

Social developments in the European Union: past and future

The launch of the fifteenth edition of the report Social Developments in the European Union 2013 jointly produced by the European Social Observatory (OSE) and the ETUI was the highlight of our activities in June. The report complements the ETUI's recent Benchmarking Working Europe through a critical assessment of last year's policy developments in the area of social Europe. It also comprises the first pieces of the puzzle for a new European social deal.

The institute also held its annual [advisory board](#) meeting to discuss its future research and training agenda.

Registration is now open for the important conference held under the joint auspices of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) from 24-26 September. The conference will focus on alternatives for jobs and prosperity and feature prominent keynote speakers from academia, politics and the trade unions. It will be the first big platform after the European elections where the new chosen policymakers will be able to go into discussion with academics and high-level trade unionists about the future of Social Europe.

For more information on this important event, [consult our special webpage](#).

Philippe Pochet, General Director ETUI

Publications

Social developments in the European Union 2013



This 2013 edition of Social developments in the European Union provides key insights from analysts and scholars. Through the critical assessment of the EU economic governance of the last few years, contributors have set guidelines for a reinforced EU social protection and investment plan. The proposals for a pan-European unemployment insurance scheme and an EU minimum income scheme are

analysed together with a renewed focus on the gender dimension of European social policies. Beyond economic and social governance, this volume critically reviews national reforms of labour market policies. While the state of the European economy is still gloomy, the institutional and policy reforms proposed here represent an opportunity to unveil a new path for Europe. synthesising the most pertinent findings of AR5 for workers and employment. It was born of the belief that trade unions could make more use of AR5, which is long and highly technical, if it were distilled into an accurate, accessible, timely, relevant and readable summary.

Events

Save the dates

- 4 September: Monthly Forum - **EU social policy and the internal market: How power and conflict inside the Commission shape the policy for Europe** with Miriam Hartlapp.
- 24-26 September: Conference - **Europe at a crossroads. Which way to quality jobs and prosperity?**, Brussels.
- 22-24 October: **EduDay and EduConf**, Sofia.

Recent events

1 July: Social developments in Europe 2013

To mark the 15th edition of their flagship publication, the European Social Observatory (OSE) and the ETUI held a conference bringing together a wide variety of policymakers, stakeholders and researchers to discuss the main outcomes of this year's 'Social developments in Europe' report.

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Report Vocational education and training and the Great Recession: supporting young people in a time of crisis



The report By Jason Heyes provides a detailed overview of several European countries and their policies on vocational education and training before and after the onset of the crisis. It sets out to answer the following questions: How have EU member states responded to the dire economic and social situation and to the international call to improve education and training opportunities for young people?

[Read more](#)

Risctox database launched

On 27 June, the ETUI launched the RISCTOX database on its web site. The online service is a database of hazardous substances developed with the help of Spanish Trade Union Institute Istas providing clear, organized and concise information about health and environmental risks caused by chemicals contained in products generally used or handled by companies.

[Read more](#)

Training

Understanding and influencing the EU Semester - a practical approach for trade unions

The Education Department of the European Trade Union Institute will organise a course 'Understanding and influencing the EU Semester - a practical approach for trade unions' which will be held from 15 to 17 October 2014, in Brussels, Belgium.

This training aims to enhance trade union capacity to be consulted at national level during the European Semester.

[Read more](#)

Trade Union Communications: priorities and

5-7 June: Transatlantic Social Dialogue

This year's Transatlantic Social Dialogue meeting took place at The Worker Institute of Cornell University Workers Center in New York City.

ETUI researchers Martin Myant and Kurt Vandaele presented recent studies on the EU-US Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership and trade unions' engagement with young workers.

Part of the Dialogue was also the talk of AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka and Horst Mund of the German union IG Metall discussing the growing partnership between the American and European labour movements.

[Read more](#)

19 June: Monthly Forum - The Left at work - Why do unions, more than leftwing parties, today promote activation policies?

This Monthly Form explored the diverging roles of leftwing parties and trade unions in determining active labor market program (ALMP) spending in the OECD in recent years.

Pieter Vanhuysse from the European Centre in Vienna argued that unions increasingly take into account the distinct re-employability worries of their members. They have come to consider ALMPs, especially those sub-programs most directly useful to their members, as their second-best priority.

[Read more](#)

23-24 June: Annual TURI conference, Sofia, Bulgaria

This year's conference of the Trade Union-related Research Institutes (TURI) network was attended by representatives of 23 TURI members from over 15 European countries and many guests from Poland, Latvia, the UK and of course, from the host country Bulgaria.

The participants enjoyed a very interesting trade union table with the President of CITUB Plamen Dimitrov, the Vice-President of CL Podkrepa Dimitur Manolov and the ETUC Confederal Secretary Luca Visentini. The trade union officials put on the table their worries and hopes in relation to the results of the European elections. A main concern of the Bulgarian trade unionists is the lack of political partners for the trade union movement in Bulgaria and more in general – in the next European parliament.

[Read more](#)

strategies

The European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) in co-operation with the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) is planning a training programme for communicators from ETUC member organisation on the theme 'Trade Union Communications: Priorities and strategies'.

This training will take place in Rome, from 9 to 10 October 2014.

[Read more](#)

Trade Union Strategies against austerity measures and workers' rights contraction in Europe

Madrid, 1-3 July, 2014

The participants of this training were high-profile trade unionists working at national, sectorial and European levels. They came from mostly from countries like Greece, Portugal, Spain, Italy, Iceland, Ireland and Belgium and most of them were affected by the country-specific recommendations (CSRs) of the European Commission.

The aim was of this training was to start from a review of main impacts on workers and trade unions rights and explore avenues to exit the vicious circle of austerity measures.

Presentations and debates developed around the impact on changes/reforms on industrial relations, collective bargaining and wages; new economic governance and alternatives; odious debt doctrine; gender perspective in the strategy; trade unions initiatives at European level and ETUC current priorities specifically the Investment Plan.

On the last morning, participants in working groups choose a couple of common priorities and reflected on their future strategy.

26-27 June: Seminar on chemicals at ISPRA, Italy

The tenth ETUI seminar on chemicals and worker protection took place in Ispra (Italy) on 26 and 27 June 2014. Thirty-odd union experts from 17 countries took stock of the implementation of the REACH and CLP regulations, the revision of the Carcinogens Directive, the risks of working with nanomaterials or endocrine disruptors and the Transatlantic Trade & Investment Partnership (TTIP).

The seminar was co-organized with the Italian General Confederation of Labour (CGIL-IT) and helped coordinate all-EU trade union action in these areas.

Experts from the European Commission, the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA), and the EU Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) shared their experiences and informed the debate. The RISCTOX database produced in collaboration with the Spanish Trade Union Institute (Istas) was officially launched during the meeting

Other activities

- ETUI researcher Magdalena Bernaciak co-authored an external study for the Friedrich Ebert Foundation on [Trade Unions in Europe. Innovative responses to hard times](#)
 - The Research Department is starting a project on the future prospects for occupational health and safety in Europe. The time horizon envisages a generation ahead. This ETUI project will build and examine alternative scenarios for the year 2040, which will be elaborated in a participatory process with different stakeholders.
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