



PRESS RELEASE

EUROPEAN TRANSPORT WORKERS' FEDERATION

FEDERATION EUROPEENNE DES TRAVAILLEURS DES TRANSPORTS

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EUROPEAN RAILWAY WORKERS TAKE ACTION AGAINST THE 4TH RAILWAY PACKAGE

European Action Day on 9 October calls for quality railway services and quality of jobs

Tomorrow, Wednesday 9 October 2013, the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) organises a European Action Day calling the Members of the European Parliament to take the unions' concerns with regard to the 4th Railway Package seriously. On 26 November, the Transport and Tourism Committee (TRAN) of the European Parliament is expected to vote on this Package. ETF affiliates from several European countries plan to organise national actions in view of the Parliament vote.

The ETF rejects further liberalisation and fragmentation in the sector and wants to remind the policy makers that railway services are first and foremost public services. The quality of such services depends on the quality of the jobs and further liberalisation will inevitably jeopardize this.

A decentralised European action day

The action day on the 9th of October will be decentralised: *"We have already confirmation that actions and initiatives will be put in place in Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland, Spain, Switzerland and the UK"* said **Sabine Trier, ETF Deputy General Secretary**.

"The nature of the actions will differ from country to country. We will have demonstrations, dissemination of information materials in railway stations and on-board of trains as well as meetings with politicians and press conferences. In France a strike has been announced to protest against the 4th Railway Package in conjunction with the national reform of the railways" she added.

The actions will target primarily the users and the workers of the railways because they will be directly affected by liberalisation of domestic passengers' services and further fragmentation of the railways through separation of infrastructure management and operations. Policy makers at European and national level will be contacted by the unions from the respective countries to raise awareness about the workers' concerns.

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The 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.

A dangerous package that disregards the social aspects

“The proposal from the European Commission is unacceptable and ignores the social consequences” stated **Sabine Trier**. *“For example, on the one hand the Commission wants to introduce compulsory tendering for all public rail passenger transport services, on the other hand safeguarding social conditions and protection of staff in case of change of operator will be left to the good will of the local authorities without any obligation. As a result, we will enter into a competition based on wages and working conditions and the cheapest offer will be chosen”* she said.

The vote on the 26th of November in the TRAN Committee is an essential one because it will set the grounds for the first reading vote in the plenary. Therefore, the ETF calls the Members of the European Parliament to take seriously the unions’ concerns at this stage and make sure that the 4th Railway Package will not pave the way for decreasing the quality of railway passengers’ services and social conditions in the sector.

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