

## Editorial

On 13 March the ETUI and ETUC launched the 2017 edition of [Benchmarking Working Europe](#). This report monitors the state of social Europe on an annual basis.

The figures shown in the graphs of this publication reveal that the fragile and uncertain recovery that we have been witnessing over recent months is not equally spread across the EU Member States and, furthermore, that there are substantial inequalities within Member States. The numbers show that this weak economic growth is not enough to kick off employment. An inadequate understanding of the profound cleavages in the political, economic and social landscape is preventing the European Union from successfully addressing these problems.

In this respect, recent EU policy initiatives such as the White Paper on the future of Europe, the Five Presidents' Report and the European Pillar of Social Rights are of key importance in laying down the foundations for a common understanding of how to shape the future of the EU.

This year's Benchmarking report received a lot of media attention for its overview of wage developments in the EU. Although real wages increased substantially in central and eastern European countries, they stagnated in others such as Italy, Greece and France. Astonishingly, Belgium is the only country where real gross wages actually decreased in 2016.

For more information on this and some other key findings of the publication I recommend reading the [brief publication alert](#).

Philippe Pochet, General Director ETUI

## Publications

### Measuring European competitiveness at the sectoral level



This book develops a new approach for estimating the way in which labour costs reflect cost competitiveness. The authors present empirical evidence of equilibrium and actual wage developments for country aggregates and for economic sectors.

Authors: Stefan Collignon and Piero Esposito

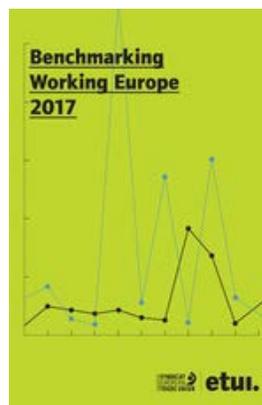
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### Social policy in the European Union: state of play 2016

The 17th edition of *Social policy in*

## Focus

### Benchmarking Working Europe 2017



This 2017 edition of *Benchmarking working Europe* focuses on the question 'overcoming cleavages across the EU?'. It demonstrates that the European Union is experiencing increasing social divergences and underlines the need for new policies that can generate higher living standards for all, based on fair integration and upwards convergence.

Download or order the report [here](#).

Read the related articles:



*the European Union: state of play* reports on recent EU and national social policymaking, with contributions from leading scholars pointing to a 'crisis', the best word to characterize 2015.

- [High time for new approach to wage policy](#)
- [Labour market shows growing divides between countries and groups of workers](#)
- [Faltering recovery under threat again](#)
- [Debate on the new Benchmarking 2017 report focuses on the urgent need for social reform](#)

Editors: Bart Vanhercke, David Natali and Denis Bouget

[Read more](#)

## The emergence of peer production: challenges and opportunities for labour and unions



This policy brief discusses the implications for labour and trade unions of new forms of work that are organised via distributed digital networks using the internet.

See also our [media page](#) for the reporting in the various national and international media.

Watch [here](#) the short video from the launch of the publication on 13 March 2017.

Read also the blog article by Torsten Müller (in German) on the blog.arbeit-wirtschaft.at: [Höchste Zeit für eine lohnpolitische Trendwende in Europa](#).

## Events

### Save the dates

- 27–28 April: [Europe - Rewrite the rules for shared prosperity, European Dialogue 2017](#).

Authors: Michel Bauwens and Vasilis Niaros

[Read more](#)

## Recent events

### Alternative economist Tim Jackson proposes abandoning the ideology of growth

At the ETUI Monthly Forum which took place on Monday 13 March, Tim Jackson – British economist and author of the best-selling book *Prosperity without Growth: Economics for a Finite Planet* – presented the main take-aways from the latest edition of his book and called for the paradigm of growth to be cast aside once and for all, and for investment to be redirected towards sectors which promote well-being.

[Read more](#)

Watch the short video with Tim Jackson's main messages [here](#).

