



PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 23 January 2013

4,000 livid workers vent their anger to the European Parliament and the Commission

Today (23 January 2013), 4,000 furious workers from the construction, transport and agricultural sectors expressed their outrage at the economic exploitation and social dumping affecting numerous foreign workers in our workplaces. Every day, thousands of workers are exploited and pitted against one another by unscrupulous employers and middlemen who sniff out statutory and operational loopholes and use them to exploit workers as if they were goods. They lure workers in with false promises, set up letterbox companies, draw up fake employment contracts and documents, do not provide workers with social protection, do not pay overtime, do not award leave and deduct substantial amounts from workers' wages for transport costs, accommodation, food, and so on. At the end of the day, foreign workers are the victims in all this, and end up working for a fraction of what they are entitled to.

The existing forms of abuse have been well-known for many years now, and yet European politicians (especially the European Commission) have absolutely no desire to tackle the problem. The Commission continues to preach its internal market dogmas (like entrepreneurship, reduction of red tape and free competition) as though they were a miracle solution that will make Europe more competitive and eradicate unemployment. Europe's current orthodox labour market policy is failing and undermining the credibility of the European project. Instead of European citizenship, we are seeing a rise in discrimination and racism.

The workers of the construction, transport and agricultural sectors urge European policymakers to recognise the problems we are facing and take decisive action to tackle them, outside of any petty ideological debates. To ensure better monitoring of the European labour market, the trade unions are calling for a social Europol, a European social identity card, European liability for clients and principal contractors, clear definitions that distinguish between genuine self-employed people and employees, and stringent national controls with clear aims. **Europe's politicians must act decisively and courageously to take these measures!**

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