

European Federation
of Building
and Woodworkers



Press release, 4 April 2014

Youths lead the 50,000 strong European trade union demonstration to reclaim their future

On Friday 4 April 2014, representatives of six European trade union federations (ETUFs), together with the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) youth delegation, led 50,000 demonstrators through Brussels to demand a new path for Europe that includes a secure future for young people in the labour market.

Alluding to the film “Back to the future”, the delegation demonstrated alongside a model Delorean to a playlist inspired by the same film to reinforce their slogan: “Enough of *their* crisis – back to *our* future!”

The demonstration’s youth bloc is the latest of a series of actions that the ETUFs are undertaking to demand that EU institutions and employers put youth at the top of their agenda. Around 50,000 participants from all over Europe took part in the march to express their dissatisfaction with Europe’s failed formula of austerity and push for a change of path.

Throughout the demonstration, the ETUFs distributed a brochure summarising the demands first announced at their campaign launch in Athens in March and encouraged young trade unionists to take part in their campaign by viewing back2ourfuture.org

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. Moreover, the strength of the youth bloc in the demonstration sends a clear signal to European decision makers and employers that young people are ready to take back their future. In the same way that the youth delegation led the demonstration of the European Trade Union movement into the future, European institutions must take the lead in fighting youth unemployment and ensuring better and quality jobs for young people.

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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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.

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