

Work Programme of the ETUI

1 April 2015 – 31 March 2016

etui.

Table of contents

General introduction	3
Main activities of the ETUI.....	3
Main priorities 2015-2016.....	5
A. Main priorities	16
1. The crisis and the reinforced economic governance system	16
2. Worker participation.....	21
2.1. Board-level employee representation and corporate governance.....	24
2.2. European Works Councils and SE-Works Councils.....	27
2.3. Information and consultation.....	28
2.4. Multinationals’ Strategies and Workers’ Participation.....	29
2.5. Overarching issues.....	30
2.6 Workers’ participation in technical standardisation.....	32
3. Sustainable development and industrial policy.....	33
4. Working conditions and job quality.....	35
5. Trade union renewal.....	38
B. Other projects	42
1. Education Department.....	42
2. Research Department.....	44
Glossary	46

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) was set up, in the form of a Belgian international non-profit-making association, to conduct research and provide scientific, educational and technical support to the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and its affiliates and to contribute to the development of Social Europe and the **Social Dialogue**. Such is the broad and basic mission of the ETUI, reflected in Article 3 of the Statutes adopted by its General Assembly on 1 December 2004. The mission is carried out by means of:

- Collection of documentation, conduct of research, and production of studies on topics of strategic importance for the world of labour, while developing dialogue and cooperation with the academic and research community.
- Provision of technical support in the field of occupational health & safety and protection so as to achieve a high level of health & safety protection for workers in Europe.
- The promotion of educational activities, programmes and exchanges designed to strengthen a European trade union identity and implement common ETUC/ETUI priorities.

Main activities of the ETUI

The current strength of the ETUI lies in the way in which the priorities, resources and capabilities of the Institute are organised and brought together in a manner which fulfils and respects its general mission while facilitating the conduct of more specific, concrete activities.

The different kinds of support delivered by the ETUI are based on three components:

- firstly, multidisciplinary work, often carried out in teams composed of people with different professional backgrounds and experience;
- secondly, support received from both individual, as well as networks of, national experts and trade union representatives who assist the ETUI and its staff; and
- thirdly, activities organised by the ETUI staff such as conferences, workshops, training courses and educational seminars.

Establishing itself as an important European knowledge and competence centre requires the ETUI to be a network-steering body that can organise and coordinate numerous academic and trade union activities while simultaneously displaying and using its competence for critical analysis as well as the organisation of conferences, meetings, training activities and workshops in the EU28.

In 2015-2016, the **main activities** of the ETUI, will, in accordance with its statutes, include:

1. Monitoring major European developments of importance to workers and the European trade union movement;
2. Collecting, storing and providing data and information on policy areas of relevance to the European trade union movement as actors in the European integration process;

3. Conducting multi-disciplinary and intellectually independent research on topics of importance to the European trade union movement and other social actors and publishing the results of this research in books, working papers, journals, reports, guides, policy briefs and background analyses;
4. Disseminating the results of this work at conferences and seminars;
5. Establishing European networks of researchers, research bodies and universities in the field of industrial relations;
6. Coordinating European networks of health and safety experts in a range of fields including technical standards, ergonomics, gender, psycho-social risks, nanomaterials and chemicals;
7. Representing and supporting the European trade union movement in the field of health and safety in regard to EU strategy, legislative acts and their implementation, collective agreements and technical standards;
8. Improving cooperation between the European trade union movement and academic institutions, research institutes, EU specialised agencies and preventive and enforcement agencies;
9. Providing training programmes reflecting the needs of the ETUC and its affiliated organizations;
10. Promoting new validated training systems for strategically targeted groups which will renew and update the trade union movement and challenge the needs and demands of the members and the organisations;
11. Improving the European trade union education community which provides a forum for the strategic development of trade union education in Europe and reinforcing networks as required by the core and strategic activities and expertise;
12. Adding a European dimension to national trade union education initiatives through the provision of basic and ongoing European training programmes for trainers and the production of training resources;
13. Providing expertise and advisory services for the design and delivery of European trade union education projects.

