

Chronology 2010

Key events in European social policy

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JANUARY

8 January: Euro area **unemployment** rate up to 10.0% in November 2009, and in the EU27 up to 9.5% (http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/3-08012010-AP/EN/3-08012010-AP-EN.PDF).

14 January: Launch of the **new social dialogue committee** in the area of metallurgy, engineering and technology.

15 January: Trichet says **Greece leaving euro area is an ‘absurd’ notion**.

18 January: The Eurozone Finance Ministers decide unanimously to extend the term of office of the **Eurogroup** Jean-Claude Juncker.

20 January: Bulgaria puts forward **Kristalina Georgieva** as its nominee for the next Commission following the withdrawal of **Rumiana Jeleva** from the list of candidates. The vote on **‘Barroso II’** is scheduled for 9 February (http://ec.europa.eu/news/eu_explained/100122_en.htm).

20 January: The Commission launches the 2010 European Year for **Combating Poverty** and **Social Exclusion** (<http://www.2010againstpoverty.eu/?langid=en>).

29 January: At an informal meeting in Barcelona from January 27 to 29, the EU Ministers of employment and social security agree that the Europe 2020 **Strategy** should be **different from the Lisbon Strategy**, which comes to an end this year.

30 January: Climate change: the European Union announces EU emission reduction targets following the Copenhagen Accord (<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/97&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>).

30 January: In January, **the euro area unemployment rate** is stable.

FEBRUARY

2 February: The European Commission publishes the results of the **public consultation on Europe 2020** and an evaluation of the **Lisbon Strategy**, SEC (2010) 116 final and SEC (2010) 114 final.

3 February: On the eve of the Informal **European Summit**, to be held on 11 February, an ETUC delegation will visit the President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, to set out workers' expectations and demands (<http://www.etuc.org/a/6915>).

4 February: Despite progress in recent years, nearly a third of Europeans lack the skills to meet the demands of the **labour market**.

5 February: The Committee of Permanent Representatives of the EU Member States (COREPER) approves (at first reading) a compromise on the new **European Microfinance for employment and inclusion** (PROGRESS).

6 February: Social organisations and environmental non-governmental bodies criticise the **Europe 2020 Strategy**.

9 February: The European Parliament approves the '**Barroso II**' **Commission** (<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/hearings//default.htm;jsessionid=088E94B2695EECEB1C6EC34071DB3449?language=EN>).

10 February: The ETUC and the European Union of Christian Democratic Workers (EUCDW) of the European People's Party adopt a joint declaration on **Social Europe** and a **social market** economy (<http://www.etuc.org/a/6942>).

10 February: MEPs call for more binding tax cooperation to tackle **banking secrecy and fraud** (<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+IM-PRESS+20100209IPR68641+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>).

10 February: Male/female equality: tackle violence and guarantee **paternity leave**, say MEPs (<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+IM-PRESS+20100209IPR68656+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>).

15 February: At today's meeting of the Macro Economic Dialogue, the ETUC warns against the danger of a '**double dip**' in economic activity (<http://www.etuc.org/a/6973>).

16 February: A draft of the Joint Report on **Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2010** examines how to address the impact of the crisis on pension schemes, housing and security for savers, COM (2010) 25 final.

19 February: Broad consensus of Development Ministers on the need to **revive the Millennium Goals, with financial support**.

19 February: László Andor and Martin Hirsch agree on the goal of a **one-third reduction of poverty by 2012**.

23 February: Europe's unions fully support the **general strike in Greece** and ask Eurozone Ministers to go for realistic and socially acceptable plans (<http://www.etuc.org/a/6986>).

24 February: MEPs remain divided on the inclusion of self-employed workers in the Directive on working time in the road sector.

26 February: The **EU economy is gradually recovering**, whilst still facing turbulent times ahead.

27 February: The EU agrees on concrete measures to combat **illegal immigration** (<http://www.immigration.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/ConclJAI25022010.pdf>).

28 February: The **Euro area unemployment rate** stands at 10.0%, the EU27 rate at 9.6%, in February.

MARCH

3 March: Commenting on the publication of the Commission paper '**Europe 2020**', John Monks, ETUC General Secretary says: 'The 2020 exercise so far is flawed and disappointing. There is a desperate need for the EU and the rest of the world to digest what caused the crisis and how we can avoid a repeat' (<http://www.etuc.org/a/7010>).

3 March: Europe 2020: the Commission proposes a **new economic strategy in Europe**, calling for strengthened economic governance, COM (2010) 2020 final.

4 March: Publication of the **Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2010**, SEC (2010) 98 final.

4 March: A person may lose **refugee status** when the circumstances in the third country on which his fear of persecution was founded have ceased to exist (<http://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2010-03/cp100016en.pdf>).

