

European Works Councils take centre stage

The European Works Councils are the theme of this month's **Education Day and Education conference** events in Sofia. From 22-24 October, participants will discuss trade union strategies and policies, as well as a training programme that will allow the effective participation of workers in transnational companies.

The joint **ETUC-ETUI conference** of 24-26 September was a huge success. With a large number of participants and speakers, the conference showcased the work of the Institute in the different domains related to Europe's unemployment challenge and provided the perfect platform for debate on the future of social Europe.

In the run-up to the conference, the ETUI produced various **new publications** on hot topics such as the TTIP (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Pact), the REFIT or better regulation agenda of the Commission, and the controversial link between wages and unemployment. We also continued updating our analysis of the EU's country-specific recommendations in the field of social affairs. More on these and other new publications can be found further in this newsletter.

Three interesting events will be organized in the coming months looking at the new power divisions in the European Parliament, the social-ecological transition and climate change and the investments of Chinese multinationals in Europe and their labour impact. We also would like to draw attention this month to our Worker Participation web site and its updated map of industrial relations

Philippe Pochet, General Director ETUI

Publications

Why have some countries become more unemployed than others? An investigation of changes in unemployment in EU member states since 2008



This Working Paper investigates links between employment changes and both sectoral developments and changes in earnings levels in six EU member states. The paper challenges the view that a remedy focusing on reducing employment protection and pay levels leads to higher levels of employment. It recommends instead policies to restore investment levels and to help transformation towards economies based on higher skill and qualification levels.

Authors: Agnieszka Piasna and Martin Myant

[Read more](#)

Focus

Trade unions and industrial relations

All you ever wanted to ask about trade unions and industrial relations in the EU member states can be found on our National Industrial Relations database pages on the worker-participation.eu website. This 'map of national industrial relations' provides key facts and information on trade unions in the different countries, collective bargaining systems, and much more

[Read more](#)

Events

EduDay and EduConf focus on European Works Councils, Sofia

This year's **EduDay** (22 October) focuses on the European Works Councils (EWC). Participants will discuss trade union strategies and policies, as well as a training programme that will allow the effective participation of workers in transnational companies.

The country-specific recommendations (CSRs) in the social field. An overview and comparison Update including the CSRs 2014-2015

As part of the European Semester, the main pillar of Europe's new economic governance, the Commission puts forward every year the 'country-specific recommendations' (CSRs). This background analysis provides an overview of specific recommendations to the EU Member States in the field of employment and social policies. It also includes a brief 'statistical' comparison between the CSRs for 2014-15 and those presented by the Commission and adopted by the European Council in 2011 and 2012 and 2013.

Author: Stefan Clauwaert

[Read more](#)

The EU's REFIT strategy: a new bureaucracy in the service of competitiveness?



This Working Paper provides a clear but critical assessment of the EU's process of simplification and qualitative improvement of the 'acquis', a process originally known as 'Better Law-making', subsequently as 'Smart regulation' and, in its latest incarnation, as 'Regulatory Fitness and Performance (REFIT)'. The paper concludes that the smart regulation agenda has

generated a creeping bureaucratisation of the process, in the course of which political decisions have gradually forfeited their legitimacy in favour of 'the expert'.

Author: Eric Van den Abeele
Also available in French

[Read more](#)

A gender perspective on older workers' employment and working conditions

This working paper aims to give a structured gender analysis of the working and employment conditions of older workers (aged 50 and over). While working and employment conditions are increasingly recognised as key

In the two-day **EduConf** from 23-24 October, the qualification of the members of the European Works Councils is a central theme. Actual case histories will be presented and the relationship between the training needs and training provision of the ETUI examined.

[Read more](#)

Save the dates

- 29 October: Monthly Forum - [Voting behaviour in the European parliament: left-right or grand coalition?](#), Brussels.
- 6 November: Book presentation - [Challenges, actors and practices of non-formal and informal learning and its validation in Europe](#), Brussels
- 21 November: ETUI Conference cycle - [The social-ecological transition: a new climate for the EU's sustainability transition](#), Brussels.
- 11 December: Symposium - [Chinese investments in Europe: business strategies and labour impacts](#), Brussels.