The research and education activities form the basis for the development of knowledge, expertise, technical support, policy advice and common identity projects. The research and expertise dimension of the ETUI is fundamental to the fulfilment of its mission and this aspect of its work will be performed in ways that also contribute to building bridges between the trade union and the academic world. What is more, without high-quality educational activities, trade unionists will be unable to develop a common European understanding, a strong European trade union identity and joint European strategies.

The ETUI offers a comprehensive and ongoing European training programme that will enable trade union officers and representatives from all over Europe to participate in a unique learning experience and to gain a broader European perspective on trade union issues.

The introduction of a form of multi-annual programming has enabled the provision of appropriate training courses for, in particular, trade union officers with European-level responsibilities.

In the last years new pedagogical pathways have been developed and implemented, thus adding skills, providing consistency and systematisation, and reinforcing the training of representatives.

The ETUI will help promote EU initiatives through the exchange of information, information campaigns, reports, pamphlets and books, and will help implement such initiatives by stimulating and developing networks of trade union experts and representatives of the trade union organisations involved. The provision of expertise will continue to be incorporated into the European trade union movement's efforts to enlighten, educate and protect workers and to improve working conditions.

The ETUI is considering setting up an internal working group or network (*'cellule de prospective'*) to reflect on future trends and challenges.

For the successful implementation of this work programme the ETUI relies on the close cooperation with the ETUC, its affiliated organisations, academic bodies, research institutes and foundations in Europe, which may benefit from financial support for the activities mentioned above.

Furthermore, in this work programme, the following conditions for subcontracting and financial support apply. (The eligibility criteria applying to are set out in the framework partnership agreement VS/2014/O106, Annex II, Part B).

A proposal will only be considered eligible if:

(a) its content corresponds, wholly or in part, to the topic description against which it is submitted, in the relevant work programme part (Part A or Part B);

(b) it complies with the eligibility conditions set out in the framework partnership agreement VS/2014/O106, Annex II, Part B.

The ETUI staff will also promote the dissemination of their research and educational facilities through a wide range of different networks and events at the national, European and international levels.

Main priorities 2015-2016

The European Union is undergoing a turbulent period in a number of respects. The economic crisis, nowadays renamed 'sovereign debt crisis', has prompted a strengthening of the European Economic Governance structure in combination with an emphasis on balanced public budgets and structural reform. As a consequence, some core elements of the process of European integration are being called into question or are undergoing restructuring; economic growth does not seem to be recovering and unemployment is remaining at an unsustainably high level. It is in this context that the European Commission has fleshed out its 2015 work programme. The European Commission work programme is echoed in the ETUI work programme, where many subjects have remained on the agenda for several years. The most important current ETUI research areas include the Investment Plan, REFIT agenda, climate change and industrial policy, fundamental rights, intra-EU migration, taxation, and TTIP. A newly emerging subject is the digitalisation of the economy, the concept of

the shared economy and its impact on the future of work. In framing the ETUI work programme, two core issues stand out as fundamental:

- 1) The *raison d'être* of the support lent by social actors to the European integration project has always been grounded in the political will to achieve an upwards convergence of the European economy and social standards for the purpose of increasing the well-being of European workers and citizens. In the current climate of public-deficit-and-debt reduction, this fundamental aim of European integration is being called into question, representing a challenge to the need for convergence of economies and social standards. In the context of this worrying trend, the available data now indeed provide evidence of considerable *divergence* in the European Union on a number of economic and social indicators, in particular in the EMU area.
- 2) As a corollary of the above point, social and labour standards are being questioned as to their sustainability in a global economy. This discourse is not new, nor are the reasons underlying it. What *is* new, however, is the highly aggressive nature of the attacks and the speed with which social standards have been and continue to be downgraded. In conjunction with public-deficit-and-debt reduction, major labour market and social policy reforms are taking place, aimed at further increasing labour market flexibility so as to 'allow a rapid restructuring of the economy'. A deeply worrying development is the direct attack on industrial relations as we know them and hence on the ability of trade unions to perform their role in democratising the economy. The manifestations of this attack are particularly visible in relation to its effects on the collective institutions (minimum wage, sectoral collective bargaining, *erga omnes*, arbitration extension, etc.) which are strategic tools for extending/protecting the rights of the most vulnerable. The need to monitor and understand this new state of play and its implications for trade unions across Europe as well as its interactions with the European integration has to be borne in mind as a baseline in drawing up the ETUI work programme. In particular, the upcoming European-level processes and developments on REFIT and evaluation of the European **Social Dialogue** will be mainstreamed across all the activities of the ETUI. In addition European policy initiatives as the **Europe 2020**, the employment strategy and the initiatives related to climate change and industrial policy will form the basis for reflections and analysis.