5 March: Ahead of **International Women's Day**, the European Commission strengthens and deepens its commitment to equality between women and men with a **Women's Charter** (<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=708&furtherNews=yes>).

8 March: Council Directive 2010/18/EU of 8 March 2010 implementing the revised Framework Agreement on **parental leave** concluded by BusinessEurope, UEAPME, CEEP and ETUC and repealing Directive 96/34/EC (JO L 68/13 of 18 March 2010).

8 March: The Council adopts the **European microfinance facility** for employment and social inclusion, *Press release*, 6868/10 (Presse 45).

9 March: Guerrero Salom reports on the effects of the global **financial and economic crisis** on developing countries and on development cooperation (Guerrero Salom (S&D, ESP), A7-0034/2010 of 09 March 2010).

9 March: The Council extends **parental leave**, *Press release*, 6641/10 (Presse 33).

10 March: The Commission sets out its **post-Copenhagen climate strategy** (<http://euobserver.com/885/29645>).

10 March: The OECD, WTO and UNCTAD once again call on the **G20** to resist **protectionism** (http://www.oecd.org/document/48/0,3746,en_21571361_44315115_44741628_1_1_1_1,00.html).

10 March: The EU ministers draw up Community measures against **gender-based violence** (http://www.eu2010.es/en/documento/synoticias/noticias/mar08_epscomujer.html).

17 March: The European Commission proposes negotiating directives for the Union's accession to the **European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)** (<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/0/84&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>).

17 March: The ETUC unveils its proposals for a revision of the **Posting Directive** (<http://www.etuc.org/a/7046>).

20 March: Second revision of the **Cotonou Agreement**, but the question of the readmission of illegal immigrants is not yet settled (http://ec.europa.eu/development/geographical/cotonouintro_en.cfm).

23 March: The ETUC meets the President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy. At this meeting, held on the eve of the **Spring Summit**, the ETUC stresses in particular the need to keep **employment** at the top of the agenda, to have a robust **public sector**, to maintain **social expenditure**, and to fight **financial speculation** (<http://www.etuc.org/a/7073>).

23 March: The Commission launches a consultation on how the **European Company Statute (SE)** is working (*Bulletin of the European Union*, No.10103 of 23 March).

24 March: MEPs from the EPP and S&D groups organise the first European conference on the '**Protection of a Work-free Sunday**' in Brussels.

24 March: Improved **access to finance**, more **flexicurity** and credible **governance** are **BusinessEurope's** priorities for the **Europe 2020** Strategy (*Bulletin of the European Union*, No.10104 of 24 March).

24 March: Proposal for a Council Decision authorising enhanced cooperation in the area of the law applicable to **divorce and legal separation** and Proposal for a Council Regulation (EU) implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of the law applicable to divorce and legal separation COM (2010) 104 and COM (2010) 105. The FR, EN and DE versions were replaced by COM (2010) 104 final/2 and COM (2010) 105 final/2 of 30 March 2010 (<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/10/st08/st08143-re01.en10.pdf> and <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/10/st08/st08176-re01.en10.pdf>).

24 March: The European Commission takes its first step towards a review of the **rules on working time** (<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/345&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&guiLanguage=fr>).

25 March: Declaration of the Heads of State and Government of the Euro Zone. Member States of the euro area agree on the European system of support to Greece. The mechanism includes financial involvement of the International Monetary Fund, European financing and coordinated bilateral loans from the euro area Member States; it is intended to reassure the markets. Furthermore, the President of the European Council is requested to establish a working group on economic governance.

25 March: Decision No.283/2010/eu of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 March 2010 establishing a **European Progress Microfinance** Facility for employment and social inclusion (JO L 87/1 of 7 April).

25 March: The ETUC, BusinessEurope, UEAPME and CEEP present their European Agreement on inclusive **labour markets** at the **Tripartite Social Summit** in Brussels (<http://www.etuc.org/a/7089>).

25 March: European aid to Greece dominates the work of the **Tripartite Social Summit**.

25 March: ATD Fourth World and EAPN call for **the numerical target on poverty** to be maintained (<http://www.atd-quartmonde.be/Inverser-la-logique-mettre-la.html>).

27 March: The EU agrees on five basic areas for its **2020 economic strategy**, including the **battle against poverty**. Zapatero states that the essential idea underpinning the conclusions on the 'Europe 2020' strategy was the coordination of economic governance in the EU27.

27 March: HCR calls for improved **asylum** procedures in Europe (*Bulletin of the European Union*, No.10107 of 27 March).

30 March: Parliament calls for a tax on **financial transactions** and a moratorium on **debt** to mitigate the impact of the crisis on developing countries.

