

## SOCIAL POLICY

**NGOs want to dedicate 2012 to ageing**

By Sophie Petitjean

On the occasion of the second EU Day of Solidarity between Generations, 13 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) proposed, on 29 April, to designate 2012 as the European Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations.

The 13 European organisations, active in different areas (mutual associations, social protection, etc) and representing different categories of the population (women, the elderly, young people,

etc), also urged the EU institutions and member states to propose a ten-year action plan to help the EU develop a fair social model that is viable for the long term and includes all generations.

**INTERGENERATIONAL SOLIDARITY**

"We think that greater intergenerational solidarity can help develop fairer and more sustainable responses to the economic and social challenges facing the EU," they declared jointly at the Conference on Active and Healthy Ageing.

The conference in Logrono (Spain), from 29 to 30 April, sponsored by the Spanish EU Presidency, aims to encourage active and healthy ageing as a means of enabling the elderly to enjoy a healthy life, fully integrated in society, and to promote solidarity and relations between generations.

"Urgent measures are needed to ensure a fairer distribution of resources, responsibilities and participation in society and to strengthen intergenerational cooperation in all social and economic spheres," declared the coalition. ■

## EMPLOYMENT

**ETUC issues May Day plea against precarious work**

By Sophie Petitjean

On the occasion of International Workers' Day, celebrated on 1 May in most European countries, the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) points out that the EU's future cannot be based on precarious work. The trade unions will hold demonstrations to mark their commitment and will call for more cohesion and solidarity for the future.

"European workers must increasingly cope with unemployment and precarious job situations, which are aggravated by the brutality of the economic crisis we are

experiencing," declared ETUC General Secretary John Monks. "Precarious work cannot represent the future of the European Union. It undermines people, society and democracy. Over the longer term, we are headed towards widespread impoverishment that downgrades Europe both economically and politically." To avoid reaching the point of no-return, the confederation recommends that the Union and member state governments focus on the quality of employment, promote social inclusion and reduce growing inequalities. More specifically, it urges the European Union to develop investment poli-

cies as part of a recovery plan equivalent to 1% of Europe's gross domestic product. The ETUC also calls for strong industrial policies based on a dynamic of Community industrial coordination rather than on intergovernmental cooperation. It is also vital to invest in people through the development of education, training and active solidarity policies. The ETUC calls for a 'new deal' to encourage a more sustainable economy and a system of solidarity and social justice.

May Day commemorates the strike by workers in Chicago for an eight-hour workday in 1886, which left dozens dead. ■

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

**Three journalists win awards for work on discrimination**

By Sophie Petitjean


The European Commission presented awards, on 29 April, to three European journalists (a German, a Hungarian and a Finnish) for their articles on discrimination, in the framework of its 'For Diversity. Against Discrimination' competition. First prize went to German journalist Kathrin Löther, specialised in social affairs and health, for her work creating awareness of discrimination. Second prize went to Hungarian journalist István Balla and a special prize (created in connection with 2010 Euro-

pean Year against Poverty) was awarded to Finnish journalist Hanna Nikkanen for her article linking poverty and discrimination. The three winners will each receive a grant for a research trip to the EU country of their choice.

The European Commission also launched at the ceremony, attended by Commissioner Viviane Reding (fundamental rights, justice and freedom), the 2010 'For Diversity. Against Discrimination' competition, called 'EU Journalist Award – Together against Discrimination'. This seventh competition is open to both print and online journalists, for

articles published between 1 September 2009 and 17 September 2010.

The European Union's annual journalism competition awards European journalists who give an original insight into diversity and discrimination. The event is part of the Commission's 'For Diversity. Against Discrimination' information campaign, conducted in the 27 member states and financed by the Progress programme for employment and social security. ■

 See [journalistaward.stop-discrimination.info/2872.0.html](http://journalistaward.stop-discrimination.info/2872.0.html)