

## Editorial

Our flagship publication, [Benchmarking Working Europe 2018](#), was published this month and has generated an unprecedented amount of media interest with its findings on the fragility and inequity of the much-trumpeted economic recovery. Yes, growth has returned to Europe as a whole. But the fortunes of many countries are diverging, not converging, in terms of their economic and social performance, and wage earners are bearing the brunt of this. Average GDP per capita growth was actually negative for eight countries between 2008 and 2016, and barely above zero in seven more. In other words, the recovery has yet to arrive for many countries - particularly in southern Europe where the impact of low investment and self-defeating austerity policies will be felt for years to come. The ETUI has been saying this for some time, and it was encouraging to see our warnings on the lack of convergence echoed by the IMF's Europe Director, Jeffrey Franks, when he spoke at our [Monthly Forum](#) on 22nd March.

There is further bad news on pay. The Benchmarking report found that wage rates in central and eastern, and southern, Europe increasingly lag those in the west, meaning that the long-term trend of wage convergence in Europe we saw before the crisis is fading. Real wages in nine EU countries are still below pre-crisis levels. Youth unemployment remains a serious problem and our evidence shows that jobs growth in Europe is being fueled mainly by part-time and precarious work.

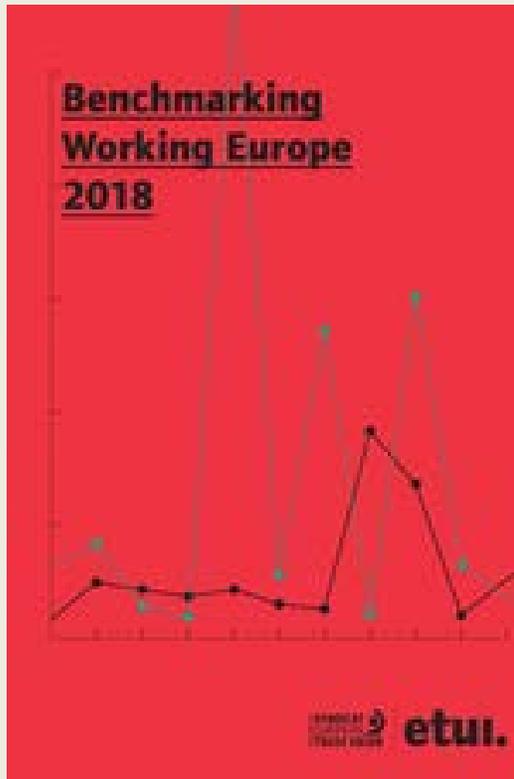
What can be done? Benchmarking calls for a real boost to pay and much more emphasis on investment and skills. Social dialogue and worker participation are another key ingredient in a successful, inclusive economy. High levels of social dialogue correlate strongly with lower levels of inequality and higher levels of growth. Yet, in its present form, although it represents a real political opportunity, it is not clear how far the European Pillar of Social Rights can deliver this. The Pillar needs to be backed by real political commitment and this is something we will be monitoring closely.

Finally, preparations are advancing for our joint ETUI-ETUC conference in Brussels on 27-29 June. This year's theme is 'The World(s) of Work in Transition' and will feature high level panels on the digital economy, industrial policy, climate change and many

other pressing themes. More details will follow in next month's newsletter.

**Philippe Pochet, General director ETUI**

## Publications



### **Benchmarking Working Europe 2018**

This year's Benchmarking Working Europe focuses on whether the European Union is really on the path towards convergence.

[Read more and download the report](#)

### **Managing public debt in Europe: an introductory guide**

This new introductory guide reviews the debate and empirical evidence on the problems that high public debt may cause and the policy options for reducing it.

[Read more](#)

### **European social dynamics: a quantitative approach**

This working paper tries to understand, through the cross-analysis of two databases, the gradual evolution of Social Europe in terms of processes and results.

[Read more](#)

## Events

9/4: [For a Fair, Modern & Efficient Corporate Taxation in Europe](#)

17/4: [Monthly forum: Is the European Union ready to commit on work-life balance?](#)

24/4: [Book launch: Labour market policies in the era of pervasive austerity: a European approach](#)

26-27/4: [European Dialogue 2018: Social Europe strengthening workers' voice](#)

## New in Reforms Watch

[Portugal: decree limits working time for junior doctors, 19/3](#)

[EU: income convergence and inequality, 15/03](#)

[Sweden: arrangement on new employment model for labour market entrants, 14/3](#)

[Luxembourg: activating labour market reform and the Revenue for Social Inclusion Bill, 14/3](#)

[Slovakia: labour code changes pass parliament - another social package announced, 12/3](#)

[Malta: voluntary occupational pension scheme in force – other improvements announced, 12/3](#)

[Poland: voluntary pension scheme announced by the government, 12/3](#)

## Reports from recent events

[IMF highlights absence of convergence in the Eurozone, 22/3](#)

[Military Trade Unionism in Europe, 21/3](#)

[Benchmarking Working Europe 2018: trade unions call for tangible progress on social](#)

issues before the next European elections, 19/3

[The doughnut revolution as an alternative to the growth paradigm](#), 6/3

[Working time reduction back on the table](#), 22/2

[Strong trade unions are a sign of solidarity among workers](#), 14/2

## Training



### Developing new capacities to represent young workers

Twenty-six young members of the European Federation for Food, Agriculture and Tourism (EFFAT), from 10 different countries, met in Leuven this month to discuss their training needs for developing new capacities to represent young workers.

[Read more](#)



### Stem the tide!

The four-day training course entitled “Stem the tide!” organized by ETUI Education, the British TUC and the Greek Adedy took place in Esher (UK) in February. The course dealt

with labour and trade union rights restrictions in Europe.

[Read more](#)

## SAVE THE DATES: EWC and SE Works Council training

[Find here](#) an overview of all “open courses” for EWC/SE WC members for this activity year. Block the dates now if you are interested in any of these seminars.

## In the media

20/3: [Britain is one of just six EU countries where wages are falling](#), Yahoo Finance UK

20/3: [España, entre los nueve países de la UE donde los salarios son aún peores que antes de la crisis](#), El Mundo

19/3: [EU: Greece comes first in wage cuts in 2010 - 2017](#), IBNA

19/3: [Nederlanders verdienen maar nét iets meer dan in de crisisjaren](#), AD

19/3: [Lavoro: sindacati Ue, in Italia -4,3% guadagni tra 2010-2017](#), La gazzetta del mezzogiorno

19/3: [Los españoles ganan menos que al comienzo de la crisis](#), RTVE

19/3: [Retoma? Portugueses continuam a ganhar menos do que antes da crise](#), Renascença

19/3: [Sindikati upozoravaju: 'Hrvatska je jedina zemlja EU čiji radnici i dalje imaju manje plaće nego prije krize'](#), Vjesti.hr

17/3: [Twee dagen staken, drie dagen werken](#), De Standaard

7/3: [Verontwaardiging over lonen: waarom de ene topverdiener een graaier is en de andere een held](#), De Morgen

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