31 March: Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the **citizens' initiative**, COM (2010) 119 final.

31 March: A new Commission report presents an initial assessment of the roll-out of the European **cohesion policy**, COM (2010) 110 final.

APRIL

7 April: The Commission services issue an analysis of the main innovative **financing options** (<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/405&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&guiLanguage=fr>).

7 April: The European Commission adopts a communication on the **social and economic integration of Roma in Europe**, COM (2010) 133 final.

13 April: Putting the Media Spotlight on **Poverty** in Europe (<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/416&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&guiLanguage=fr>).

13 April: Socialists, trade unions and anti-globalisation activists push for the '**Robin Hood tax**'.

14 April: Karel De Gucht promises an **active policy** in support of **human rights and social and environmental standards**.

15 April: CCRE President Michael Häupl campaigns for the inclusion of '**better living**' in EU policies (http://www.ccre.org/communiqués_de_presse_detail_en.htm?ID=295).

15 April: The Commission urges Member States to **increase their aid** after a slight shift in 2009. An action plan is expected on 21 April.

20 April: For the first time ever, the **G20** Labour and Employment Ministers' meeting is held in Washington, on 20 and 21 April (*Bulletin of the European Union*, No.10122 of 21 April).

21 April: László Andor speaks at the first ever meeting of **G20** Labour and Employment Ministers in Washington on 20 and 21 April (<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=781&furtherNews=yes>).

22 April: Development Aid and the **Millennium Development Goals:** the Commission calls on Member States to get back on track for more **and better aid** (<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/451&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>).

23 April: Deficit and **debt** data for 2009 revealed: the Euro area and EU27 government deficits stand at 6.3% and 6.8% of GDP respectively (<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=STAT/10/170&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>).

24 April: Greece requests activation of the plan to **help refinance its debt**. The provision of funds should be rapid, according to the Commission.

28 April: The Council provides financial support out of the **ERDF** for the renovation and reconstruction of housing for **Roma** and other marginalised communities.

28 April: Europe 2020 will address **social issues** (<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=370&langId=en&featuresId=111&urtherFeatures=yes>).

30 April: Rules on working hours must apply to **self-employed commercial drivers** too, say MEPs (<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+IM-PRESS+20100426IPR73471+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>).

MAY

1st May: Entry into force of new regulations on the **coordination of social security systems** (Regulation (EC) 883/2004).

1st May: Europe 2020 Strategy: high employment and job quality must be key aims, say MEPs (<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+IM-PRESS+20100426IPR73482+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>).

2 May: Statement by the Eurogroup: following a request from the Greek authorities, Euro area Ministers unanimously agree to **activate stability support to Greece** via bilateral loans centrally pooled by the European Commission under the conditions set out in their statement of 11 April.

4 May: Europe prepares to mobilise **110 billion euros to help Greece** continue to meet its debt service payments (<http://www.etuc.org/a/7216>).

4 May: The **ECB** announces a **change in the eligibility of debt** instruments issued or guaranteed by the Greek government (<http://www.ecb.int/press/pr/date/2010/html/pr100503.en.html>).

5 May: John Monks, the ETUC General Secretary, joins the massive, **general Pan-Hellenic strike** organised today in Athens by GSEE and Adedy, the Greek ETUC affiliates (<http://www.etuc.org/a/7220>).

5 May: The Ombudsman calls for active participation of the European Parliament in the future **citizens' initiative**.

7 May: Asylum in the EU27: Around 260,000 asylum applicants registered in 2009.

9 May: President Barroso commends Mario Monti on his excellent report, which confirms the need to relaunch the **Single Market** now, while overcoming persisting concerns, missing links, bottlenecks and problems of enforcement (http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/news/press-releases/pdf/20100510_1_en.pdf).

9-10 May: The Council and the Member States decide on a comprehensive package of measures to preserve **financial stability in Europe**, including a European **financial stabilisation mechanism** (http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/fr/ecofin/114356.pdf).

11 May: Commissioner Barnier holds a press conference setting out where the EU and the US stand on delivering the G20 commitments on reform of **financial regulation**, and the next steps towards fulfilling those commitments.

12 May: The Council adopts rules to **prevent injuries to healthcare workers**, *Press release*, 9612/10 (Presse 112).

12 May: The Commission adopts a communication on reinforcing **economic policy coordination**, COM (2010) 250 final.

12 May: The Commission proposes that **Estonia** join the Euro area in 2011.

14 May: The ETUC writes to President Barroso asking him to convene an emergency **Tripartite Social Summit** in view of the **austerity packages** being applied in Greece, Spain, Portugal, Romania and elsewhere (<http://www.etuc.org/a/7259>).

