

AGORA

TRADE UNION EDUCATION IN EUROPE

Quarterly Newsletter of the Education Institution of the European Trade Union Confederation



ETUCO in merger

The European Trade Union College (ETUCO), set up in 1990 by the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) to support and carry out European trade union education activities, has merged with two other ETUC centres of expertise - the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) and Trade Union Technical Bureau (TUTB) to become the European Trade Union Institute for Research, Education and Health and Safety (ETUI-REHS).

ETUI-REHS will bring together professional, economic and social research expertise, engineering and ergonomic knowledge, and training activities that can make the new international not-for-profit organisation a real asset for the EU as a whole. "There are many overlaps between these areas of knowledge which, when united in one organisation, will bring a real value-added to the work of our movement," said John Monks.



The Directors' Committee of the ETUI-REHS

The three separate bodies have now become a single entity with three departments and 60 staff.

Commenting on the launch of the new institute, John Monks, ETUC General Secretary and also Chair of the new Directors' Committee of ETUI-REHS, hoped it would become "the single best and most respected European knowledge and competence centre in relation to the world of labour".

"The new institute will provide the kind of research, expertise and support needed by decision-makers to maintain the impetus for Social Europe," said former TUTB Director Marc Sapir, who heads the new centre.

No break in service

ETUCO may have disappeared, but European trade union education goes on. The ETUCO staff have all been transferred to ETUI-REHS, and they will continue to offer vital services to the ETUC and its affiliates:

- Designing and delivering European courses that give trade union officers and representatives a unique European learning experience – acquiring new information, developing new skills, sharing European trade union values and gaining a broader European perspective on trade union issues
- Supporting a European trade union education community that provides a forum for the strategic development of European trade union education
- Developing multicultural European learning and training methodologies and shared European notions of best pedagogical practice
- Producing a range of European training resources that can be used by trainers working in different cultures, with different languages and in different industrial relations systems
- Providing an EU Information Service that offers online information and advice on a range of EU programmes and funding opportunities

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Leaders examine the challenges facing European trade unions

For the first time ever, top trade unionists from across Europe came together in July to discuss strategies for the future, at a high-level summer school.

The newly formed ETUI-REHS Education Department joined up with the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) to organise the event. It took place at the Centro Studi, the training centre of the CISL, in Florence, and was attended by 46 general secretaries and their deputies from ETUC-affiliated organisations in 23 different countries.

The aim of the summer school was to analyse social and trade union trends and situations at national level, and weigh up perspectives for European trade unionism.

The first session examined trade union organisation in a changing society, with presentations from Savino Pezzotta (CISL, Italy), Frances O'Grady (TUC, United Kingdom), Jacques Thibault (CGT, France) and Tine Auvig-Huggenberger (LO, Denmark). Participants considered four key issues:

- how to improve recruitment and organising activities
- how to reform trade union systems of government to encourage higher levels of member participation
- how to review the bargaining agenda to reflect the interests of potential members
- how to improve the match between trade union structures and the character of the current labour market

Investment in the welfare state

The second session examined demography, social cohesion and the future of welfare states, with presentations from Guglielmo Epifani (CGIL, Italy), Agnes Jongerius (FNV, the Netherlands) and Carola Fischbach-Pyttel, the General Secretary of the European Public Services Union. The key issues here were:

- how to present the cost of social protection as an investment and not simply as a burden
- how trade unions can best defend and develop pension provision
- how societal needs (childcare, care for the elderly, etc) can be catered for under present budgetary constraints



ETUC General Secretary John Monks (centre) and speakers at the summer school in Florence

- how trade unions can defend social security systems in the light of moves toward individualisation

Restructuring and delocalisation was the focus of the final session, with presentations from Zdenek Malek (ČMKOS, Czech Republic), Erland Olauson (LO, Sweden), Bernadette Ségol (Uni-Europa – the services union) and Peter Scherrer, the General Secretary of the European Metalworkers Federation.

It looked at:

- how trade unions can inform and consult adequately so as to anticipate change
- how they can accompany changes so as to ensure minimal social costs to workers
- how they can coordinate collective bargaining strategies so as to avoid downward spirals in wages and working conditions, and what minimal (corporate social) responsibilities employers have

In his conclusions, ETUC General Secretary John Monks underlined the importance of making the case for Europe within the European trade union movement, of improving organising and recruiting strategies, and of reaching out to women, young people and migrant workers.

