

ETUC WARNS ABOUT THE DRAMATIC IMPACT OF AUSTERITY POLICIES ON WAGES ACROSS EUROPE

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The European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) has unveiled today a new visual map comparing wage developments in the European Union between the year 2000 and 2012. For the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) this illustrates the dramatic impact of austerity policies on wages in the EU. Ten months before the European elections, mass unemployment together with wage-cutting policies are a dangerous mix for citizens' support to the European project. The ETUC warns European leaders: a change of direction is urgently needed to restore growth and confidence.

Since the start of the crisis, the ETUC has voiced its grave concerns about the negative impact of austerity measures on Europe's economic and social situation. As all trends show constantly since then, this impact resulted in exploding unemployment figures, with actually more than 26.5 million people without a job. The infographic based on the ETUI's recent Benchmarking Working Europe report demonstrates that, in the majority of countries where unemployment is increasing, salaries are falling, with serious consequences in terms of growing poverty risk and social exclusion.

“What this visual wage developments map is proving is that wages are the principle target of austerity measures across Europe. They clearly became the key instrument or adjustment mechanism through an internal devaluation policy” said Bernadette Ségol, ETUC General Secretary. *“This trend did not solve the “competitiveness” problems, in particular in countries subject to financial bailout schemes. On the contrary, it aggravated existing problems, by affecting the most vulnerable. This is unacceptable and it risks undermining further the already fragile citizens' support to the European project”.*

Link to the visual map: www.etui.org

The ETUC exists to speak with a single voice, on behalf of the common interests of workers, at European level. Founded in 1973, it now represents 85 trade union organisations in 36 European countries, plus 10 industry-based federations.

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