The redefined five priorities laid down in the previous year's work programme continue to be valid for the ETUI work programme for 2015-2016. Details of these priorities are supplied below.

Social Dialogue – in its specifically European guise – is the *raison d'être* of the ETUI and hence relevant and instrumental to all five priorities. For this reason it has been mainstreamed and located within each of the priority areas. This approach seems particularly relevant in the light of the call from the European institutions for **social dialogue** to be a part of European governance and of the efforts announced to reinvigorate it at all levels.

The following paragraphs set out some of the main ideas that will be developed in the context of these priorities, taking into consideration the core issues developed under points 1 and 2 above. While a number of issues could be dealt with under several priorities, our choices in this respect reflect subject-based rather than procedural considerations.

The crisis and the reinforced economic governance system

Reason: The crisis and the protracted absence of signs of economic growth will remain high on the agenda; the ETUI will continue to follow developments on both the European and national levels and to provide an analytical assessment of these developments. Likewise, the new governance structures and processes that have been or are being developed have profound implications for immediate policy-making and for the longer-term future of the European Union. The new governance structure is enlarging the scope for European definition and intervention in national policy-making. Social partners are being called upon to engage with the process. The fact that the European Union now displays divergence on a number of economic and social indicators raises the question of whether Europe is heading towards a new model of integration based on the hypothesis of diverging rather than converging economies.

Main issues to be dealt with:

- Monitoring the implications of the economic governance structure, in particular as they affect **social dialogue**;
- Following further policy developments related to the European Commission's Investment Plan;
- Reconfiguration of the economic structures in the European Union;
- The reinforced economic governance and austerity measures (country-specific recommendations and memoranda of understanding) and their implications for the social dimension;
- Understanding the welfare state and labour market reforms being carried out (job quality, pensions, unemployment, employment, wages) as well as the public administration reforms;
- Extent of reforms of the industrial relations system and their impact on collective bargaining;
- Analysis of alternative monetary and macroeconomic policies and proposal of alternatives to downgrading of the European Social Model.

Worker participation

Reason: With the continuing integration of the European market, we see, in parallel, a decentralisation and erosion of sector-level and national-level industrial relations (IR) institutions. It has become clear that the key to successfully meeting the challenges of simultaneous processes of Europeanisation and decentralisation of IR at the company level lies in strategically combining the various instruments for information, consultation and board-level participation, as well as linking them to collective bargaining structures more generally. These linkages involve varying constellations of actors and instruments across borders, from the local to the national and European levels. New sources of influence and coordination emerge, while others disappear or become weakened. The European Workers Participation Competence Centre (EWPPCC) will continue, in its work, to explore and foster the strategic and anticipatory interlinkages of these processes, actors and levels.

Main issues to be dealt with:

- Understanding of the various instruments and avenues for information, consultation and board-level employee representation within multinational

companies, in particular those which stem from European legislation (employment law, company law, health and safety legislation) and evolving innovations in practice;

- Monitoring legislative developments (particularly the REFIT process) for information and consultation legislation and company law;
- Exploring emerging gaps in the legal and practical regulation of cross-border board-level employee representation;
- Understanding of multinational strategies and their implications for workers' representatives;
- Adjustment of the EWC (European Works Councils) and SE (Société Européenne) databases to meet changed current and future needs;
- Exploratory research on the functioning of European works councils, works councils of European companies and board-level employee representation;
- Evaluation of the EWC Recast Directive;
- Continuation and expansion of the knowledge website 'workers-participation.eu';
- Strengthening the work on EWPC and EWPF.