19 May: MEPs call for binding **social protection** for **self-employed** women and wives (Astrid Lulling, (PPE, LUX). A7-0146/2010 of 10 May 2010).

19 May: EU Member States that volunteer to welcome third-country **refugees** could receive up to €6,000 per resettled person under a draft EU law amended by Parliament (Rui Tavares (GUE/GVN, PORT), A7-0131/2010 of 03 May 2010).

19 May: European Parliament resolution on the institutional aspects of the accession of the European Union to the European **Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms** (Ramón Jáuregui Atondo (S&D, ESP), A7-0144/2010 of 06 May 2010).

20 May: European Parliament resolution of 20 May 2010 on the **long-term sustainability of public finances for a recovering economy** (Liem Hoang Ngoc (PS, FR), A7-014/2010 of 07 May 2010).

20 May: Emissions from industrial installations covered by the EU's carbon trading scheme fell by 11% in 2009, thanks largely to the crisis, says Ms Hedegaard.

21 May: MEPs postpone the adoption of the resolution on the **Europe 2020 Strategy**.

26 May: XVIIIth **CEEP** Congress (http://www.ceep-france.org/IMG/pdf/Programme_XVIII_Congres_du_CEEP_EU_2020_FR.pdf).

26 May: The European Commission presents an analysis of the costs, benefits and options for moving beyond the **EU's greenhouse gas reduction target for 2020**, from 20% below 1990 levels to 30% once the conditions are met.

JUNE

2 June: A slight increase in **unemployment** in the euro area. Figure unchanged in the EU.

2 June: The ETUC will organise a **European Day of Action** on September 29, to coincide with a meeting of European Finance Ministers (<http://www.etuc.org/a/7323>).

3 June: The Council facilitates access to the **EU structural funds** to counter the **crisis** (<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=PRES/10/155&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>).

4 June: The ETUC and the other **European social partners** meet the European Commission President, Mr Barroso, to discuss the consequences of the **crisis** and of **austerity measures on employment and the social dimension**. They have presented their joint statement on the 2020 Strategy.

7 June: According to the ETUC, the main goal of the **Working Time Directive (WTD)** is, and must remain, to protect workers against the health and safety risks of long and irregular working hours (<http://www.etuc.org/a/7352>).

7 June: Traditional **stereotypes** remain the biggest challenge for **gender equality in education** (<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/695&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>).

8 June: Gender differences persist in both choice of study and outcomes (*Bulletin of the European Union*, No.10154 of 8 June).

8 June: The Council of EU Ministers adopts conclusions on the subject of 'Equity and health in all policies: **solidarity in health**' (http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/fr/lisa/114995.pdf).

10 June: Commission communication on A new impetus for European cooperation in Vocational Education and Training to support the **Europe 2020 strategy**, COM (2010) 296 final.

11 June: The EU launches European **social dialogue with education workers and employers** (<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=329&langId=en&newsId=829&furtherNews=yes>).

15 June: European Council: the ETUC warns against the **austerity measures** (<http://www.etuc.org/a/7385>).

16 June: Parliament decides on the new Europe 2020 Strategy and on economic governance (RC-B7-0348/2010).

16 June: The European Parliament remains divided over whether to include **self-employed drivers** in the directive on **working time in road transport**.

17 June: Report on Public Finances 2010: the sovereign debt crisis highlights the need for fiscal consolidation and strengthened surveillance.

17 June: A majority of MEPs rejects the Commission proposal on the regulation of **working time in road transport of self-employed drivers**.

17 June: Parliament approves **Estonia's** joining the Euro (*Bulletin of the European Union*, No.10161 of 17 June).

17 June: The European Council welcomes the progress report by the President of the **Task Force on economic governance** and agrees on a first set of guidelines.

17 June: The Heads of State and Government officially adopt the European Union's medium-term socio-economic strategy, known as '**Europe 2020**'.

18 June: The European Parliament adopts the Ilda Figueiredo report on the **European equality strategy** (Ilda Figueiredo (GUE/NGL, PORT), A7-0156/2010 of 12 May 2010).

19 June: The European Parliament adopts the Raül Romeva i Rueda report on '**Gender aspects** of the economic downturn and financial crisis' (Raül Romeva i Rueda (Greens/EFA, Spanish), A7-0155/2010 of 12 May 2010).

19 June: The EU granted **asylum** to about 79,000 people in 2009.

22 June: The EU and the ACP sign the **revised Cotonou Agreement** for the second time to adapt it to the new challenges.

23 June: G20: Berlin and Paris argue in favour of a **global tax on financial transactions**.

24 June: The European Commission informs the Transport Council that it is withdrawing its proposal for a **directive on the working time of road hauliers**.