Florence, the city of the Italian renaissance, could also become the city of European trade union renaissance.

Coming together

By Antoine Cochet, Education Officer

Coming together was the rather apt title for five training activities planned and implemented by the Education Department of the new ETUI-REHS in conjunction with the Social Development Agency of the ETUC.

The main aim of the project was to provide training for trade union officers or representatives in the 10 new Member States, to enable them to organise events at the national level supporting the implementation of European legislation on information, consultation and participation. This relates in particular to:

- Directive 94/45/EC of 22 September 1994, on the establishment of a European Works Council (EWC)
- Directive 2001/86/EC of 8 October 2001, supplementing the Statute for a European company with regard to the involvement of employees
- Directive 2002/14/EC of 11 March 2002, establishing a general framework for informing and consulting employees in the European Community

The five training courses were designed to strengthen understanding of the *acquis communautaire* (the body of European law) on information and consultation rights. They included group and individual exchanges aimed at getting workers more actively involved in EWCs, European enterprises and individual companies.

Deeper social dialogue

The participants selected for these courses were encouraged to contribute to the development of social dialogue at all levels, by taking part in an ongoing process of monitoring, evaluation and exchange of experiences.

In order to achieve these aims, the programme of the five courses included group work activities related to **social dialogue** and the **representation of workers**. They were followed up with presentations on **European Works Councils**, question and answer sessions, and comparative analysis activities.



Course participants take a break

Each course featured a presentation by a member of one of the sectoral European industry federations, passing on experiences and explaining some of the practical work of the EWCs. A detailed analysis of the implementation of the Directive establishing a **general framework for informing and consulting employees** was also on the training agenda.

These five courses enabled 120 trade unionists from the 10 new Member States to find out more about information and consultation rights and, above all, to understand how to carry out the vital task of passing on what they learn to others in the European trade union movement.

This training programme also made it possible to establish a number of new informal networks of trade union officers responsible for these particular themes – a further step on the road to establishing a European trade union identity.

Education and research

The merger of ETUCO with the research and health and safety institutes of the ETUC to form ETUI-REHS will have clear advantages for European trade union education, and by extension the European trade union movement.

It will provide a greater measure of financial stability, thus making it possible to plan for strategic development and the effective delivery of European trade union education programmes over a longer time period.

It will lead to an improvement in the overall quality of European trade union courses. Researchers will become more directly involved in the education process. They will be able to make a more direct input into course design, and their findings will be more readily available at the course delivery stage, either in the form of expert presentations or as background papers.

The greatest potential lies in the improvement of European trade union education resources. Researchers and education officers will be able to participate more readily in the preparation of training materials, which, when designed and presented with the needs of trade union officers and representatives in mind, can be used to add a European dimension to trade union education activities carried out by ETUC-affiliated organisations at the national, regional or local level.

In this way, ETUI-REHS will be able to offer an informed and balanced service, on the basis of research and education, which will contribute to the reinforcement of a European trade union identity.

Jeff Bridgford

Director, Education Department
ETUI-REHS

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AGORA welcomes comments or contributions from readers. Please e-mail or send them to the address above. Contact us if you wish to receive more copies of the newsletter.



Saul Meghnagi: "Trade unions need to keep abreast of changes in economic, social and cultural contexts"

The very nature of a trade union means that ongoing and high-profile cultural development is crucial, not least when one considers the need for varying degrees of representation and protection. Trade unionists must know how to interpret processes of change and, in turn, be able continually to pinpoint key strategic paths and coherent organisational action..."

"This Masters qualification aims to meet the needs for knowledge of all fields in which trade unionists operate, for an open discussion on commitments and principles, for enhanced interaction based on shared principles, for increased protection – combined with trade union action – of democracy, and for the development of civil society."

These are the words of Guglielmo Epifani, the General Secretary of the Italian trade union confederation CGIL (*Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro*), speaking three years ago at the launch of a new training programme providing higher-level training for senior trade union officers and leaders.

