



European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)
Confédération européenne des syndicats (CES)

**Declaration of the Young Trade Unionists from Southern Europe
ETUC Day of Action and Solidarity
For decent jobs and the welfare state**

CALL FOR SOLIDARITY

YOUTHS OF EUROPE RISE UP!

Young people all over Europe are paying the highest price in this period of economic crisis as European countries are facing a dire situation. In particular, the condition of Southern Europe could be the tip of the iceberg; without social and economic solidarity, what is happening in those countries could spread throughout Europe. Youth unemployment rates in countries like Cyprus (27%), Greece (55,6%), Italy (35%), Spain (54%) and Portugal (37.4%) have risen to unacceptable levels. The situation is even worse for women, migrants and other groups subject to discrimination.

Young people find jobs that are mostly characterised by highly precarious conditions and a lack of solid social protection (temporary contracts are widely used and generally lack the necessary labour and social protection; there is a widespread misuse of internships, which are often unpaid; low wages and 'voluntary' part-time jobs lead to the increase in working poor; too often there is no guarantee of a decent income during unemployment periods; etc.)

Such conditions make it impossible for most young people to personally and financially free themselves from their family of origin in order to start a new family and lead to a new and increasing migratory trend: young people leaving southern European countries to find decent jobs abroad. This causes a brain drain which deprives countries of the most important human capital on which their growth should be based.

This situation is not only the result of the effects of the economic crisis, but also of the austerity measures being implemented by national governments which are greatly affecting basic services like health, education and culture. Decent jobs and the pillars of welfare state should be at the core of all European and national policies: By only focusing on fiscal consolidation, and not on investment for the sustainable development of our economies, social injustice and inequalities - above all for young people - are going to increase.

Austerity is economically and socially unacceptable as well as being environmentally unsustainable. It is also politically dangerous and undermines democratic stability. As the situation worsens and unemployment rates increase, phenomena like racism, xenophobia, intolerance and violence resurface.

These policies and the unilateral violation of social dialogue have led trade unions all over Europe to react and young people to mobilize, because:

- It is unfair and unacceptable for workers to pay for the crisis, while those who are responsible for it, not only do nothing to address it, but are even continuing to take advantage of it, as the huge profits by financial groups clearly demonstrate;
- There are alternatives: resignation is not an option and we should not just accept the neo-liberal approach adopted so far. Financial transaction taxes, investment on R&D, progressive taxation, prosecution of tax fraud and corruption, the fight against precarious jobs and the adoption of a Youth Guarantee Scheme to tackle youth unemployment are some of the many alternative measures which could help to reverse the situation.

The European social model should be both protected from the present strong attacks and strengthened. We urge European institutions to adopt a European Social Compact, as proposed by the European Trade Union Confederation. This social model has ensured that the post-war generations have enjoyed the benefits of a welfare state and peace. By demolishing the social model, we put at risk the well-being of present and future generations as well as the peaceful future of Europe.

You can lose what you don't defend. The rights and welfare we have enjoyed so far were hard won by our parents' efforts and struggles: Let's unite in solidarity to maintain and extend them.

Young workers from all over Europe, stand up for your rights!

Strikes, demonstrations and solidarity rallies have been organised all over the EU, from north to south.

Let's join forces to support all the actions on November 14th!



G.S.E.E.
GREEK GENERAL CONFEDERATION OF LABOUR
Affiliated to ITUC and ETUC

