

EU Investment Plan

With the €21 billion investment plan, the new Juncker Commission has got off to a controversial start. Several top economists have raised questions about the proposed plan's credibility as a means of unleashing public and private investment in excess of €315 billion over the next three years. What is more, the plan appears still locked into the old narrative concerning the need for 'structural reform' and 'removal of regulatory burdens'. Read on to find out more about our views on this investment plan.

It is already clear, in any case, that 2015 will be a crucial year for the European Union. This Commission 'of the last chance' will need to prove its ability to deliver according to its citizens' and workers' expectations. The year will also see a general election in the United Kingdom, the outcome of which could entail serious repercussions for the future of Europe.

The ETUI, meanwhile, will continue to provide thorough and evidence-based analysis of all economic and social developments. A special three-day conference in March will focus on 'women and health at work', while a new conference cycle on the 'future of work' will provide a forum for debate on the changing nature of work in the wake of globalisation and the growing impact of IT, robotisation, and the internet.

Finally, our best wishes go to all our readers for the coming festive season.

Philippe Pochet, General Director ETUI

Publications

About the baby and the bathwater: assessing the European Platform against Poverty



This Working Paper provides a qualitative assessment of one of Europe 2020's flagship initiatives: the 'European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion' (EPAP). It argues that a transformed EPAP has the potential to provide strong added value for the EU's toolbox in the fight against poverty. Rather than throwing out the baby with the bathwater, the mid-term review

of the Europe 2020 Strategy should be used as a window of opportunity to revamp this tool by addressing its weaknesses. The authors propose three complementary scenarios for boosting, step by step, the effectiveness of the Platform.

Authors: Sebastiano Sabato and Bart Vanhercke

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Focus

Collective Bargaining Newsletter

The monthly *Collective Bargaining Newsletter* is compiled by a research team from the Amsterdam Institute for Advanced Labour Studies (AIAS) in cooperation with the ETUI. The Newsletter presents up-to-date and easily accessible first-hand information on collective bargaining developments across Europe to practitioners, policy-makers and researchers. It includes short summaries of bargaining developments with links to records that provide more detailed background information. In order to ensure that the information presented is as comprehensible as possible the AIAS research team utilizes a number of different sources. These include the thorough investigation of all relevant (inter)national press agencies on a weekly basis and the use of an extensive network of contacts within the European trade union movement and beyond.

You can download the monthly newsletters in pdf format on [our website](#) or [search in the archives](#) by key words, countries, and date. If you want to subscribe please send an email to mnikolova@etui.org.

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Validation of non-formal and informal learning: new opportunities for all?



The aim of this Policy Brief is to highlight the key issues concerning recognition of skills as embodied in the project *Actors, practices and challenges concerning non-formal and informal learning and its validation* and proposes ways of developing such validation. In the context of a growing need to raise levels of education, enhance skills and encourage occupational mobility

the validation of non-formal and informal learning (NFIL) is a key stage in the proactive management of working lives. It could benefit numerous social groups, especially the most vulnerable.

[Also available in French.](#)

Author: Nicolas Fleury

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The Economic and Financial Crisis and Collective Labour Law in Europe



The current economic and financial crisis erupted several years ago. Its effects impacted deeply upon society, in which legal rules and social patterns have developed to enable the establishment of civilisation, justice and peace. Over time it has become more and more obvious that policy, financial and economic actors have adopted austerity measures as a main tool to solve the

ensuing problems, and that these measures have hit social policy standards sometimes dramatically. Recent analyses have dealt with several aspects of this issue. This book focuses on one important element: the impact on collective labour law. This book is published by Hart Publishing, Oxford.

Authors: Niklas Bruun, Klaus Lörcher, Isabelle Schömann

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Climate change: implications for employment - French and Spanish versions now available

Events

Save the dates

- 22 January: ETUI Monthly Forum - [Mobilising for change: the first successful European Citizens' Initiative 'Water is a Human Right'](#), Brussels.
- 3 February: Symposium - [The sovereign debt crisis, the EU and welfare state reform](#), Brussels.
- 24 February: ETUI Monthly Forum - [Corporate Social Responsibility and trade unions: perspectives across Europe](#), Brussels.
- 4-6 March: International conference - ['Women, Health and Work'](#), Brussels.
- 12 March: ETUI Monthly Forum - [Transformations in EU gender equality: from emergence to dismantling](#), Brussels.

