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International Forum on Decent Work



The “[International Forum on Decent Work](#): a new global momentum for the promotion of decent work?” was held on 11 and 12 October in Brussels. This Forum, jointly organised by the Belgian European Union (EU) Presidency and the European Commission (EC), in cooperation with the ILO-Brussels Office, brought together representatives of EU institutions, Member States, social partners, and other parts of civil society as well as participants from the EU’s strategic partners and International Organisations. It explored recent developments in the field of decent work and social dimension of globalisation in times of crisis and recovery and strategic prospects for the next decade. Participants debated on how the EU should develop the external dimension of its employment and social policies with a view to enhancing decent work on a global scale. The forum addressed also the integration of labour provisions in bilateral trade agreements, the enhancement of decent work opportunities for young people and the new challenges for decent work in the low-carbon economy.

The need to continue a regular dialogue between Employment and Labour Ministers within the G20 framework, to prepare the G20 by the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs (EPSCO) Council and the involvement of social partners was also debated.

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Launch of World of Work Report 2010



The “[World of Work Report 2010](#) – from one crisis to the next?” was officially launched in Brussels on 30 September 2010. The study was presented by Mr Raymond Torres, Director of the ILO International Institute for Labour Studies and lead author of the report, assisted by Mr Rudi Delarue, Director of the ILO Brussels’ Office. Mrs Joëlle Milquet, Belgian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Employment and Equal Opportunities, and currently chair of the EU Employment and Social Affairs Council, participated in the event. She underlined that the findings of the report were very timely and very relevant for the ongoing EU debate on the role of employment and social policy in EU economic governance.

The ILO report says that, if current policies persist, a recovery in employment to pre-crisis levels will be delayed until 2015 in advanced economies, instead of 2013 as it was projected a year ago. The report covers the global social climate, the challenge and potential of a job-rich recovery in times of constrained public finances, the role of an income-led strategy, in particular in countries with underdeveloped domestic demand and surpluses and reforming finance for more and better jobs.

In the [European Union](#) unemployment and job quality remain a major problem. In 23 of the 27 EU countries there was an increase in the incidence of long-term unemployed. Youth (aged 15-24) in the EU was especially hit hard. More than 20% of youth were unemployed in

the first quarter of 2010, with the figure for Latvia and Spain reaching almost 40%.

ASEM 8 Summit outcome supports ILO work



The 8th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Summit of Heads of State and Government took place in Brussels on 4 and 5 October. This Summit is the key event of the Asia-Europe Meeting which aims at discussing global challenges through an informal process of dialogue and co-operation bringing together the 27 EU Member States and the EC with 16 Asian countries and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretariat. At the Summit, ASEM leaders agreed to promote decent work, explicitly reiterating their support to the ILO Global Jobs Pact. In the [Chair’s Statement](#) they furthermore stressed the crucial importance of the effective implementation of ILO fundamental principles and rights at work. “Violations cannot be invoked or otherwise used as a legitimate comparative advantage and labour standards should not be used for protectionist purposes, as stipulated in the 2008 ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization”. It equally underlines the importance of strong labour administrations and inspectorates to ensure proper implementation.

Leaders also noted with interest the gradual development of a global Social Protection Floor. The statement additionally promotes the greening of the economy, the rights of migrant

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workers and an effective social dialogue to promote mutual understanding on issues related to productivity, working conditions, remuneration and economic change.

The outcome of the ASEM 8 Summit has a high relevance for the upcoming G20 Summit, it provides guidance to the upcoming ASEM labour Ministerial in Leiden, the Netherlands, and to expert meetings such as on social protection.

7 October: World Day for Decent Work

Parallel with the ASEM Summit, the Asia Europe People Forum (AEPF) was organised. The AEPF constitutes the people's equivalent of the meeting of the Heads of State and Government of the ASEM partners. On the occasion of the [World Day for Decent Work](#) on 7 October a round table on Decent Work and Social Protection was organised in the European Parliament (EP). With the presence of Asian civil society organizations in Brussels, this round table was a unique opportunity for members of the EP working on development cooperation, social justice, women's rights, decent work and social protection to hear direct testimonies from speakers about the impact that access to decent work and social security schemes have on people's lives.

European Parliament Crisis Committee adopts mid-term report

The Special Committee on the Financial, Economic and Social Crisis (CRIS), which was set up by the EP to analyse and evaluate the extent of the financial, economic and social crisis, adopted the [CRIS mid-term report on the financial crisis](#) on 20 October 2010 in Strasbourg. The internal market is one of the main drivers of European growth, the report states. Therefore, the EU 2020 strategy should serve as a concrete program for strategic long

term investment and employment in order to face the economic crisis and strengthen the internal market. Sustainable job creation and high-quality employment should be a key priority. For that reason the EP urges the Union to accompany its actions on employment with measures to combat poverty and social exclusion. It believes that further efforts to support job creation need to be focused particularly on employing young people and improving working conditions together with creating an effectively functioning internal market for workers so that the crisis does not further increase inequalities. A delegation of the CRIS Committee has held extensive consultations with the ILO in November 2009.