Keeping up with change

The decision by the national secretariat of the CGIL to launch such a project, consisting of continuing training for trade unionists coupled with practical experience in the field, was based on two perceived needs:

- Trade unions are organisations that require rigorous human resource management strategies
- Trade unions are organisations that, by their very nature, need to adapt the complex ways in which they operate in order to keep abreast of changes in economic, social and cultural contexts

A Masters qualification: rights, representation and protection

Saul Meghnagi, President of Italy's Istituto Superiore per la Formazione, outlines a pioneering new education project to enable senior trade unionists to obtain high-level recognition of their knowledge and skills.

Targeted primarily at young trade union officers, the project aims, as its title suggests, to provide a greater insight into rights, representation and protection. It was devised by the *Istituto Superiore per la Formazione*, the national training centre of the CGIL, and its objective is to help individuals develop the skills required to operate in what are regarded as essential areas for trade union action.

The Masters programme – which has been designed with these requirements in mind – enables individuals to obtain a qualification in social history or economics and law. Students may work towards a qualification in either or both fields.

Lectures and credits

The study programme is structured as follows:

- **Masters in social history:** this course comprises two units – one on a general topic and the other on a specialist area – and is made up of eight training modules each lasting three days.

The general unit is entitled *the rule of law* and comprises four modules.

The specialist unit (the content of which is designed specifically to respond to local or sectoral trade union organisations' needs) also comprises four modules.

- **Masters in economics and law:** this course comprises two units – one on a general topic and the other on a specialist area – and is made up of eight training modules each lasting three days.

The general unit is entitled *Labour, the market and protection* and comprises four modules.

The specialist unit (the content of which is also designed specifically to respond to local or sectoral trade union organisations' requirements) also comprises four modules.

Each training activity, whether lecture-based or cross-cutting in nature, is assessed using a system of credits. To be awarded the Masters qualification, students must attend all lectures and obtain the required number of credits. Individuals taking part in training activities are given a 'training record' to document the course they have followed and the credits they have achieved.

Trial period

A pilot phase of the Masters in social history project – testing out the teaching arrangements and timing of the various stages of the course described above – has been completed by two specific organisations (CGIL Veneto and the Communication Workers' Union), while the course is also being tested in four other organisations: Fillea and CGIL Emilia Romagna (final stage), NidiL and CGIL Campania (midway stage). The Masters in economics and law is due to be launched in 2006.

The latest book by Saul Meghnagi, *Il sapere professionale*, was published by Feltrinelli, Milano in 2005.

Europe and Globalisation: a training guide

By **Georges Schnell**, Education Officer

For three years, the ETUI-REHS Education Department has been working with the ACTRAV Training Centre of the International Labour Office in Turin and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) to develop a training programme for trainers from ETUC-affiliated organisations.

The ICFTU's involvement has helped identify potential topics for cooperation, whilst the ETUC participation has placed these areas of action within a European trade union strategy.

The innovative approach has been to combine an analysis of EU policies on globalisation with compared experiences of European trade union trainers and trade unionists from other continents. This exchange of knowledge and skills has been very rewarding, despite the different socio-economic and political circumstances in the different countries. By addressing the strategies of global capitalism, with its competitiveness and flexibility dogma and anti-social and anti-union practices, the discussions have pointed



to alternative strategies focused on employment, social protection, social rights and improving living and working conditions.

Developing a trade union strategy on globalisation is an important task in view of the new challenges facing European trade unions. By producing a guide that aims to define a European training strategy, with ideas on how to create national and European courses and prepare teaching materials on the issue, we aim to support affiliated organisations in building their own approaches.

The guide is intended as a reference tool for trainers. In separate sections it sets out to:

- provide a definition of globalisation and its place within the historical development of capitalism
- list the main stages of trade union resistance and the achievements of the European social model (with respect to social security, collective bargaining, labour legislation, labour codes, equal treatment, occupational health and safety, etc.)
- prepare the ground for trade unions in different continents to take a more coherent approach and share knowledge and expertise

The guide also includes a glossary of common terms (competitiveness, the Washington Consensus, the debt, etc.) together with descriptions of the work of the major international institutions (IMF, World Bank, WTO, ILO, EU, etc.).