25 June: Declaration of international trade unions to the **G20 and G8 summits**.

26 June: A CEDEFOP report points out that economic competitiveness is seriously at risk owing to a mismatch of skills.

28 June: Taxation trends in the European Union: the EU27 tax ratio fell to 39.3% of GDP in 2008. There has been a steady decline in top corporate income tax rates since 2000 (STAT/10/95, full version of the report) (http://ec.europa.eu/news/economy/100628_fr.htm).

29 June: Conclusions of the **9th annual meeting of people experiencing poverty**: guarantee a dignified life and encourage social inclusion.

30 June: Services Directive: the Commission consults interested stakeholders in the context of the Directive's implementation process (<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/862&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&guiLanguage=fr>).

30 June: EU economic governance: the Commission proposes reinforced macro-economic, budgetary and structural surveillance, COM (2010) 367 final.

JULY

3 July: Towards a removal of the **European Social Fund** from the **cohesion policy**? Warning from Danuta Hübner.

6 July: European Parliament resolution on the contribution of EU regional policy towards fighting the **financial and economic crisis**, with special reference to Objective 2 (Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE, GR). A7-0206/2010).

6 July: The euro area is slowly recovering from the **economic crisis** with a growth forecast of 0.8% in 2010 and 1.3% next year, according to the latest quarterly report 'Eurozone Forecast' (Ernst & Young).

6 July: The EU launches a public debate on the **future of pensions** (<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/905&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&guiLanguage=fr>).

6 July: European Parliament resolution on **promoting youth access** to the **labour market**, strengthening trainee, internship and apprenticeship status (Emilie Turunen report, A7-0197/2010 of 14 June 2010).

7 July: Directive 2010/41/EU of the European Parliament on the application of the principle of **equal treatment between men and women** engaged in an activity in a **self-employed** capacity and repealing Council Directive 86/613/EEC (OJ L 180/1 of 15 July).

7 July: EU Member States granted **citizenship** to 696,000 people in 2008.

7 July: The European Commission and the Council of Europe begin joint talks on the EU's accession to the **Convention on Human Rights** (<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/906&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&guiLanguage=fr>).

7 July: The Commission launches its **Green Paper on pensions**, COM (2010) 365 final.

7 July: According to the OECD's annual report on employment, the **economic crisis** is still having an impact on the global job market.

8 July: Ahead of the meeting of EU Ministers of Employment and Social Affairs, the **Ministers of the Troika** (Belgium, Hungary and Poland) met with the European social partners and the **European Social Platform**, in the presence of the European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, László Andor.

8 July: The ETUC reiterates its concerns about the **Green Paper on the future of pensions**, published by the European Commission (<http://www.etuc.org/a/7468>).

10 July: Informal EPSCO Council: employment is central to the new **economic governance** (<http://www.eutrio.be/pressrelease/informal-council-epsco-employment-central-new-economic-governance>).

12 July: Council Decision authorising enhanced cooperation in the area of the law applicable to **divorce and legal separation** (2010/405/EU) (OJ L 189/12 of 22 July).

13 July: France and Germany insist that the EU should continue its efforts to create a **global tax on financial transactions**.

13 July: The Commission presents a communication on Reaffirming the **free movement of workers:** rights and major developments, COM (2010) 373 final.

13 July: Council recommendation on broad guidelines for the **economic policies** of the Member States and of the Union (JO L 191/28 of 23 July).

13 July: Proposal for a Directive on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of **seasonal employment**, COM (2010) 379 final and proposal for a Directive on conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals in the framework of an **intra-corporate transfer**, COM (2010) 378 final.

14 July: Estonia adopts the euro on 1st January 2011.

15 July: The European Court of Justice finds against Germany over the **practice of local authority employers to award pension services** contracts on the basis of a selection laid down in collective agreements.

20 July: Employment policy guidelines: the Csaba Öry report calls for more and better jobs (Csaba Öry report (PPE, TCH), A7-0235/2010 of 20 July 2010).

20 July: The **economic recovery** progresses but job growth is still lagging behind.

22 July: Commission report on European-level **sectoral social dialogue**, SEC (2010) 364.

21 July: Franco-German Paper on European **Economic Governance** (<http://www.minefe.gouv.fr/actus/pdf/100721franco-german.pdf>).

24 July: Seven EU **banks fail stress test** (http://www.economist.com/blogs/newsbook/2010/07/europes_bank_stress_tests).

27 July: Foreign Ministers launch negotiations on bringing **Iceland into the EU** (http://europa.eu/news/external-relations/2010/06/20100617_fr.htm).