Conference and UN joint letter on Human Trafficking



Within the framework of the fourth European Anti-trafficking Day on 18 October, the Belgian EU Presidency organised a two-day conference on Human Trafficking in Brussels on 18 and 19 October 2010. The conference concerned the different aspects of the struggle against human trafficking, around four principles, the so-called "Four Ps": prevention, prosecution, protection and partnership. The conference looked also into aspects of the fight against human trafficking both internal and external to the EU, supported in particular by the requirements put forward by the "Action Oriented Paper" adopted under the Swedish EU Presidency.

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On 29 March 2010, the EC released a [proposal for a Directive](#) on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings, and protecting victims. Once this Directive is adopted, it will repeal the 2002 Framework Decision on combating trafficking in human beings.

As this is a matter of great concern to the UN, six UN agencies, including the ILO, have jointly submitted their views and suggestions on the proposal for a Directive to ensure that the rights of victims of trafficking are effectively taken into consideration in EU rules. The [joint letter](#) was signed by the six country directors in Brussels.

Ministerial Conference on Promoting Green Employment stresses need for social dialogue

A [Ministerial Conference on Promoting Green Employment](#) was held on 28 and 29 September 2010 in La Hulpe (Brussels). The conference, organised by the Belgian Presidency and the EC, offered a platform for discussions on the promotion of green employment as an indispensable driver behind a successful transition towards a competitive low-carbon and green economy. The ILO actively contributed to the conference.

In the final conclusions the involvement of the social partners and the contribution of social dialogue to a transition towards green jobs were highlighted. The repercussions on the labour market of combating climate change were also addressed. While new jobs will be created, other will be transformed or even disappear. Ways to facilitate the transition towards a green economy can be found in the policy toolbox of the [European Employment Strategy](#).

ILO Director-General statement at 2010 International Monetary Fund and World Bank annual meetings



In a [statement](#) presented at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank annual meetings on 8-10 October, ILO Director-General Juan Somavia underlined the need for "an employment-oriented framework for future economic growth which accelerates a job rich recovery and a major shift towards a job rich pattern of development and growth." The statement on "The Challenges of Growth, Employment and Social Cohesion" was presented in the aftermath of the joint ILO and IMF Oslo Conference to address ways of accelerating a job-rich crisis recovery.

Trade and employment in the global crisis: Lessons for the future

The ILO and the World Bank have jointly organised a conference on "Trade and Employment Post-Crisis: Global Shocks, Structural Changes and Policy Responses" on 25 October in Washington DC. The conference discussed the role of open markets in supporting growth and job creation and was held in the lead up to the G20 Summit in Seoul on 11-12 November.

ILO celebrates UN Day in Brussels



On the occasion of the UN Day on 24 October, ILO-Brussels together with the other Brussels based UN agencies, participated in the UN information village at the Grand Place in Brussels. The village was intended to illustrate various aspects of UN activities in everyday life. A special focus was on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

At the same time a gathering on: “Belgium, Europe and the United Nations” took place in the City Hall of Brussels attended by the Mayor of Brussels, Mr Freddy Thielemans, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Steven Vanackere, and the Resident Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations in Belgium, Mr Antonio Vigilante. The meeting was chaired by the presidents of the French and Dutch speaking Belgian UN Associations, Professor Frank Maes and Honorary Ambassador Michel Adam. Video messages came from the Secretary-General of the UN, Mr Ban Ki-moon, and the President of the European Council, Mr Herman Van Rompuy.

EC assessment in Bangladesh defines ILO as reliable partner

Last year, EuropeAid decided to assess the performance of key UN partners in Bangladesh where the EC channels a significant volume of funds through the UN by examining a selection of programmes. The ILO and the EC have currently a programme on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) aimed at assisting the Government of

Bangladesh in reducing poverty through reforms of technical and vocational education and training policies and systems. Its overall objective is to increase the number of people possessing employable skills and thus generate income through wage earning jobs or self-employment.

The [assessment](#) asserts that the “Cooperation with ILO on the TVET reform project has overall been satisfactory and the project appears to be on track”. “The ILO country office in Bangladesh is well established, adequately staffed and effectively managed”, the assessment says, describing the ILO as “a technically well-qualified and reliable partner in implementing EC funds.”

Call for structured dialogue for effective EU development cooperation

The European Commission organised a seminar on “Structured dialogue on the participation of civil society and local authorities in the European Commission development cooperation policy”, held in Paraguay on 15 and 16 September 2010. The aim of this meeting was to improve the effectiveness of development cooperation. Civil organisations and local authorities involved in development cooperation, delegations from the EU, the EP and the EC participated in the meeting. At the meeting the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (TUCA) reaffirmed that structured dialogue should be the principal and fundamental mean for the development of a cooperation strategy focusing on actors and for recognising civil society’s autonomy and right to be heard. Moreover, the ITUC and the TUCA recognised the need to establish a permanent working relationship between the trade union organisations and the

multilateral organisations built on the resolutions agreed in the Millennium Development Goals, the Decent Work Agenda and the ILO's Global Jobs Pact.