The training guide will soon be available in electronic format (for free downloading), from the ETUI-REHS Education resource centre website <http://ert.etuc.org/ert/>

Updated support for European project managers

The fifth edition of the *Guide to Managing European Training Projects – Trade Unions and Transnational Projects* is now ready.

An experienced team of experts has updated the manual, on the basis of growing trade union experience in the management of European education and training projects.

It is part of a range of tools to increase the quantity and quality of transnational cooperation through projects. Together with regular courses twice a year (for dates, please consult our website), the training materials and information services provide comprehensive support for motivating trade unions in using (good) projects as a strategic development tool.

Available for downloading in English and French:

<http://education.etui-rehs.org/en/resources/projman/projman.cfm>

Benchmarking Working Europe 2005

ETUI, 2005

This year's report provides useful statistics and information on issues of particular relevance to the world of labour in the EU: Social Europe; employment; wages, income distribution and labour costs; working time; social protection and active ageing; lifelong learning; information, consultation and worker participation; European social dialogue; and delocalisation.

For more information, including a downloadable extract (on working time), and orders:

http://www.etui-rehs.org/publications/benchmarking_working_europe/benchmarking_working_europe_2005#desc

European Economic and Employment Policy Brief

ETUI-REHS, 2005

The EEE Policy Briefs set out to provide readers with short, critical, policy-oriented analyses of topical issues relating to European employment and the economy. Initially, the aim is to produce six to eight Policy Briefs a year, based on analytical work by the ETUI-REHS, ETUC, and partners. All issues are available on the ETUI-REHS website:

http://www.etui-rehs.org/publications/european_economic_and_employment_policy_brief

Informed, Consulted, Organised!

TUC, 2005

This interactive CD-ROM aims to help union reps and shop stewards understand the new information and consultation regulations that came into force on 6 April 2005, obliging companies with more than 150 employees to have systems in place for dialogue between managers and staff. It includes an introduction by TUC General Secretary Brendan Barber, a PowerPoint presentation and a full briefing document.

Copies (including group orders) available from:

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E-mail: hgharbaoui@tuc.org.uk

Une histoire du futur (the story of Philips, Hasselt)

CSC, 2005

This DVD traces the relocation of production by Philips following the closure of their Hasselt plant in December 2002. The documentary moves from the initial anger of the Belgian workers to

their quest to understand why the company has relocated – first to Hungary and then, later, to China. It compares the conditions of workers in Hungary, and those of the Chinese who are currently producing most of the products sold by Philips. Analysing the 'race to the bottom' in terms of wages and working conditions, it suggests how European plants can compete on the world market.

Copies available in French, Dutch and English from:

CSC International Department

Tel: +32 2 246 36 00

E-mail: international@acv-csc.be

European Commission website on the Social Dialogue

DG Employment and Social Affairs has set up a trilingual website with useful documents, reports, definitions of the main actors, etc. Information is downloadable on: What is the Social Dialogue?; News; Cross-industry Social Dialogue; Sectoral Social Dialogue; Social Dialogue Toolkit; Thematic Index; Representativeness; Enlargement; Key Documents; Industrial Relations Reports; Grants; Archives; Social Dialogue texts database.

http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/social_dialogue/index_en.htm (English)

http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/social_dialogue/index_fr.htm (French)

Report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalisation – toolkit and summary for trainers

ILO

The World Commission Report covers many interrelated facets of the social dimension of globalisation, including trade, finance, technology, migration, and culture. It is a long and complex document, but for education and public access purposes, independent partners have prepared two useful items:

- A toolkit, with six different modules: 1. Creating opportunities for all; 2. Globalisation for people; 3. Views and perceptions about globalisation; 4. The nature and impacts of globalisation; 5. Governance; 6. Mobilising Action
- A summary by the UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service, the so-called 'NGLS Roundup'

All the modules and the summary are available in English, while the report itself and synopses are available in several other languages.