Recent events

24-26 September ETUC-ETUI conference 'Europe at a crossroads'

The ETUC - ETUI conference 'Europe at a crossroads. Which way to quality jobs and prosperity' attracted over 400 participants (trade unionists, academic experts, 2 EU Commissioners and 15 members of the European Parliament including the Parliament's President). The conference consisted of 5 plenary sessions and 16 workshop panels on topics related to Europe's employment crisis. More than 110 speakers introduced the debates. Extensive use of new social media (Twitter, Storify), more than 50 short video interviews and a conference report gave huge visibility to this joint conference on jobs and employment.

View the [presentations of speakers](#) or [watch the video interviews](#) done during the conference.

The report of the conference will be available on the website later this month.

10-12 September IREC Conference 2014 in Dublin

Three ETUI researchers contributed to the 2014 Industrial



issues in ageing at work, gender disparities do still not get enough attention.

Authors: Patricia Vendramin and Gérard Valenduc
Also available in French

[Read more](#)

Letter-box companies and abuse of the posting rules: how the primacy of economic freedoms and weak enforcement give rise to social dumping



This policy brief demonstrates how the emphasis on the primacy of economic freedoms has negatively affected the application of EU social security rules and the working conditions of posted workers. Finally it formulates policy recommendations for clear, transparent regulation, tighter controls and closer cooperation between national law-enforcing authorities.

Author: Jan Cremers

[Read more](#)

The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership: exaggerated hopes from the liberalising agenda?

This policy brief provides evidence that the economic benefits of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) have been seriously exaggerated. It also provides some ideas for an alternative globalisation agenda which would enshrine higher labour and environmental standards into

Relations in Europe Conference (IREC) that took place at Eurofound in Dublin from 10 to 12 September 2014.

Magdalena Bernaciak chaired a session on social dumping in which preliminary results from an edited volume coordinated by her (2015, forthcoming) were discussed. Based on survey evidence from across Europe, Kurt presented a paper on the trade unions' 'deliberative vitality' towards young workers. Romuald Jagodziński contributed with a paper on implementation of enforcement provisions (sanctions) in EWC directives. The ETUI presented also its annual flagship publication 'Benchmarking Working Europe'

[Read more](#)

13-19 Juli ISA World Congress of Sociology, Yokohama, Japan

On 13-19 July 2014 the XVIII ISA World Congress of Sociology took place in Yokohama. The ETUI was present and contributed to the Congress by chairing panels in the stream 'Trade Unions and Participation' (P. Pochet), contributing to round-table discussions (J. Drahokoupil and R. Jagodzinski on 'Integrating Eastern Europe: Experience from the Multi-Level System of Worker Participation in Europe') and presenting research outcomes (R. Jagodzinski on implementation of EWC directives in the area of access to courts). Moreover, PhD candidate Radosław Polkowski (University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, UK) holding a traineeship at the ETUI at the time presented papers on migrant workers.

[Read more](#)

24-27 August XXth World Congress on Safety and Health at Work

Aida Ponce Del Castillo, the head of the ETUI Working Conditions, Health & Safety unit participated in the 20th World Congress on Safety and Health at Work in Frankfurt (Germany). She took part in a panel focused on the trade union strategies for tackling unhealthy workplaces and delivered an address on the potential impact on workers' health of the spread of nanomaterials in the industry.

[Read more](#)



trade negotiations.

Author: Martin Myant

[Read more](#)

Back on the agenda: a European minimum wage standard



This policy brief provides a brief but systematic overview of the different minimum wage regimes currently found in the EU as a basis for formulating some potential contours of a European minimum wage policy.

Authors: Thorsten Schulten (WSI) and Torsten Müller (ETUI)

[Read more](#)

Training

Project Management for Trade Union Representatives

From 28 to 31 October, the second edition of the training on Project Management for Trade Union Representatives will take place in Gif sur Yvette (Paris) France, at the CGT training centre.