## Epigenetics and chemical risk management in the workplace



This guide provides a comprehensive introduction to epigenetics, the emerging science of biological mechanisms in the DNA which can change our genetic activity without changing the genetic code itself.

### Debate on the new Benchmarking 2017 report focuses on the urgent need for social reform

On Monday 13 March, a debate organised by the ETUI in Brussels between representatives of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), the European Commission and the European think tank Bruegel to mark the publication of a new ETUI report (*Benchmarking Working Europe 2017*, which analyses the state of working Europe) focused on the lag in economic recovery,

Authors: Rokus Renirie and Hildo Krop

[Read more](#)

## Challenger multinationals in telecommunications: Huawei and ZTE

This background analysis looks at the development and success of two Chinese companies, Huawei and ZTE, as major players on the global market of telecommunications equipment producers.

Author: Peter Pawlicki

[Read more](#)

## Occupational safety and health in 2040: four scenarios



The publication presents four potential scenarios ('wellbeing', 'self-reliance', 'productivity' and 'protection') for the future of OSH in the European Union.

Editors: Aída Ponce del Castillo and Sascha Meinert

[Read more](#)

## Training

### 'Young TU Leaders': week two in Brussels

The second week of the 'European training for young TU leaders' course took place in Brussels on 20-24 February 2017. Participants had the opportunity to learn more about the work of the trade unions at the European level.

[Read more](#)

## Occupational health and safety: a topic needing transnational action

A seminar for European Works Council (EWC) members took place on 1-3 March on the topic of occupational health & safety and how this can be used to develop joint action at the transnational level.

[Read more](#)

## In the media

- 24/02/2017 - [Cancer au travail : la Commission](#)

social inequalities and the urgent need for a genuinely social Europe.

[Read more](#)

Watch the launch video [here](#).

## New opportunities to move from the growth paradigm to the well-being paradigm

In Europe and elsewhere, the sacrosanct gross domestic product (GDP) continues to be the main yardstick for measuring economic performance. Yet the concept of "the well-being of its peoples" has in fact been a feature of the European Treaty since the very foundation of the European Economic Community. How can the well-being paradigm replace the growth paradigm? At an ETUI Monthly Forum on 23 February, the Austrian economist Georg Feigl presented a tool that could refocus European and national economic policies.

[Read more](#)

## Other activities

- ETUI General Director Philippe Pochet was invited to be a member of the Advisory Board of the European-funded project ENLIVEN ('Encouraging Lifelong Learning for a Vibrant and Inclusive Europe'). The project's overarching objective is to provide an innovative model and mechanism to support policy debate, policy formation and policy evaluation in lifelong learning.
- The Director of the ETUI Research department Maria Jepsen has been interviewed on on co-determination in Europe, watch the Hans Böckler Foundation video [here](#).
- ETUI Senior researcher Sotiria Theodoropoulou has written a blog post on the website of Euractiv, read the opinion: [Europe's labour pains](#).
- ETUI health and safety researcher Laurent Vogel featured in a [Euractiv video](#) on chemical safety in the workplace.
- The German Metalworker's Union (IG Metall) and the ETUI are currently inviting comments on the topic of minimum wages on online labour platforms from any interested parties, especially workers, clients, platform operators, researchers, journalists, trade unionists and policymakers. The goal of the project is to develop and disseminate a nuanced view of the applicability of minimum wages, in an effort to ensure fair working conditions on online labour platforms.
- Martin Myant, head of the ETUI unit 'European Economic, Employment and Social Policy', wrote an article for the Italian EuVisions entitled '[Italy's Jobs Act in European perspective: the flawed economics of flexibility](#)'.
- ETUI researcher Sara Lafuente Hernández gave a training

[européenne complice de l'industrie](#), Le Monde.