For more information and downloading:

<http://www.oit.org/public/english/fairglobalization/report/highlight.htm>

January 2006

Recruiting and organising

AIMS	To evaluate union recruitment and organising strategies and practices for union growth To analyse organisational change and steps towards overcoming resistance to organisational change After this course participants will be able to: • understand the importance of change in recruitment methods • consider introducing new recruitment methods
PARTICIPANTS	Trade union officers responsible for recruitment and organisation
WORKING LANGUAGES	English, French, Italian
DATES	19 – 22 January 2006
COURSE REF. N°	552.16.EOT

Training Eurotrainers level 2

AIMS	To prepare Eurotrainers for implementing a teaching strategy in line with their organisation's approaches and the policy of the ETUC, so that they can participate effectively in the Education Dept trainers' network
PARTICIPANTS	Trade union trainers with experience in European level training and who have successfully completed Training Eurotrainers level 1
WORKING LANGUAGES	English, French
DATES	25 – 29 January 2006
COURSE REF. N°	552.34.PED

New trends in the European industry policy and consequences for the work of the EMF

AIMS	To examine horizontal instruments for the development of SMEs To investigate how sectoral programmes could be developed and how an action plan for innovation policies could be implemented
PARTICIPANTS	Trade union officers and representatives from EMF affiliated organisations and who are responsible for the evolution of the metalworking industry
WORKING LANGUAGES	3 – to be decided
DATES	27 – 29 January 2006
COURSE REF. N°	552.25.ECB

French for European trade unionists (intermediate)

AIMS	To enable trade union officers with at least a basic level of French to operate effectively for professional purposes in a French-speaking environment
PARTICIPANTS	Trade union officers or representatives with at least a basic knowledge of French
WORKING LANGUAGE	French
DATES	29 January – 9 February 2006
COURSE REF. N°	552.06.LAN

February 2006

How to reinforce social dialogue

AIMS	To gain a thorough understanding of how European social dialogue functions To be aware of ways European social dialogue can be used to achieve trade union goals at the European level To enable participants to become actors in European social dialogue
PARTICIPANTS	National trade union officers responsible for relations with employers' organisations
WORKING LANGUAGES	Czech, English, Polish
DATES	8 – 12 February 2006
COURSE REF. N°	552.10.SOC

Best practices to prevent, reduce and combat undeclared and illegal labour in the construction industry

AIMS	To examine and compare practices of undeclared work in the construction sector in Europe To develop trade union strategies to reduce and prevent illegal work in the sector
PARTICIPANTS	Trade union officers and representatives from EFBWW affiliated organisations and who are responsible for social dialogue questions
WORKING LANGUAGES	English, German, Italian
DATES	16 – 19 February 2006
COURSE REF. N°	552.20.SOC

English for European trade unionists (intermediate/advanced)

AIMS	To enable trade union officers with an intermediate level of English to operate effectively for professional purposes in an English-speaking environment
PARTICIPANTS	Trade union officers or representatives with at least an intermediate knowledge of English
WORKING LANGUAGE	English
DATES	20 February – 2 March 2006
COURSE REF. N°	552.05.LAN

March 2006

English for European Works Councils (intermediate)

AIMS	To enable European Works Council members with a basic or intermediate level of English to operate for professional purposes by improving their ability to communicate in an English-speaking environment
PARTICIPANTS	Members of European Works Councils and trade union officers dealing with EWCs with at least a basic knowledge of English
WORKING LANGUAGE	English
DATES	6 – 10 March 2006
COURSE REF. N°	552.30.EWC

More and better jobs and the Lisbon strategy

AIMS	To equip train trade union officers from the national and regional level to implement the European Employment Strategy more effectively. For this they will need: • to have an in-depth understanding of the European Employment Strategy • to be familiar with the role that trade unions can play in the process at the national and regional level • to develop the skills to influence this process
PARTICIPANTS	National trade union officers responsible for integration and labour market issues
WORKING LANGUAGES	French, German, Slovak
DATES	21 – 26 March 2006
COURSE REF. N°	552.13.SOC

Workshop – Developing language training in European trade unions

AIMS	To consider the organisational and pedagogical challenges of language training for European trade unions To exchange information about existing language learning materials and tools To share examples of good practice in language training activities To examine ways of introducing elements of e-learning into language training To disseminate foreign language learning materials being developed by the Education Dept and affiliated organisations
PARTICIPANTS	Language trainers and trade union trainers with experience of language training in a trade union context; trade union officers responsible for language training within their organisations
WORKING LANGUAGES	English, French
DATES	23 – 26 March 2006
COURSE REF. N°	552.37.PED

For further details see: <http://education.etui-rehs.org/en/courses>