

Delegation of the European Parliament at ILO Geneva	1
ILO Governing Body high-level discussion on “Challenges and Change in the Arab World”	2
ILO Director-General’s statement at IMF and World Bank spring meetings 2011	2
The Challenge of Employment Creation in G20 countries: policy options.....	2
Flemish Government signs new cooperation agreement with ILO	3
Bachelet says social protection floors key to addressing rising social demands and seizing economic opportunities	3
ILO contribution to the Industrial Relations in Europe Conference	4
ILO says fair and equitable policies are key to sustainable economic recovery	4
ILO’s policy recommendations to Bulgaria to accelerate a job-rich recovery	4
Employment for Peace, Stability and Development Conference for the Horn of Africa	5
ILO-Brussels’ briefing on ILO decent work response to the situation in North Africa and the Horn of Africa.....	5
Early identification of skill needs for the low-carbon economy	6
EESC Hearing on sustainable development.....	6
Belgian Development Cooperation Stakeholders Meeting on “Recent trends in international development efforts”	6
ILO publication on the causes and consequences of the Great Recession of 2008-09 and its policy responses	7
New manual on the measurement of volunteer work	7
World Day for Safety and Health at Work – 28 April 2011.....	7
ILO technical comments on the proposal for a Directive on seasonal employment by migrant workers	7
ITC-ILO training course on “NGO Management”	7
Scheduled meetings.....	8
Contact us	8

Delegation of the European Parliament at ILO Geneva



A high level delegation by the Employment and Social Affairs Committee of the European Parliament (EMPL), visited the ILO on 21 and 22 March 2011 during the plenary session of the ILO Governing Body (GB). The delegation was headed by the EMPL chair Mrs Pervenche Berès and was composed of the coordinators of several political groups and assistants.

The chair of the EMPL committee intervened in the discussion on “recovering from the global crisis” at the ILO GB Working Party on the Social Dimension of Globalisation. She [strongly welcomed ILO’s role](#) in promoting a decent job centred approach to recovery, in addressing social inequalities and in strengthening policy coherence e.g. by the ILO-IMF cooperation and the role of ILO in the G20.

The delegation also met with the ILO Director General J. Somavia. They had exchanges with the ILO Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia, with the Executive Directors, with ILO experts as well as with social partners on a wide number of issues directly relevant for the ILO-EU cooperation such as employment and the financial and economic crisis, labour standards and internal market, labour migration, the social protection floor and domestic workers.

ILO Governing Body high-level discussion on “Challenges and Change in the Arab World”



Leaders from Arab countries met at the [ILO's Governing Body](#) on 21 March in a session dedicated to discussing ways to ensure a more equitable future in the Arab world, with the respect of fundamental rights at work, employment and social protection as a basis for sustainable growth. The discussion was opened by the ILO Director-General J. Somavia reporting on his recent visit to Egypt, followed by interventions of Dr. Ahmed El-Borai, Minister of Manpower and Migration of Egypt; Mr. Habib Yousfi, President of the General Confederation of Algerian Enterprises (CGEA); and Mr. Abdessalem Jerad, General Secretary of the Tunisian General Labour Union (UGTT).

One aim of the high-level discussion on “Challenges and Change in the Arab World” was to highlight the role and actions of the ILO and its constituents in the process of renewal so that the changes being forged meet with the fundamental concerns of governments, employers and workers and the whole society in the region for achieving decent work. This is also very relevant for the EU action in the region following the joint communication by the EC and the EU High Representative of 8 March 2011 on a partnership for democracy and shared prosperity with the countries of the Southern Mediterranean.

ILO Director-General's statement at IMF and World Bank spring meetings 2011



Each spring, thousands of government and international officials and representatives of the private sector, civil society and media gather in Washington, DC for the Spring Meetings of the World Bank and IMF. ILO Director-General Juan Somavia presented a [statement](#) to the International Monetary and Finance Committee and Development Committee. Mr. Somavia calls for an adjustment of macro-economic policies centred on rights and jobs: “If countries are to grow on a more equitable, sustained and balanced basis, the macro-economic policies will also have to target jobs creation on a priority basis. This is the central policy challenge we face in 2011 worldwide”.