Sustainable development and industrial policy

Reason: Sustainable development was high on the European as well as national agendas before the crisis set in. It currently seems to have been placed on the back burner with increasing priority accorded to unregulated business development. Initiatives are being taken that have implications for how the European Union will shape its future in a resource-scarce society and a de-regulatory agenda that decreases safety and increases social inequalities. Re-industrialisation of Europe is being called for as a necessary condition to get Europe back on a sustainable growth path. It is important that the agenda, combining issues of sustainability with industrial development and policy, be followed closely in order to understand and assess the implications for trade unions and workers in the European Union. The Paris COP21 meeting in December 2015 will be decisive in this respect.

Main issues to be dealt with:

- Macroeconomic considerations of a future sustainable growth model based on scenarios of 'crisis growth', 'green growth', and 'de/low/no-growth';
- Monitoring EU policies on sustainable development, and the implications of member states' policies under the impact of austerity, pointing out gaps between targets and reality;
- A continued mapping of employment effects, with a focus on social and employment risks (in sectors); quality of employment and working conditions in low-carbon sectors; sectoral analyses highlighting controversial issues (e.g. coal and nuclear energy, biofuels, extreme energy); further development of the sustainable company approach and a stakeholder-oriented corporate governance (i.e. which includes trade unions and the workforce);
- Developing a trade union-oriented approach to no- and low-growth scenarios as well as sustainability debates;
- Analysis and better understanding of the future of work;

- Continuation of the debate on ‘Beyond GDP’ and alternative indicators;
- Increasing the capacity of trade unions to influence scientific and technological developments as well as emerging risks at work on the basis of a social and safety assessment and an open debate on their impact on employment and society.

Working conditions and job quality

Reason: The economic crisis and the reinforced economic governance system have been associated with changes in employment levels, employment conditions and labour law, leading to a weakening of workers’ rights and challenging the role of trade unions as agents for raising social standards. It is therefore essential to follow both employment levels and the nature of jobs that may be created, in terms of pay, stability work organisation, health and safety, and other factors.

Main issues to be dealt with:

- Understanding the link between the growth of precarious employment and the deterioration of working conditions; studying the implications of ageing, gender and psychosocial risk factors;
- Evaluating and influencing the continuation of the European strategy on occupational health and safety in order to reinforce the culture of occupational health prevention and to reduce social inequalities;
- Following and understanding the implications of the crisis management on job quality and the labour market at large (including wages);
- Developing job-quality indicators that can be applied across countries to monitor developments;
- Supporting the process and implementation of European **social dialogue**;
- Monitoring labour law reforms and assessing the potential implications for workers as well as trade unions;
- Assessing the instruments at the European level to counter the drive towards a lowering of social standards, including fundamental rights;
- Continuing to assess developments in the sectoral **social dialogue**;
- Reinforcing cooperation with EU member states and candidate countries on the role of **social dialogue** in health and safety, the links between other pieces of legislation and workers’ rights (free market and competition vs. fundamental collective rights, market regulation and working conditions);
- Understanding the role of soft law and new ways to regulate complex issues like technical standards in different sectors such as chemicals, nanotechnologies and nanomaterials, and ergonomics, and the challenges they pose for trade unions.

Trade union renewal

Reason: Falling trade union membership continues to be one of the main challenges to trade unions across Europe. It is essential that trade unions across Europe gain a better understanding of what lies behind falling membership and, furthermore, that they share experiences and good practices with each other. In order to keep pace with European integration, the potential to join forces across borders in trade union renewal initiatives should be explored. These questions should be seen in the light of the on-going crisis and deregulation of the labour market.

