What do we and what don't we know about minimum wages in Europe?
Expert conference organised by the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI)

Brussels, 12 December 2011, 10h30-16h30
ITUH, Blvd du Roi Albert II, 5, 1210 Brussels, Belgium
Room B

The purpose of this expert conference is to deepen our knowledge about the wages paid at the ‘bottom’ of the labour market in European countries. Invited experts will discuss the empirics and also more theoretical questions relating to wage and employment outcomes. What proportion of the workforce earns the minimum wage in different countries? What are the characteristics of these people? What, if any, is the relationship between the level of the minimum wage and employment and distributional outcomes? Another focus will be the different institutional arrangements that determine wages at the bottom of the labour market across Europe. Can we move beyond a simple dichotomy between statutory and collective bargaining-based systems?

Agenda

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10.30 – 11.30
How are minimum wages set in Europe? Beyond the statutory/collective bargaining dichotomy?
Speaker: Thorsten Schulten, WSI
Discussant: Line Eldring, FAFO

11.30 – 12.30
Who earns minimum wages in Europe? New empirical evidence based on household surveys
Speakers: Francois Rycx, Stephan Kampelmann, DULBEA
Discussant: Sangheon Lee, ILO

12.30 – 13.30 Lunch

13.30 – 14.30
Effects of a change in regime: the example of the UK
Speakers: Alan Manning, LSE
Discussant: Robert Strauss, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

14.30 – 14.45 Coffee break
14.45 – 15.45
**The links between minimum wages, the wage structure and employment outcomes: theory and European empirics**
Speakers: Hans-Jörg Herr, Berlin School of Economics and Andrew Watt, ETUI
Discussant: Alfonso Arpaia, DG Ecfin

15.45 – 16.30
**Concluding remarks and discussion**
Discussion led by Philippe Pochet, General Director, ETUI

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