary Session of the European Economic and Social Committee (Brussels)	
22-23/09/2011	Justice and Home Affairs Council (Brussels)	<a href="#">More information</a>
26-29/09/2011	Plenary Session of the European Parliament (Strasbourg)	
29-30/09/2011	Competitiveness Council (Brussels)	<a href="#">More information</a>
03/10/2011	Employment and Social Affairs Council (Luxembourg)	<a href="#">More information</a>
03/10/2011	Eurogroup meeting (Luxembourg)	<a href="#">More information</a>
04/10/2011	ECOFIN Council (Luxembourg)	<a href="#">More information</a>
10/10/2011	Environment Council (Luxembourg)	<a href="#">More information</a>
10-11/10/2011	External Relations Council (Luxembourg)	<a href="#">More information</a>
11/10/2011	General Affairs Council (Luxembourg)	<a href="#">More information</a>
17/10/2011	Tripartite Social Summit (Brussels)	<a href="#">More information</a>
17-18/10/2011	European Council (Brussels)	<a href="#">More information</a>
27-28/10/2011	Justice and Home Affairs Council (Luxembourg)	<a href="#">More information</a>



## [ You may be interested ]

### European development policy: contributions by the ETUC and the Trade Union Development Cooperation Network

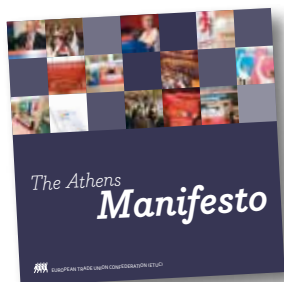
The ETUC and the Trade Union Development Cooperation Network (TUDCN) of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) actively took part in the **recent debates on the European policies for cooperation and development** and they adopted a series of declarations. You will find the declarations about the Structured Dialogue on effective partnership for development, the Green Paper on EU development policy and the EU Multiannual Financial Framework 2014–2020 at the following address: <http://www.ituc-csi.org/european-policies-on-development.html?lang=en>

### New ETUC publications adopted by the Congress in Athens



Three new publications adopted at the 12th statutory ETUC Congress (Athens, 16–19 May 2011) have just been released:

- The “Strategy and Action Plan 2011–2015” is available in French, English and German at the address: <http://www.etuc.org/a/8928> ;
- The “Athens Manifesto” is also available in the following languages : French, English, German, Finnish, Swedish, Norwegian, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Polish, Hungarian, Slovak, Czech, Slovenian and Rumanian at the address: <http://www.etuc.org/a/4546> ;
- The “ETUC Constitution amended by the 12th Congress in Athens” is available only in French and English at the address: <http://www.etuc.org/a/9016>.



### Visit of the Hisarna plant (TataSteel)

Judith Kirton–Darling and Anne Panneels, respectively ETUC Confederal Secretary and ETUC Adviser visited the Hisarna plant of TataSteel Company. This plant is actively engaged in the ULCOS project, the objective of which is to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in steel production by 50% by 2050.



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