Main issues to be dealt with:

- Organisation, recruitment, and retention strategies in Europe; recruitment and organisation of youth and atypical workers; mapping of trade union membership and organisational development in the new Member States.
- Capturing and understanding current and long-range trends in strike activity and collective action.
- Analysing the functioning of trade unions in terms of participatory collective bargaining and financing
- Sharing experiences and good practice across the ETUC affiliates. Pilot projects in innovative cross-border recruitment and organising campaigns.

Over and above these priorities, all of which are taken into account in the training activities and for which the **Education Department** will produce a range of technical and pedagogical resources, the ETUI will also develop language courses, thereby developing the capacity to work together, and will, to the same end, set up a network of trade union training centres in Europe. The ETUI will continue the process of incorporating its key courses into the European Qualifications System (EQF) and the associated quality standards. Studies on evaluation and impact-assessment of the ETUI training provision will also be conducted.

Consolidating collaboration and cooperation

Establishing, running, maintaining and forming part of networks is one of the core characteristics of the ETUI's working method. This dimension will continue and will, in some areas, be stepped up.

The networks relate in some cases to specific topics, e.g. European Company (SEEUROPE), corporate governance (GOODCORP), Transnational Trade Union Rights (TTUR), as well as four trade union expert networks in health and safety (on machinery safety, chemicals, psycho-social risks and gender aspects of health and safety).

In other cases, the networks are more structural and more strategic in nature, e.g. Trade Union-related Research Institutes (TURI), European Committee for Standardization (CEN). Alternatively, they may form part of a dissemination strategy, e.g. Global Union Research Network (GURN), or consist of the hosting of final or dissemination conferences of FP7 projects, e.g. NANODIODE.

Since networks are part of the core functioning of the ETUI, aspects that will continue to receive close attention are the reinforcement of the collaboration between and with TURI and the strengthening of the capacity of the trade union trainers' network. The ETUI will support the TURI network by strengthening ongoing projects and, if need be, initiating new initiatives for collaboration among members. Especially wage developments and the social dimension of the European Union will continue to be explored. During the reference period the next annual conference of the network will take place in Amsterdam. Overall, the work of the network will also be further disseminated and promoted through integration of the TURI website into the ETUI site and the use of social media (e.g. new TURI twitter account).

Annual events organised with similar research bodies and networks from the US and Canada also ensure exchange of information on issues of strategic relevance to trade

unions on both sides of the Atlantic, e.g. Cornell University and the CRIMT net. Only eligible costs will be incurred in the work programme.

Meanwhile, trainees and guest researchers continue to have an important role in the context of the ETUI's working method. The ETUI's aim in this respect is to provide students and researchers across the European Union with a unique experience at the European level by participating in the conduct of the ETUI work programme.

The ETUI will likewise continue to organise events and projects with affiliates, related organisations and universities across the European Union, e.g. the 'European Panel' together with the Hans Böckler Foundation (HBS) and the 'International Symposium' together with the Otto Brenner Foundation (OBS). In essence, the ETUI's collaboration with other institutions and organisations may be said to function as a multiplier and to be fruitful for all parties.

A research and training dialogue has been set up with the London School of Economics (LSE). This programme aims at exchanging and debating research outcomes with regard to European Integration between LSE and ETUI staff, including the possibility for ETUI researchers to spend time at the LSE for research purposes and for LSE staff and students to spend time at the ETUI and contribute to the ETUI work programme.

Communication strategy

The ETUI continues to strengthen its communication policy by having targeted approaches for its different communication target audiences. The main target audiences are European and national trade union (con)federations, but also academic institutes, networks and researchers, European and national policymakers, economic decision makers, business leaders and NGOs, as well as the specialised press and social media (bloggers) interested in new developments in areas related to the social dimension of European integration.

In 2015-2016, the emphasis will be placed on improving dissemination of ETUI research publications via targeted electronic newsletters, the web and social media as well as high-level public events in Brussels and (occasionally) member states.

The external newsletter which was started in 2014 will be gradually improved and its distribution widened. On average, more than 50 people per month are added to the list of over 10,000 registered users.