The Challenge of Employment Creation in G20 countries: policy options

A G20 High Level Experts' Seminar on Employment Policies was organised under French G20 presidency on 7 April in Paris. At the Seminar, the ILO contribution focused on the different policy options of [Employment Creation in G20 countries](#).

Flemish Government signs new cooperation agreement with ILO



On 21 March the Minister-President of the Flemish Government, Mr Kris Peeters, signed a new Cooperation Agreement with the ILO. The signing ceremony was attended by a high-level tripartite Flemish delegation, including Mr Philippe Muyters, Flemish Minister for Finance, Budget, Work, Town and Country Planning and Sport, as well as the leading representatives of workers and employers in the Flemish Social and Economic Council and the Belgian Ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva.

Flanders is a long-standing partnership donor to the ILO. The new Agreement builds a broader policy framework for Flanders/ILO cooperation and establishes the rules for management of all voluntary contributions from the Flemish Government. It will also promote the Decent Work Agenda in Flemish internal and external policies, and facilitate dialogue between government, the ILO and the social partners.

The principal funding modality used by the partners is the ILO/Flanders Trust Fund through which the Flemish Government provides regular contributions to the ILO technical cooperation programme.

Bachelet says social protection floors key to addressing rising social demands and seizing economic opportunities



The Chairperson of the [Social Protection Floor Advisory Group](#), Executive Director of UN Women and former President of Chile, Ms Michelle Bachelet, has said that the implementation of social protection floors can offer an effective response to the increasing demands for social justice in many countries. As key speaker during a [consultative workshop](#) on the Social Protection Floor (SPF), organised at the ILO, Ms Bachelet called for the implementation of social protection floors to respond in many countries to calls for social cohesion, political stability and resilient economic growth. “The Floor is a feasible and sustainable solution that very much corresponds with the reality of our time in which some countries are facing increasing social unrest and sluggish economic recovery”, she said. The EC presented at the workshop the 2010 European report on development dealing with social protection.

The Social Protection Floor is a set of basic social security rights and transfers, as well as essential services in the area of employment, health, water and sanitation, nutrition, education and family-support, to protect and empower poor and vulnerable people to work out of poverty. It covers both the formal and informal economy. Social protection systems should be based on a solid social protection floor for all. Ms Bachelet was also in Geneva to chair the second meeting of the [Social](#)

[Protection Floor Advisory Group](#). She also met with the current G20 chair (France) and highlighted that the G20 agenda should also include the social protection floor.

ILO contribution to the Industrial Relations in Europe Conference

Every two years the European Commission publishes a [report on the Industrial Relations in Europe](#), providing an overview of industrial relations developments in Europe for the previous two-year period. The Industrial Relations in Europe 2010 Report, which focuses on industrial relations and the role of social partners in times of economic crisis, was presented during the EU Industrial Relations Conference in Brussels on 17-18 March 2011. ILO Director for Policy Integration, Mr Stephen Pursey, introduced the session on “Industrial relations outcomes: overcoming the crisis”. The increasing European economic integration requires effective labour market and social protection systems and well functioning national and EU social dialogue systems.

The [Euro Plus Pact](#), aiming to strengthen the economic pillar of the European Monetary Union and to achieve a new quality of economic policy coordination. The Pact was endorsed on 24-25 March 2011 by the European Council and underlines the importance of social dialogue and the need to respect autonomy of collective bargaining.

The promotion and protection of collective bargaining is enshrined in the ILO Convention N°98, classified as a fundamental labour standard convention and ratified by 27 EU Member states.

