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**Europe**

# **EuroMarch: A step forward for the radical left**

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**The June 14 EuroMarch demonstration in Amsterdam exceeded all expectations. Organisers counted 35,000 participants, the Dutch police estimated 50,000. All countries of the EU were represented.**

This four-hour demonstration was the culmination of 18 marches against unemployment, job insecurity and marginalisation which had converged from all corners of Europe in the nine weeks leading up to the EU Inter-Governmental Conference in Amsterdam.

[<https://www.internationalviewpoint.org/IMG/jpg/Euromarch9a.jpg>]

The Fourth International played an important role in the organising efforts in most countries. The 50,000 activists who attended the final rally in Amsterdam also included reasonably-sized Green contingents and a fair number of anarchists and "autonomous" currents. Other Trotskyist and Maoist groups also mobilised for the final demonstration.

This is certainly a success. But in itself is obviously not enough to shake the European Union to its foundations. While EuroMarch organisers were generally very happy with the final results, they regret the lack of interest in the campaign from the left wing of the social democratic movements. And Italy's Refounded Communists, Germany's PDS and the Greek Communist Party were the only Communist Parties to give significant support to the campaign.

The motor for the campaign was the French AC! unemployed movement, and radical networks in the French and Italian trade union movement. All areas where Fourth International supporters have played a mayor role in recent years. The EuroMarches were a further sign that a significant minority of the European labour movement is now organised largely or completely independently of the old social-democratic and Stalinist bureaucracies.

The political and media impact of the EuroMarches exceeded the expectations (and the real weight) of the movement which has been built up around the EuroMarch campaign. In fact, the bulk of support for the EuroMarches came from the radical left. In most countries, the reformist left was interested in the marches, but rarely contributed more than moral or minimum practical support.

The march co-incided with a five-day counter-summit, now a traditional response to the bi-annual summits of EU heads of state. About 2,500 people attended workshops and meetings on a wide range of questions: employment, ecology, militarism, the third world and feminism. Most of the participants were Dutch, but the organising committee built on the experience of previous counter-summits, and invited an impressive range of speakers from both European and non-European countries.

The most striking aspect of the "Summit from Below" was not the pluralism of style and opinion (which is now a normal part of this kind of meeting) but the common ground which has been established. This testifies to a step forward in the Europeanisation of the social and political movement.