A great deal of knowledge dissemination also takes place via speaking opportunities for ETUI researchers in network meetings or conferences whether in Brussels or abroad. Furthermore, the ETUI's training courses for trade unions make use of most of the publications produced by the research department.

ETUI researchers also regularly produce external (non-ETUI) studies which build on their work for the institute. These external publications will in the future be given greater visibility on the ETUI web site and via social media.

One of the main priorities of the communication and publications unit will be the ETUC Congress from 29 September to 2 October 2015. A new general ETUI presentation brochure and a new promotion video will be prepared to better explain the work of the institute to the trade union leaders and representatives attending this gathering. The ETUI will also have a large stand to disseminate its publications at the Congress and will organise side events around specific topics of its annual work programme.

Websites, social media and audiovisual services

The ETUI general website showed consistently moderate growth in 2014. The number of pages viewed over the whole year was 473,000 (up 20,000 or 4.5% compared to last year). The site was visited by more than 109,000 unique users (4.3% higher than last year). The Worker participation website had 381,000 page views over the whole year from 127,000 unique users. Social media impact also grew considerably with the number of twitter followers doubling to around 1800. The ETUI will start a major restructuring of the ETUI and WP.eu sites in 2015-2016 with improved sections for its research and training pages and more efficient search functionalities (improved keywords system). An expertise functional analysis of the two websites with the input of targeted focus groups will prepare the move to a new content management system in 2016. This analysis should also present ideas on how to bring some of our web contents to mobile platforms (mobile phones and tablets). Furthermore, the refurbishing of the EWC website, with the main aim of making it user-friendly, will be finalised.

The use of social media (Twitter, LinkedIn, Storify dossiers) will be accelerated, the use of data visualisation and infographics will increase, and more events will be video-recorded for viewing on the ETUI YouTube channel.

The ETUI is also stimulating its researchers to provide information about their work via contributions to important blogging sites such as the Social Europe Journal and the blogs of the London School of Economics. Researchers are also more frequently available for interviews with the European press on topics within their range of expertise.

Events

The successful 'Monthly Forum' formula will be continued. These specialised debates held in Brussels focus on the different priority areas of the ETUI and other topical questions. External speakers and ETUI researchers use these two-hour events to present the results of their work to trade union representatives and other EU stakeholders. All Monthly Forums will now also be available as video recordings on the ETUI YouTube site.

The special 'conference cycle' format started a few years ago will continue in 2015-2016 with a series of conferences on 'the future of work'. The ETUI will also continue to organise symposia which go more into depth on a specific topic such as 'Chinese investment in Europe' and 'The debt crisis and welfare states'. This relatively new form of event has succeeded in attracting a new audience of specialists on the topic in question.

In addition large public events on the main work programme priorities will take place during the year highlighting some of the ETUI's findings on, for example, worker participation, working conditions, growth, etc. Collaboration with organisations to organise these events will be envisaged in order to multiply their visibility and reach.

Publications

The ETUI has eight categories of publication. Each category has precise aims in terms of communication and target audience.

1. Newsletters

Specific newsletters that are designed for a more specialised and clearly identified audience will continue to be sent out electronically. These currently cover the following issues: collective bargaining; health and safety at work; worker participation. A new general newsletter started in 2014 provides regular alerts of activities and publications to over 10,000 contacts.

2. Policy Briefs

Policy Briefs aim to introduce and home in on a line of argument or key issue in a policy-oriented manner but always on the basis of in-depth analysis. Policy Briefs are read by a large non-specialised audience as well as by decision-makers and members of European think-tanks. Policy Briefs are published in English, although specific issues may be sometimes published in other languages as well. Policy Briefs are distributed electronically.

3. Guides

This category covers documents that are designed for trainers to support their work or that aim to outline a question or issue in a clear and simple manner.

4. Working Papers

The Working Papers series presents research that is either still ongoing or has recently been concluded. These papers are aimed above all at academics, think-tanks, European institutions, trade union organisations, and non-governmental organisations.

5. Reports

Reports are more technical documents aimed at an audience already in possession of specialised knowledge of the area in question. In some cases, they are used to outline the results of conferences.