ILO Director-General calls for a new commitment to global occupational safety and health



The ILO estimates that some 2.3 million workers die each year from work-related accidents and diseases. The human cost of this daily tragedy is immeasurable. But the economic cost of working days lost, medical treatment and cash benefits paid out is huge (estimated at 4 per cent of annual global GDP). This exceeds the total value of the stimulus packages introduced in the face of the economic crisis of 2008-09.

In the light of the successful rescue operation of the 33 miners in northern Chile, ILO Director-General highlights the need for a reinforcement of national Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) systems and programmes. “No one benefits from casualties in the workplace. Improving OSH makes political, social and economic sense. But translating this consensus into concrete measures is not always simple and will always involve several stakeholders”, he said while stressing the need to ratify the ILO Conventions on health and safety at work including the convention on health and safety in mining.

ILO and EIGE share knowledge on Gender Equality



The [European Institute for Gender Equality \(EIGE\)](#) is a European agency which supports the EU and its Member States in their efforts to promote gender equality, to fight discrimination based on sex and to raise awareness about gender issues. On 5 October, the Institute's Head of Operations, Mrs Barbara Wurster, met with ILO Directors in Geneva. The [meeting](#) shed light on sharing existing knowledge on gender equality in the working world, gaining ideas for best practices, and exploring future partnership possibilities with ILO on specific activities particularly within the fields of the Beijing Indicators, i.e. the indicators adopted at EU level for the follow up of the Beijing Platform for Action.

Bureau for Employers' Activities publications

The Bureau for Employers' Activities of the ILO (ACT/EMP) is a specialised department with the task to maintain close and direct relations with employers' organizations, to make the ILO's resources available to them and to keep the ILO constantly aware of their views, concerns and priorities. ACT/EMP regularly publishes working papers on different topics. The last paper is dealing with “[Labour market policies: Some tentative lessons from the crisis for employer organizations](#)”. This paper had a two-fold approach. On the one hand it looks at where we are in terms of a global recovery, and on the other hand it draws some tentative lessons from the crisis. “Economic growth”, the

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report says, “is not an end in itself. It must translate into positive outcomes for workers, employers and society at large.” It concludes that social policy can assist in this process, and that ancillary social policies are important to meet our collective social goals.

[Previous working papers](#) of ACT/EMP were published on the role of employers’ organisations in growth and sustainable enterprise promotion and on employers’ organisations responding to the impact of the crisis.

Guy Ryder new ILO Executive Director for Standards



Mr Guy Ryder is appointed as new ILO Executive Director for Standards and Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work Sector. In this function he is replacing Mr Kari Tapiola. Before joining the ILO, Mr Ryder was General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation. ILO-Brussels wishes him the best of luck in his new function.

ILO Governing Body and its Committees: 309th Session of the Governing Body, 4-19 November 2010

The Governing Body (GB) - the executive body of the International Labour Office – will hold its 309th Session from 4-19 November 2010 in Geneva. Topics on the [agenda](#) for the 99th Session include the follow-up to the adoption of the HIV and AIDS Recommendation, as arisen out of the work of the 99th Session (2010) of the

International Labour Conference, the ILO response to the crisis, the preparation of the 2011 International Labour Conference in relation to social security and labour administration, technical cooperation and developments concerning the question of the observance by the Government of Myanmar of the Forced Labour Convention, and the complaint concerning the non-observance by Myanmar of the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention.

“Strengthening the protection of precarious workers” course, 22-26 November, Turin, Italy

This [new course](#), with a European focus, aims at strengthening the capacity of public institutions, social partners and other stakeholders to analyse the challenges faced by precarious workers and to enhance precarious workers' labour rights and social protection in the light of international labour standards, regional instruments and national experience. The course will be taught by experts from the ITC-ILO and the ILO, academics from the University of Leicester, University College London, the University of Frankfurt and the University of Bologna, and representatives of workers' organizations and employers' organizations.

For further information, please check the website of the [International Training Centre](#) of the ILO or contact ils-fpr@itcilo.org.

**New training by ILO Brussels on
International Labour Standards, 14 January
2011**



Due to the success of the ILO-Brussels' course on the fundamental international labour conventions and the ILO's supervisory system held on 8 October, a second training will be organised on 14 January 2011 from 09:30am to 12:30pm, at Residence Palace, rue de la Loi 155, UNRIC, 8th floor. The training course is open to the public and will be given in English by ILO-Brussels' director Rudi Delarue. Please register for this free course no later than 14 December at brussels@ilo.org.

Scheduled meetings

[List of scheduled ILO meetings](#)

Contact us

For more information on the ILO's activities, please contact:

ILO-Brussels
rue Aimé Smekensstraat 40
B-1030 Brussels
Belgium

Phone: +32 (0)2 736 59 42

Fax: +32 (0)2 735 48 25

Email: ilo-brussels-press@ilo.org

Website: <http://www.ilo.org/brussels>