- 06/03/2017 - [Do we need another Renault to wake us up?](#), Social Europe Journal.
- 13/03/2017 - [Many EU workers worse off now than 8 years ago: report](#), Politico
- 13/03/2017 - [Le Belge est le seul citoyen européen qui a perdu du pouvoir d'achat l'an dernier](#), Le Soir.
- 13/03/2017 - [Dans l'Union, devinez quel pays est le seul à perdre du pouvoir d'achat...](#), La Libre Belgique.
- 13/03/2017 - [Tous les Européens ont vu leur pouvoir d'achat augmenter en 2016... SAUF NOUS: voici pourquoi](#), RTL.
- 13/03/2017 - [België enige land met koopkrachtverlies](#), De Tijd.
- 13/03/2017 - [Zijn de Roemenen echt beter af dan wij?](#), De Standaard.
- 13/03/2017 - [Only Belgium loses purchasing power](#), Brussels Times.
- 13/03/2017 - [Trabajadores de siete países de la UE tienen sueldos inferiores a los de hace ocho años](#), El Mundo.
- 13/03/2017 - [Portugal é um dos 7 países da UE onde salários hoje são mais baixos que em 2009](#), Sapó 24.
- 13/03/2017 - [UE, lavoro: salari più bassi di 8 anni fa anche in Italia](#), Imola Oggi.
- 13/03/2017 - [Seul le Belge perd du pouvoir d'achat](#), L'Echo.
- 13/03/2017 - [Salaries have been sliding 3.1 pct a year in Greece](#), Ekathimerini.
- 13/03/2017 - [European trade union: salaries in Bulgaria grow, but very slowly](#), Novinite Bulgaria.
- 13/03/2017 - [Salaires : la crise n'a toujours pas été effacée en Europe](#), Les Echos.
- 13/03/2017 - [Takhle blbě na tom jste, milí Češi. Pořád stejně zle. Mezinárodní odborník se podíval na naše mzdy... Radši nečíst](#), Parlamentní.
- 14/03/2017 - [Czasowe kontrakty bariera rozwoju](#), RP Poland.
- 14/03/2017 - [REVEALED: The seven EU countries where workers are WORSE OFF as real wages FALL](#), The Express.
- 14/03/2017 - [Analyse: Risikoen for flere working poors i Europa stiger](#), FTF, Denmark.
- 20/03/2017 - [Sindikalno poročilo o delovni Evropi](#), Radio Student, Radio Slovenia.
- 23/03/2017 - [Les salaires ont très peu augmenté depuis la crise](#), L'essentiel.

session on the European vision of board-level employee representation in a seminar organised by the Groupe de Travail des Administrateurs salariés (of the French trade union CGT) on 9 March in Paris.

- Senior researcher Christophe Degryse, who is currently a visiting professor at the Centre de droit comparé du travail et de la sécurité sociale at the University of Bordeaux, gave an internal seminar on the topic 'Modèle social européen : d'une crise conjoncturelle au déclin structurel?'
- The European Parliament's briefing '[Understanding social dumping in the European Union](#)', published in March 2017, referred extensively to the volume 'Market Expansion and Social Dumping in Europe', edited by ETUI senior researcher Magdalena Bernaciak and published by Routledge in 2015.
- ETUI senior researchers Magdalena Bernaciak and Viktor Kempa joined the Advisory Board of the EU-funded project 'Occupational Safety and Health of Posted Workers: Depicting the existing and future challenges in assuring decent working conditions and wellbeing of workers in hazardous sectors' (POOSH), coordinated by the Slovenian Migration Institute (ZRC SAZU). They participated in the project's launch meeting held in Ljubljana on 14-15 February 2017.
- ETUI labour law researcher Zane Rasnača presented the paper 'How important is the CJEU really? Assessing the Court's role in constructing social policy acquis' at the 2017 Cambridge International and European Law Conference '[Transforming Institutions](#)', which took place on 23 and 24 March.
- ETUI Foresight Unit senior researcher Aida Ponce Del Castillo participated in a stakeholder discussion at the joint conference on '[New tools and approaches for nanomaterial safety assessment](#)' which took place in Malaga on 7-9 February. She also took part in a panel on organising OSH prevention for staff at the conference [NanoLille](#) on 10 March.

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