30 July: According to **CEDEFOP**, improving existing skills is the best way to develop a low-carbon economy.

AUGUST

4 August: Paris seeks a European mobilisation around the **Roma issue**.

4 August: Decline in arrivals of illegal **immigrants** in Europe.

4 August: **Self-employed workers** to gain **maternity** and **pension benefits** under a new EU law (<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/1029&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&guiLanguage=fr>).

24 August: The Commission **approves payment of 9 billion euros to Greece**. Slovakia pulls out of the support plan.

26 August: The Commission is to check the legality of **French measures against the Roma**.

SEPTEMBER

2 September: In the framework of the ETUC Youth conference on **Youth Employment**, ETUC Youth has reiterated its concern regarding levels of youth unemployment and casualisation (<http://www.etuc.org/a/7598>).

2 September: **Demonstration** in Brussels against **France's policy** towards the **Roma people**.

2 September: Europe strengthens its **financial supervision**. A political agreement is signed to consolidate the monitoring of banks, insurers and markets (http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/barnier/docs/speeches/20100902/20100902_speaking_points_fr.pdf).

6 September: The ETUC supports the national day of action on **pensions** organised by **French trade unions** (<http://www.etuc.org/a/7610>).

7 September: Mobilise globalisation adjustment aid faster, say MEPs (Miguel Portas (GUE/GVN, PORT.) A7-0236/2010 of 26 July 2010).

7 September: At the **European semester**, the Council approves strengthened **coordination of economic and budgetary policies**, Press 230, Nr: 13190/0.

8 September: The European Parliament calls for measures against **speculation** in commodities and the **abuse of power**.

8 September: MEPs welcome the **financial supervision package** endorsed by the Council but insist this was the first step towards a **regulatory system** and not the final product.

8 September: European Parliament legislative resolution on the proposal for a Council decision on **guidelines for the employment policies** of the Member States: **Part II of the Europe 2020 Integrated Guidelines** (COM (2010) 0193 – C7-0111/2010-2010/0115 (NLE)).

9 September: Practices around **asylum** within the EU remain divergent.

11 September: Applications to the **EU globalisation fund** increase six-fold.

11 September: MEPs are concerned about the **impact of postal liberalisation on universal service and workers' rights**.

13 September: The Council adopts its first-reading position on a draft directive concerning the application of **patients' rights in cross-border healthcare** and the statement of the Council's reasons (11038/10 REV2+ 11038/10 ADD1+ 12979/10 ADD1).

14 September: For 2010 as a whole, real **GDP** growth is now projected at 1.8% in the EU and 1.7% in the euro area, a sizeable upward revision.

15 September: The Observatoire Social Européen (OSE) has been closely involved in the preparations of the **Belgian Presidency Conference** (La Hulpe, 14 and 15 September) on ‘**European Coordination of Social Policies in the Context of the Europe 2020 Strategy**’.

16 September: The European Council discusses proposals on **economic governance**. As they currently stand, these proposals basically boil down to virtually automatic sanctions, to be decided by the Finance Ministers, against countries which fail to cut wages, social benefits and public services (<http://www.etuc.org/a/7643>).

16 September: Paris and Berlin wish to **tackle asylum abuse**.

17 September: The Commission adopts an amended proposal for the **food programme** for the most deprived persons in the European Union (http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/markets/freefood/index_en.htm).

21 September: The Commission adopts its Strategy for **equality between women and men 2010-2015**, COM (2010) 491 final.

22 September: Protecting patients: the EU is to upgrade medicine **safety monitoring** (<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+IM-PRESS+20100921IPR83194+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>).

23 September: The European Parliament endorses the political agreement on the new **European financial supervision**.

24 September: According to the CGT, between 997,000 and 3 million people across France demonstrated **against the proposed pension reform**.

29 September: General strike in Spain. Trade unions mobilise against the ‘neoliberal’ turn of the Zapatero government.

29 September: Euro-demonstration 29 September 2010: '**No to austerity. Priority for jobs and growth!**' (<http://www.etuc.org/a/7407>).

29 September: EU economic governance: the Commission delivers a comprehensive package of legislative measures.

OCTOBER

1st October: The **ILO** estimates that **employment** in the **industrialised countries** will regain its pre-crisis level in 2015 (http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_145114.pdf).

4 October: Europe approves €500 million of **Food Aid for the Needy for 2011**.

7 October: The Commission outlines its vision for **taxing the financial sector**. 'Unsatisfactory, unambitious, and unacceptable': ETUC on financial sector taxation proposals (<http://www.etuc.org/a/7728>).

8 October: The British Prime Minister promises '**fair austerity**'. David Cameron's government is to withdraw means-tested child allowances.

11 October: Discriminatory ethnic profiling should be prohibited in the EU, according to the **Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)**. (http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/research/publications/publications_per_year/pub_dif4_en.htm).