Recent events

Europe's green energy transition: jobs miracle or jobs destroyer?

What will the green energy transition, and more broadly the socio-ecological transition, mean for jobs in the future? Such was the leading question debated by one of the panels at the final NEUJOBS conference. The event took place on 1 and 2 December in Brussels and marked the completion of a FP7 project in which the ETUI had participated as dissemination partner. Willi Haas from the Alpen-Adria-Universität Klagenfurt who, together with Marina Fischer-Kowalski, had developed the theoretical backbone of the project, namely the work on socio-ecological transition and employment implications, briefly presented the findings of this working package.

[Read more](#)

Recognition of skills gained outside formal education

One of the European Union's main aims in the area of employment is to have at its disposal a qualified workforce capable of adapting to the demands of the labour market. Yet a non-negligible proportion of the European population lacks all formal qualification, and recent figures show that the crisis has exacerbated the worrying phenomenon of early-school-leaving. In this context, the authors of a study recently published by the ETUI recommend encouraging the recognition of skills acquired outside the educational establishment.

The ETUI-ECF report containing the key findings on employment from the intergovernmental panel on climate change fifth assessment report is now also available in French and Spanish on our website.

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New issue of *Transfer: European Review of Labour and Research*

The latest issue of *Transfer*, [November 2014: Open issue](#) (coordinators: Jean-Yves Boulin and Alena Zemplerova), has been published by Sage.

[Read the free editorial](#) (also in [French](#) and [German](#)) and the free article by Jörg Sydow, Michael Fichter, Markus Helfen, Kadire Zeynep Sayim and Dimitris Stevis '[Implementation of Global Framework Agreements: towards a multi-organizational practice perspective](#)'.

You can also [register for a free 30-day trial](#) to this journal.

The New EU Economic Governance and its impact on the National Collective Bargaining Systems

The final report of the research project GOCOBA carried out by five Trade Union related Research Institutes: Foundation 1^o de Mayo (Coordinator, Spain); Institute For Social And Trade Union Research (Bulgaria); Institute of Social and Economic Researches (France); Association Bruno Trentin (Italy); and Labour Institute of Greek General Confederation of Labour (Greece) has been published in November 2014. The general goal of this project has been to analyze the impacts of the New EU Economic governance on the national collective bargaining systems in six countries: Bulgaria, France, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain.

[Read more in Spanish](#) and [download the report in English](#).

Training

4th 'open seminar' on the practice of European Works Councils

From 26 to 28 November, Zagreb was the venue for the fourth edition of a series of seminars on the practice of EWCs and SE Works Councils. With more than 30 participants coming from Portugal, Estonia, Germany, Malta and Croatia this was once again a very well-attended course.

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How to get job quality on to the policy agenda?

The crisis, as a result of which several European countries are again plagued by mass unemployment, has shifted the question of job quality on to the back burner. Apart from the state of the economy, the absence of a common definition of the concept of job quality, or of consensus concerning the indicators that would allow it to be measured, prevent this question from featuring in the policy debate. Such is the assessment of the situation as presented by Kirsten Sehnbruch at the ETUI Monthly Forum on 'Quality of employment in developed and developing countries', held on 20 November.

[Read more](#)

Social innovation and equality: keys to social-ecological transition

Europe must adopt new methods of governance that push equity and collaborative modes of consumption if the social-ecological transition is to be successful. This was the message from Olivier De Schutter, distinguished professor and former United Nations' special rapporteur on the right to food, speaking at the third ETUI conference on the social-ecological transition entitled *A new climate for the EU's sustainability transition*. De Schutter called on the EU to move beyond GDP and replace top-down governance with bottom-up social innovation.

