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European elections show youth dissatisfaction

The 2014 European Parliament election results send a clear message that European citizens – including precarious young workers and jobseekers – feel that European decision-makers have not done enough to address unemployment and guarantee the participation of young people in the European labour market.

The stable level of abstention and regrettable success of Eurosceptic and far-right parties in some Member States is testimony to widespread dissatisfaction with the way in which national governments, the Council of the European Union, European Commission, and leading parties in the European Parliament have dealt with pressing issues emanating from the crisis, including record levels of youth unemployment.

Together with huge victories for some left-wing anti-austerity parties, it demonstrates the popular resentment that has arisen from the deregulation of the European labour market and tough reforms and spending cuts that have caused real human suffering and threaten the wellbeing and livelihood of a whole generation.

The six European trade union federations (ETUFs) and their combined membership of 30 million workers who are powering the campaign “[Enough of their crisis – back to our future](#)”, regret the far-right victories and the inability of mainstream political parties to mobilise more of the electorate to vote. They call for more, not less, social Europe in order to boost cohesion and restore the prospect for every young worker to find a job with fair pay and decent conditions in his or her home country.

“Reducing mass youth unemployment of up to 60 per cent in some Member States has been a key concern for many voters, and therefore must be put at the top of the agenda of new and returning Members of the European Parliament,” says the campaign team.

“This is key to ensure Europe’s competitiveness and innovation, and to safeguard the social security and health care systems at the heart of the European social model.”

The six ETUFs and their respective youth organisations will meet with the newly formed European Parliament groups later in the year to lay out their key demands to reclaim the rights of Europe’s youth.

Since their campaign launch in March 2014, the ETUFs have undertaken flash mobs in different European capitals to draw public attention to the critical situation for young workers in Europe, led a 50,000-strong European trade union demonstration and undertaken other isolated actions around Europe, spoken in the European Parliament, convened a press conference and penned a series of articles.

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