6. Books

Books are intended, depending on topic and goal, for a specialised audience or a larger reading public. They also provide an opportunity to focus on activities conducted by ETUI research networks. They demonstrate academic quality and dependability in relation to issues of priority importance for the labour movement. The content of books may be the findings of internal ETUI research projects, the results of external research network projects, or regular annual publications on specific issues, e.g. *Social Developments in Europe* and *Benchmarking Working Europe*.

7. Background analysis

This new series is intended to explain and supply background to recent EU policies (e.g. the country-specific recommendations in the context of the new European governance). They are online products that can be downloaded from the ETUI website.

8. Journals: *Transfer*, *SEER*, and *HesaMag*

Transfer – European Review of Labour and Research – has been published, since 2010, by SAGE and the journal will continue to be published and distributed by this publishing house. The ETUI remains responsible, meanwhile, for the general editorial line, preparation of contents and meetings of the editorial committee. In 2015-2016, two thematic issues of *Transfer* will be focus on ‘European collective action in times of crisis’ and ‘Ten years of enlargement and the forces of labour in central and eastern

Europe'. In addition, as in other years, one issue will be a non-thematic 'open' issue publishing a selection of articles that have been submitted to the journal and accepted for publication.

The *South East Europe Review on labour and social affairs (SEER)* is a journal published by the ETUI in co-operation with Nomos Publishing House. The ETUI has a contract with Nomos for the production and dissemination of the journal. Following an agreement between the ETUI and Nomos, the journal has become a biannual publication with an additional special issue each year. The aim of the journal is to serve as an exchange platform between academics and trade unionists in the regions of south-east Europe and the European neighbourhood policy region. Only eligible costs will be incurred. The journal enjoys a stable presence in its traditional Western Balkans region, but we need to strengthen the quality of the articles.

The working conditions, health and safety information periodical *HesaMag* is a topical information magazine that aims to reach, simultaneously, a specialist and a broader audience. Each issue covers a specific topic and reflects the cooperation between the ETUI and external researchers. The periodical will continue to monitor key European policy developments. The theme of the next issue will be 'nurses', while the second issue of the year will address a specific industry sector.

The ETUI will also continue to develop its own printing capacity which enables it to disseminate information to its target audience more quickly, more professionally and in a more timely way.

Documentation Centre

The activities of the documentation centre for 2015-2016 will continue to contribute to the collection of literature and information as well as knowledge management.

The main activities of the documentation centre will concentrate on fully supporting the ongoing work and projects of the Institute. This includes the continuous development of the reference database Labourline (www.labourline.org), as well as structured Internet searches and downloads. For these activities the documentalists monitor and consult a growing number of specialised information sources and repositories.

The documentation centre's role as a specialised information resource centre for external users will also continue to be developed. The centre will continue to be an active data provider for the European common catalogue of EIGE (European Institute for Gender Equality) and in the course of 2015 for the Social History Portal (bringing together collections of European institutions in the field of social and labour history). The centre will digitalise historical ETUC documents and make them available via the Social History Portal.

Innovative activities like exhibitions about the world of work will continue to be organised in order to expand the visibility of our activities and open up the documentation centre's resources to a new and broader audience.

The ETUI: an ‘eco-dynamic workplace’

After having received in 2013 the status of ‘eco-dynamic workplace’, the ETUI has started to implement its action plan to decrease the environmental footprint of the Institute and will continue to inform its staff about ways to ‘help green the institute’.

Words of thanks

The European Union continues to be the ETUI’s most important support body. Without the continuing support from and cooperation with the European Commission, the European Parliament and other European bodies, the research, expertise and training carried out by the ETUI would simply not be possible. We are extremely grateful for this support, which is vitally important for the effective functioning of the ETUC as a proactive European social partner and for the underpinning of the European Social Model.

