



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

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For New Skills and Jobs – For a New Labour Market

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) supports the communication of the European Commission "An agenda for New Skills and Jobs" but declares that this agenda needs to be placed in a new employment strategy and a new labour market which observes and respects labour standards and social rights.

The ETUC agrees with the comments of László Andor, the Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, that 'our priority is to get people working. We simply cannot afford an unemployment rate of 10%.

The ETUC is also in agreement with Androulla Vassiliou, the Commissioner for Education, Culture Multilingualism, Sport, Media and Youth, that 'it is more than ever crucial that all citizens receive high quality education and training to equip with the skills they need to find work'.

In its own study In favour of a trade union version of the New Skills for New Jobs initiative, the ETUC would like to underline the following:

- ▶ Europe's ability to play an active role in the global economy depends upon the upskilling of workers, but within the context of an inclusive labour market.
- ▶ Sector Councils on Employment and Skills could become a useful forum for sharing best practices and experiences, but they must be in the hands of the social partners and complementary to the Sector Social Dialogue Committees.
- ▶ The move towards a learning outcomes approach, and the recognition and validation of skills, calls for the adjustment of business models within companies, which in turn should have a positive effect on the pay and employability of workers.
- ▶ The learning outcomes approach equips workers for changes in the labour market because employability is more easily recognized; it also helps employers gain a better overview of existing skills, and not just those described within qualifications.
- ▶ For labour markets to function properly, suitable regulation is needed in terms of uniform frameworks, transparent methods and accreditation bodies responsible for the certification of skills.
- ▶ The long-proclaimed European goal of life-long learning contrasts sharply with the situation on the ground: access for all to Continuing Vocational and Educational Training needs to improve markedly.

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