13-14 October: The Executive Committee of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) adopts a Resolution on Economic and Social Governance criticising the reform of the **Stability and Growth Pact** (<http://www.etuc.org/a/7770>).

18 October: Franco-German declaration of their intention to apply for a **limited revision of the Treaty on the Functioning of the Union** (<http://www.france-allemande.fr/Renforcons-le-gouvernement,5764.html>).

19 October: Ninth Round Table on **Poverty and Social Exclusion** (<http://www.eutrio.be/ninth-round-table-poverty-and-social-exclusion>).

19 October: European Parliament resolution on **precarious women workers** (Britta Thomsen, A7-0264/2010 of 05 October 2010).

19 October: The European Commission adopts a strategy to ensure respect for the **EU Charter of Fundamental Rights** (<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/1348&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=fr>).

20 October: MEPs call for an EU-wide **minimum income** to combat **poverty** (<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+IM-PRESS+20101020IPR88468+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>).

20 October: The European Parliament adopts **recommendations** to the Commission on improving the European Union **governance and stability framework**, particularly in the euro area (based on the Diogo Feio report, (EPP, Port.) A7-0282/2010 of 11 October 2010) as well as **recommendations** regarding actions and initiatives taken as part of the **financial, economic and social crisis** (based on the CRIS Commission report, chaired by Pervenche Bérés (S&D, FR), A7-0267/2010 of 05 October 2010).

21 October: Mixed outcome of the vote in the European Parliament on the **Maternity Protection Directive** (<http://www.etuc.org/a/7765>).

21 October: Council Decision of 21 October 2010 on **guidelines for the employment policies** of the Member States (2010/707/EU). (JO L 308/06 of 24 November).

21 October: The EU Ministers of Employment and Social Affairs, in Luxembourg, highlight the need to **increase the role of the Employment / Social Committee** (EPSCO) and of the Committees on Employment (SCE) and Social Protection (CPS) on the European scene, while supporting the **governance of the European Employment Strategy** in the context of the 2020 Strategy (http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/fr/lssa/117423.pdf).

21 October: The publication of the final report of the **Task Force** led by European Council President Herman Van Rompuy reveals what Member States really decided in terms of **reform of economic governance** (*Bulletin of the European Union*, No.10240 of 22 October).

26 October: Flexible work arrangements help both employers and employees, says new European Commission study (<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/1377&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=fr>).

27 October: Communication from the Commission: Towards a **single market act**, for a highly **competitive social market economy**: 50 proposals for improving our work, business and **exchanges with one another**, COM (2010) 608 final.

28 October: European Council: **Austerity** is the road to ruin, says the ETUC (<http://www.etuc.org/a/7777>).

28 and 29 October: The European Council adopts the report of the **Working Group on Economic Governance**. The European Council President is responsible for considering how to amend the Treaty on the Functioning of the Union (TFEU) so as to incorporate 'a permanent mechanism for crisis management to maintain financial stability in the euro area as a whole'.

NOVEMBER

1st November: Frontex to Deploy **175 Specialist Border** Personnel to Greece (http://www.frontex.europa.eu/newsroom/news_releases/art81.html).

4 November: Results of the European Union **Agency for Fundamental Rights** (FRA) survey among Muslim and non-Muslim youth concerning experience of **discrimination, social marginalisation and violence** (http://194.30.12.221/fraWebsite/news_and_events/infocus10_2710_en.htm).

5 November: ‘**Progress**’ is the **EU’s employment and social solidarity programme** established to provide financial support for the attainment of the European Union’s objectives in employment, social affairs and equal opportunities as set out in the Social Agenda (<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=836&langId=en>).

5 November: Joint Parliamentary Meeting - **Beyond the crisis:** How should Europe respond to the challenges ahead? (<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/en/pressroom/content/20101105IPR92008/html/Joint-Parliamentary-Meeting-Beyond-the-crisis>).

10 November: The Commission sets out options on future **cohesion policy**, COM (2010) 642 final.

11 November: Ensuring **solidarity** between **generations** (Thomas Mann report, (PPE, DE), A7-0268/2010 of 06 October)

12 November: In London, large-scale protests by British students against **budget cutbacks**.

15 November: Summit on **equality and diversity in employment** (on November 15 and 16) (<http://www.eutrio.be/fr/sommet-de-l-egalite-egalite-et-diversite-dans-l-emploi>).

15 November: Creating a barrier-free Europe: European Commission seeks better access for 80 million **people with disabilities**, COM (2010) 636 final.

15 November: **EU consumers** not making full use of the savings opportunities of **energy market liberalisation**, finds a new study (<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/1507&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=fr>).