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Job vacancies

Vacancy for a researcher on EWCs, SE-Works Councils and transnational information and consultation

The research department of the European Trade Union Institute is recruiting a researcher specialised in European industrial relations and workers' participation. [Download the full vacancy](#).

Applications and supporting documents (CV, evidence of qualifications, list of publications, etc.) should be sent before 20 January 2015 to Maria Jepsen, Director of the Research Department, ETUI, Boulevard du Roi Albert II, 5, B-1210 Brussels. E-mail: vraes@etui.org

How to create solidarity despite inequalities

Held (from 18 to 21 November) in the international environment of the ILO's International Training Centre in Turin, the course on 'Income inequalities, labour market and wage policies: rising in-work poverty and social inequality' gave 15 participants from 9 European countries the opportunity to identify ways of creating solidarity despite inequalities

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In the media

- Green European Journal: [To deal with the climate crisis, everything must change.](#)
 - Metis: [Santé au travail : le retour de l'Europe ?](#)
 - NSAE: [Le travail, grand absent du scrutin européen.](#)
 - Agence Europe: review of the book '[The Economic and Financial Crisis and Collective Labour Law in Europe](#)'.
 - Agence Europe: review of the ETUI Working Paper '[Integrating social and environmental dimensions in public procurement: one small step for the internal market, one giant leap for the EU?](#)'
 - Mitbestimmung: [Am Scheideweg](#) (article in German on the ETUI-ETUC Conference 'Europe at a crossroads. Which way to quality jobs and prosperity?').
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Other activities

- ETUI General Director Philippe Pochet has recently become *chroniqueur* for the online publication AlterEcoPlus launched by the Alternatives Economiques-group. The new online publication is focusing on current socio and economic issues. To read all articles you need to take a paying subscription but there is also the possibility to read up to five articles for free every month.

[To read the first contribution by Philippe Pochet.](#)

- The issue of better balancing transparency and confidentiality with regard to nanomaterials was the focus of a workshop held at this year's *NanoSafe conference* where the ETUI participated. Doreen Fedrigo-Fazio, the ETUI's NanoDiode Project Coordinator, made a presentation from the trade union perspective indicating that workers are not necessarily informed of the use of nanomaterials in their workplaces.

[Read more](#)

- The ETUI was present at the international conference *Democratising Technologies* organised by the Center for Nanotechnology in Society (CNS) at the University of California, Santa Barbara. The conference explored the challenges for NGOs and trade unions in engaging and influencing technology policy. In her presentation, ETUI Head of Unit Aida Ponce Del Castillo drew the working conditions and needs for workers' participation in the use of nanomaterials at the workplace. In addition, Aida presented the work of the ETUI in the NGO Marketplace to local and international organizations.

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- The Trade Union related Research Institutes (TURI) network has welcomed a new member – the Institute of Public Affairs (IPA) from Poland. The Institute is a leading Polish think tank and an independent centre for policy research and analysis, established in 1995. Its mission is to contribute to informed public debate on key Polish, European and global policy issues.

[Read more](#)

- The TURI network is now also active on Twitter. You can follow the latest news and publications from the members of the network on [#TUR1eu](#).

- ETUI Director Philippe Pochet has published an article in the journal *Labor History*: [Unions, central banks and redistribution](#).

- Read the latest contribution of Martin Myant to the *LSE's New European Trade Unions Forum*: [Juncker's false hope: a public investment plan without public investment](#).

- Read the article by ETUI Senior researcher Torsten Müller for the online journal *Internationale Politik und Gesellschaft* of the *Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung* (only available in German): [Europas Angriff auf die Tarifpolitik. Wie das EU-Krisenmanagement Flächentarifverträge aushöhlt und einen Systemwechsel in den Arbeitsbeziehungen erzwingt.](#)
 - ETUI Directors Philippe Pochet and Maria Jepsen have written the preface of the recently published book by Routledge '[Corporate Social Responsibility and Trade Unions](#). Perspectives across Europe'. The book will be presented at the February Monthly Forum of the ETUI in the presence of the three authors -Lutz Preuss, Michael Gold and Chris Rees from the School of Management at Royal Holloway University of London. [To register if you want attend this event.](#)
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