ILO says fair and equitable policies are key to sustainable economic recovery

In a new paper entitled ‘[Making recovery sustainable: Lessons from country innovations](#)’, the ILO’s International Institute for Labour Studies shows that growth and equity can be achieved in parallel if the right mix of policies is put in place. More to the point, equity-enhancing measures can drive economic growth – dispelling the conventional wisdom that the cost of social equity is less economic growth. The paper highlights the efficiency of employment-centred projects that create more and better jobs and improve long-term productivity.

The synthesis paper is published together with country reviews for Brazil, [Germany](#) and Indonesia. These reviews include an analysis of how those countries have fared during the last economic crisis, as well as noting areas for improvement. More country reviews (including Spain and Tunisia) are to be issued later this year.

ILO’s policy recommendations to Bulgaria to accelerate a job-rich recovery



The Global Jobs Pact addresses the social impact of the global crisis on employment and proposes policies aimed at job creation, extending social protection, respecting labour standards and promoting social dialogue, for countries to adapt according to their national needs.



Using the Global Jobs Pact as a framework of analysis, the ILO prepared the [Global Jobs Pact Country Scan for Bulgaria](#) in response to the Bulgarian government's and social partners' request for the ILO's technical expertise to help mitigate the worst effects of the crisis on the labour market. The Country Scan for Bulgaria examines the country situation and policy responses. It contains information that policymakers, employers' and workers' organizations need to effectively respond to the crisis and prepare policies that accelerate a job rich recovery.

The Global Jobs Pact Country Scan for Bulgaria is available in [English](#) and [Bulgarian](#).

Employment for Peace, Stability and Development Conference for the Horn of Africa



The Employment for Peace, Stability and Development in the Horn of Africa - Conference of Stakeholders' and Development Partners' – was held on 11-12 April 2011 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The high-level interactive conference, jointly organized by the African Union Commission (AUC), the ILO and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), hosted Vice-President, Ministers of Labour as well as representatives of Employers' and Workers' Organizations of Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan and Uganda.

More than 120 participants, including delegates from the European Union and ILO-Brussels,

deliberated on a regional strategy for the Horn of Africa - developed by the AUC, the ILO and the IGAD - entitled "Employment for Peace, Stability and Development" built upon a "[virtuous triangle](#)" consisting of the creation of employment opportunities, social protection for the most vulnerable and empowerment for people and communities.

Key objectives of this dialogue process included the building of consensus around the newly designed Regional Strategy for the Horn of Africa; the fostering of commitment for the successful implementation of the 'Road Map' by stakeholders; and the promotion of the 'Virtuous Triangle' concept i.e. creating jobs, extending social protection as well as empowering people and communities to secure employment for peace, stability and development in the region.

ILO-Brussels' briefing on ILO decent work response to the situation in North Africa and the Horn of Africa



On Tuesday 19 April ILO-Brussels organised a briefing on the "ILO decent work response to the situation in North Africa and the Horn of Africa". Mr Jürgen Schwettmann, ILO Deputy Regional Director of the ILO Regional Office for Africa, presented ILO's policy recommendations for the Maghreb region, principally focussing on youth employment and social dialogue. In addition Mr Schwettmann also presented the ILO regional

strategy on “Employment for Peace, Stability and Development in the Horn of Africa”.

More information is available on the [ILO-Brussels' website](#).

Early identification of skill needs for the low-carbon economy

The ILO is conducting research on the identification of skill needs to help smooth transition to a low-carbon economy. This work is co-funded and jointly managed by the European Commission. A final technical validation workshop of the EC/ILO Joint Management agreement on “Knowledge sharing in early identification of skill needs for the low-carbon economy” took place in Brussels on 29 – 30 March 2011.

