



Six European Trade Union Federations shock Brussels with flash mob to highlight the critical situation of young workers in Europe

On Wednesday 2 April 2014, in the run up to the European elections in May, European Trade Union Federations' (ETUF) youth organisations conducted a large flash mob in central Brussels to reinforce their demand that EU institutions and employers put youth at the top of their agenda. Under the slogan "Enough of *their* crisis – back to *our* future", the federations reiterated [the demands](#) first announced at their campaign launch in Athens in March: The next mandate of the European Parliament and Commission must take immediate and effective action to guarantee young people's future in the European labour market.

The flash mob was the second action of its kind in Europe, following the launch of the ETUFs' campaign in Greece on 7 March – the country with the highest youth unemployment rate (57.3 per cent in July 2013) in Europe. Around 100 young trade unionists took part in the action to draw attention to the unacceptably precarious situation for young workers in Europe today, and to reclaim their future!

Actions at the workplace and EU level

With the creation of the so-called Youth Guarantee, the EU has reserved € 6 billion for the coming seven years to stimulate youth employment. However, the ETUFs state in a joint declaration that this is too little, too late. Moreover, the estimated cost of establishing such a tool – without any enforcement measures – for implementation at national level is [€ 21 billion](#) per year, so the EU's promise remains far from adequate to tackle youth employment challenges.

In response, on behalf of the 30 million workers they represent, the ETUFs are bringing eight focal points for inclusion in future EU youth policies to the attention of all candidates for the European elections, including actions at workplace- and EU-level.

Investment in quality jobs and training opportunities

Young people in today's Europe face never-ending internships, a range of precarious employment situations and the lure of migrating to other countries in order to find work. Together with the increase in the pensionable age and reduced access to training and education – thanks to austerity measures that have stalled public investment and caused social hardship throughout Europe – 7.5 million young people are out of work or training, with an estimated cost of € 150 billion in terms of benefits paid out and lost output.

"As of today, failing banks have received more than € 160 billion. It shows that the victims of the crisis are getting pennies while the culprits are offered the keys to the vault", states the ETUF's joint declaration.

"It is our common understanding that the creation of quality jobs and training opportunities has to be the number one priority of the newly elected Parliament and Commission," say the ETUFs.

Long term campaign for long term solutions

The ETUFs' youth organisations will continue pushing EU institutions and employers via different actions to put youth at the top of their agenda in the run up to the European elections in May and after the installation of the new European Parliament and Commission. The lack of decisive actions taken by the European institutions so far and the extensive and long lasting consequences of youth unemployment in Europe necessitate a long-term campaign to claim back the future of young people. The federations' actions and demands are complementary to the European Trade Union Confederation's plan for investment, sustainable growth and quality jobs.

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For more information, please contact:

[EFBWW](mailto:wuelen@efbh.be): Werner Buelen +32 (0)475 84 06 48 or [wbuelen@efbh.be](mailto:wuelen@efbh.be)

[EFFAT](mailto:d.mitchell@effat.org): Dominique Mitchell +32 (0)490 56 94 05 or d.mitchell@effat.org

[EPSU](mailto:psanchez@epsu.org): Pablo Sanchez +32 (0)474 62 66 33 or psanchez@epsu.org

[ETF](mailto:k.reynaerts@etf-europe.org): Koen Reynaerts +32 (0)470 93 05 90 or k.reynaerts@etf-europe.org

[industriAll](mailto:Mischa.Terzyk@industrial-europe.eu) European Trade Union: Mischa Terzyk +32 (0)473 865 884 or Mischa.Terzyk@industrial-europe.eu

[UNI Europa](mailto:cornelia.broos@uniglobalunion.org): Cornelia Broos +32 (0)476 25 76 50 or cornelia.broos@uniglobalunion.org

Link to the campaign video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v7u5tHsYh18>

Link of the first flash mob of the campaign on the 7th of March 2014 in Athens: <http://youtu.be/CvxryGGwBul>

The European Federation of Building and Woodworkers (EFBWW) is the European Industry Federation for the construction industry, the building materials industry, the wood and furniture industry and the forestry industry. The EFBWW has 72 affiliated unions in 31 countries and represents a total of 2,350,000 members.

EFFAT is the European Federation of Trade Unions in the Food, Agriculture and Tourism sectors representing 2.6 million members from 120 national trade unions from 35 European countries

EPSU is the European Federation of Public Service Unions and comprises 8 million public service workers from over 265 trade unions.

The European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) represents more than 2.5 million transport workers from 243 transport unions and 41 European countries, in the following sectors: railways, road transport and logistics, maritime transport, inland waterways, civil aviation, ports & docks, tourism and fisheries.

industriAll European Trade Union represents 7.1 million workers across supply chains in manufacturing, mining and energy sectors on the European level.

UNI Europa unites national trade unions organising in service and skills sectors in 50 different countries. With 320 affiliated trade union organisations, UNI Europa represents 7 million workers.