[Read more](#)

European Trade Unions Action to Defend Labour and Trade Unions Rights

Other activities

- Maria Jepsen, the Director of the ETUI Research department, took part at the two-day High-level expert conference organized by Commissioner László Andor and DG EMPL in Brussels on 18-19 September '[Labour Economics After the Crisis: What theoretical lessons to draw from policy experience?](#)'. She acted as discussant in the plenary debate 'Strengthening employment policy in Europe'. The conference brought together theoreticians, experts, analysts, advisers, and policy makers to discuss the state of play and the way forward in the area of labour economics.
- Tony Musu, senior researcher in the Working Conditions, Health and Safety Unit, was part of the EU-delegation visiting China from 22-25 September 2014 to meet with the Chinese homologues from the State Administration of Work Safety (SAWS). The EU delegation was composed of representatives from the EU Commission, EU Member States, trade unions and employers. The aim of the meeting was to exchange on Occupational Health and Safety (OSH) rules in China and Europe for possible collaboration. The EU-China dialogue on OSH was organised in the fringe of the 7th China International Forum on Work Safety which gathered hundreds of participants from all over the world (<http://www.cwsforum.com/en/>). Tony Musu and other trade union colleagues also paid a visit to the All-China Federation Trade Unions (ACFTU) to meet with its vice-president M. Jiang Guangping.
- Kurt Vandaele participated in the 7th PERC Summer School (in cooperation with the FES) in Bratislava with a contribution on trade union renewal.
- ETUI researcher Agnieszka Piasna assists the EU Social Dialogue as an expert on current labour market developments, policies and challenges. The negotiations are carried out by the cross-industry social partners (BUSINESSEUROPE, CEEP, UEAPME and ETUC) as part of their multiannual work programme 2012-2014 and aim at delivering a Joint In-depth Employment Analysis by the end of this year. ETUI supports the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) in the development of the Gender Equality Index for Europe. Earlier this month ETUI researcher Agnieszka Piasna took part in the meeting in Vilnius

Trade unionists in charge of labour law and/or social dialogue will meet from 27-29 Jan 2015 in Brussels to discuss the legal aspects related to austerity, TTIP, TISA, and REFIT.

The reflection will start from violations of labour and trade unions rights that have already occurred. To do so, emblematic cases are going to be presented. The group will have an exchange on TTIP (ISDS), TISA (Trade in Services agreement) and REFIT in terms of risk assessment of labour and trade unions rights violations.

[Read more](#)

Youth working conditions and precariousness in Europe

The ETUI Education department has been invited by ETUC to support the development of the training session on youth working conditions and precariousness in Europe. The training is supported by the Council of Europe Youth and it will be held on 28 October in Budapest, Hungary.

TOT (International training of trainers) forum, November 2014

The Education Department, in cooperation with ACTRAV/ILO, will organise a pedagogical workshop on “Active learning methodologies”, which will be integrated in the international TOT (Training of trainers) Forum organised by ACTRAV. The workshop/forum will be held from 3 – 6 November 2014 in Turin, Italy.

[Read more](#)

dedicated to advancing the measurement of various dimensions of gender equality, including quality of work and gender based violence.

- The ETUI documentation centre took part in the 45th Annual Conference of the International Association of Labour History Institutions, organized this year by the New York University Library on 1-4 October 2014. This association brings together archives, libraries, documentation centres, museums and research institutions specializing in the history and theory of the labour movement from all over the world. This year the ETUI documentation centre was formally confirmed as one of the 5 next new data providers for the web portal <http://www.socialhistoryportal.org/>. The four others are: the Kheel Center (Cornell University), Arbark (Norwegian Labour Movement Archives and Library) and 2 Russian institutions (Gosudarstvennaia Pubblicaia Istoricheskaia Biblioteka (GPIB) and Gosudarstvennaia Obshchestvenno-Politicheskaia Biblioteka (GOPB)). The portal gives access to over 900,000 digital objects (archives, books, brochures, leaflets, photographs, posters, prints, cartoons, sound, films and videos). The digital documents of this portal are automatically integrated in the European portal Europeana (<http://europeana.eu/>).
-

In the media

- Senior researcher Bela Galgoczi wrote a blog post for the Social Europe Journal on [‘Europe’s fading climate policy ambitions’](#).
 - Planet Labor: [EU: feedback from the ETUI-ETUC conference on ‘Europe at a Crossroads’](#).
 - Liaisons sociales Europe: [Le mouvement syndical ouvre les débats sur l’avenir de l’Union européenne](#).
-

European Trade Union Institute
Bd. du Roi Albert II, 5 – 1210 Brussels
www.etui.org – etui@etui.org

The ETUI is financially supported by the European Union.
The European Union is not responsible for any use of the information contained in this publication.

Follow us on [twitter](#) and [youtube](#)