At the workshop the ILO presented the findings of three draft reports prepared in the framework of the project: A comparative analysis of methods of identification of skill needs on the labour market in transition to the low carbon economy; a study of occupational and skill needs in the green building sector; and a study of occupational and skill needs in the renewable energy sector. The workshop brought together around 40 participants from DG's Employment and Education, the ILO, UNEP, OECD, UNESCO, European Training Foundation, European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, the project's research partners PERI (US Political Economy Research Institute) and REN Alliance, the umbrella business association for the renewable energy sector, representatives from workers and employers organizations, and other experts.

The discussions at the workshop feed into the final reports that will be made available later this year.

EESC Hearing on sustainable development

The United Nations is convening a World Summit Conference on sustainable development in Rio in 2012. The EU is playing an active part in the preparation process, and the European Commission has now launched a public consultation with European civil society on some of the key issues that will be addressed at the Summit.

The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) in its capacity as a channel for organised civil society in Europe has also been playing an active part in the process. It organised an all-day hearing for civil society participants on Green Economy and Sustainable Development Governance on 23 March 2011. The [hearing](#) “Greener Europe – Greener World?” addressed the questions highlighted in the Commission's consultation document. At the hearing ILO-Brussels gave a presentation on “How to manage the transition to a Green Economy? Green jobs, sustainable business practices and investment”.

Belgian Development Cooperation Stakeholders Meeting on “Recent trends in international development efforts”



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The Belgian Development Cooperation has chosen “Recent trends in international development efforts” as a central theme for its 4th [Stakeholders Meeting](#) on 4 May. The Stakeholders Meeting is an annual forum to provide information on the international development trends and to stimulate reflection on the current and future Belgian policy

orientations and programmes. It brings together development cooperation policy makers, public actors, civil society, politicians and academics. At the Stakeholders Meeting ILO-Brussels director Rudi Delarue will participate in a panel discussion on a new role for the private sector.

ILO publication on the causes and consequences of the Great Recession of 2008-09 and its policy responses

The [book](#) – From the Great Recession to labour market recovery: Issues, evidence and policy options – analyses the causes and consequences of the global economic and jobs crises and offers policy responses for both developed and developing countries. It presents a global overview of different aspects of the crisis, from the pre-crisis period to the unemployment and social impacts of the recession to the macroeconomic stimulus and labour market policies adopted by various governments.

New manual on the measurement of volunteer work

The ILO and the Johns Hopkins University Centre for Civil Society Studies have released a new manual to help statistical agencies around the world track the amount, type and value of volunteer work in their countries. The [Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work](#) represents the first-ever internationally sanctioned guidance to statistical agencies for generating reliable, official data on volunteer work using a common definition and approach.

Completion of this manual coincides with the 10th anniversary of the 2001 United Nations International Year of the Volunteer (IYV), which called on governments to improve their

measurement of volunteer work. It also coincides with the launch of IYV+10 and of the 2011 European Year of Volunteering.

World Day for Safety and Health at Work – 28 April 2011

As each year, the 2011 World Day for Safety and Health at Work will be celebrated on 28 April. This year the World Day focuses on a systems' approach for the prevention of workplace accidents and the management of Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) with a logical and useful tool for the promotion of the continual improvement of OSH performance at the organization's level. A [report](#) has been prepared to serve as a background to this theme.

ILO technical comments on the proposal for a Directive on seasonal employment by migrant workers

The [ILO comments](#) analyses the proposal for a Directive - currently discussed in the European Parliament and The Council - in the light of relevant international labour standards, including the core labour standards conventions, the social security conventions and recommendations and the conventions on the protection of migrant workers.

ITC-ILO training course on “NGO Management”

A new professional [training course](#) on “NGO Management” will take place at ITC-ILO Turin from 16 to 20 May 2011. The training is specifically designed for non-governmental organisations' (NGO) staff operating in different economic, cultural, political and social contexts. It is also useful for government staff responsible for oversight of NGO operations as well as staff from



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national and international development agencies who are financing or collaborating with NGO's in various development and advocacy initiatives.

Scheduled meetings

[List of scheduled ILO meetings](#)

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