20 November: Synergies for **combating poverty** (*Bulletin of the European Union*, No.10260 of 20 November).

23 November: Euro area ready to help Ireland, if needed.

23 November: ‘**Agenda for new skills and jobs**’: the EU sets out actions to boost employability and drive reform, COM (2010) 682 final.

24 November: General strike in Portugal and widespread protests by British students in the United Kingdom.

25 November: A new EU report stresses the urgency of removing **labour market** obstacles and helping **youth to access jobs** (<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/1600&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=fr>).

26 November: Innovation Union: the Commission launches a **consultation on active and healthy ageing** (<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/1609&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=fr>).

DECEMBER

1st December: The Commission launches a debate on the future of **Value Added Tax (VAT)**, COM (2010) 695 final.

1st December: State Aid: Scoreboard shows continued trend towards less and better targeted aid despite **crisis-related spike** (<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/1635&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=fr>).

2 December: The European Commission launches the **European Year of Volunteering 2011** (<http://europa.eu/volunteering/>).

2 December: Euro area GDP up by 0.4% and **EU27 GDP** up by 0.5%.

2 December: The European Commission puts **citizenship** at the heart of justice and social affairs policies (<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/1642&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>)

3 December: 10 million people use the **Europass CV** to seek employment.

3 December: The EU Justice Ministers back new rules to bring legal certainty to couples in **cross-border divorces** (<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/1653&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=fr>).

7 December: Labour market participation in the EU27 in 2009: nearly one woman in five aged 25-54 is outside the labour market, half of them for family reasons (Eurostat, STAT/10/185).

7 December: An agreement on the '**citizens' initiative**', the new tool introduced by the Lisbon Treaty whereby one million citizens can ask the Commission for a new EU law, is reached by Constitutional Affairs Committee MEPs and Commission and Council delegates (<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/en/pressroom/content/20101206IPR06449/html/Citizens%27-initiative-agreement-reached-Monday-evening>).

13 December: Income and living conditions in Europe: 116 million people at risk of **poverty or social exclusion** in the EU27 in 2008.

14 December: The Commission appoints an EU **Anti-Trafficking Coordinator**: Myria Vassiliadou.

14 December: The Commission tables a proposal for a Council Decision authorising enhanced **cooperation in** the area of the creation of unitary patent protection, COM (2010) 790 final.

15 December: Commission welcomes agreement on **European Citizens' Initiative** (<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/1720&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=fr>).

15 December: As part of its campaign against the **austerity plans** plaguing Europe and ruining both the economy and its citizens, the ETUC calls for a day of decentralised action on the eve of the European Council on 16-17 December (<http://www.etuc.org/a/8077>).

15 December: In advance of the European Council meeting on 16-17 December, the ETUC reminds European leaders that strict adherence to the rules also means defending the **EU's social dimension** (<http://www.etuc.org/a/8089>).

15 December: The European Parliament does not adopt the framework directive on the single permit for **foreign workers** but instead extends the debate for a further two months (<http://www.etuc.org/a/8101>).

16 December: The EU welcomes the UN resolution on the **safety and security of humanitarian workers** (<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/1739&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=fr>).

16 December: Digital Agenda: Commission signs **eHealth agreement** with US Department of Health (<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/1744&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=fr>).

16 December: The Commission presents The **European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion**: A European framework for social and territorial cohesion, COM (2010) 758 final.

16-17 December: The European Council launches the simplified **TFEU revision procedure**. It involves modifying the framework of the Treaty containing provisions relating only to Member States in the euro area (EUCO 30/1/10 REV 1).

20 December: Taxation: Removing **cross-border tax** obstacles for EU citizens, COM (2010) 769 final.

21 December: A fresh round of consultation on the review of the EU **Working Time Directive** begins as a new implementation report is published, COM (2010) 801 final.

21 December: The ETUC is disappointed by the European Commission's communication concerning the second consultation of the social partners on the revision of the **Working Time Directive**: it shows no political will to end the opt-out and the prolongation of reference periods without safeguards through collective agreements (<http://www.etuc.org/a/8125>).

22 December: The ETUC welcomes the citizens' initiative, but is critical about the cumbersome and bureaucratic character of the instrument now proposed (<http://www.etuc.org/a/8128>).

23 December: In Italy, a major university reform is passed by the Senate after lively student protests throughout the country. The text provides in particular for a reduction in the number of faculties and courses and for lower grants. It cuts the amount of time allocated to research, changes the admissions system and strengthens the role of the private sector in university management.

31 December: The Euro area unemployment rate stands at 10.0%, the EU27 rate at 9.6%, in December

*Chronology drawn up by Cécile Barbier
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