What is more, with regard to the successful implementation of this work programme, the ETUI is grateful for the excellent level of cooperation it enjoys with the ETUC and its affiliated organisations. It also welcomes its close level of cooperation with several academic bodies, research institutes and foundations in Europe. Particular support will be forthcoming from the German Hans Böckler Foundation (HBS), and additional support will be received from national affiliates, national governments and agencies. Furthermore, the ETUI welcomes the cooperation agreements with various European Industry Federations and the projects financed by national affiliates. We very much appreciate such financial support and collaboration.

A. MAIN PRIORITIES

1. The crisis and the reinforced economic governance system

The crisis and the protracted absence of signs of economic growth will remain high on the agenda; the ETUI will continue to follow developments on both the European and national levels and to provide an analytical assessment of these developments. Likewise, the new governance structures and processes that have been or are being developed have profound implications for immediate policy-making and for the longer-term future of the European Union. The economic governance structure is enlarging the scope for European definition and intervention in national policy-making. Currently there are calls for social partners to enhance their role in this setting. The fact, however, that the European Union now displays divergence on a number of economic and social indicators raises the question of whether Europe is heading towards a new model of integration based on the hypothesis of diverging rather than converging economies.

The main issues to be dealt with will be as follows:

- Monitoring the implications of the economic governance structure, in particular as they affect **social dialogue**;
- Following further policy developments related to the European Commission's Investment Plan;
- Reconfiguration of the economic structures in the European Union;
- The reinforced economic governance and austerity measures (country-specific recommendations and memoranda of understanding) and their implications for the social dimension;
- Understanding the welfare state and labour market reforms being carried out (job quality, pensions, unemployment, employment, wages) as well as the public administration reforms;
- Extent of reforms of the industrial relations system and their impact on collective bargaining;
- Analysis of alternative monetary and macroeconomic policies and proposal of alternatives to downgrading of the European Social Model.

Regular monitoring and tracking of economic, employment and social policy developments at the EU level will form an essential part of the research agenda. This will include general commentary, analysis, external advice and reactions to EU-level policy developments, including the development of the European semester, proposed policies to facilitate economic revival and the negotiation of trade and investment relationships between the EU and the USA. New topics may be taken up as issues arise with ongoing attention to the themes of taxation, proposals for improving competitiveness, reform of banking and financial systems, and to proposals for alternative economic policies.

The focus will continue to be a critical evaluation of the macroeconomic adjustment strategy that has been put forward by the new economic governance reforms in the EU and already implemented by several member states that have sought financial assistance from the EU/IMF since 2008 in order to deal with the knock-on effects of the global financial crisis on their macroeconomic (fiscal/current account/balance of payments) imbalances. This strategy has privileged the simultaneous pursuit of fiscal austerity, internal devaluation and structural reforms in the labour and product

markets. Its merits and perils have been the subject of an ongoing debate among economists on both sides of the Atlantic, with varying experiences of individual countries cited. A continuing research project has therefore brought together a network of experts from different member states to look in more detail at the adjustment trajectory followed and to answer questions about the appropriateness and results of the strategy of so-called internal devaluation. Following two successful workshops, this is expected to lead during 2015-2016 to publication of working papers and a book including individual case studies and overarching analysis. Research outputs will aim towards an edited volume, following appropriate workshops and working papers.

A further project will take this forward as policies develop to provide regular and continual monitoring of the mix of monetary, fiscal, and supply-side policies in the EU member states, with a particular, though not exclusive, interest in those of the Eurozone. The analysis of demand and supply-side policy outcomes will feed into the ongoing debate on how the economic governance of the EU/Eurozone should and could be improved. Results of the research will be disseminated through publications.

The emerging economic governance, as well as the longer-term vision of the EU as a 'viable Economic and Monetary Union', is currently promoting integrated frameworks on fiscal and economic policy matters. However, pursuit of these goals appears to cause tensions with the promotion of social cohesion and solidarity among member states. A project has started on how national welfare states in Europe have been changing under the pressures created by austerity and policies aimed at reducing divergence in competitiveness among member states in Europe. This will be developed to focus on whether, and if so how, the pattern of reform in labour market policies – that is, unemployment benefits (insurance and assistance), EPL (Employment Protection Legislation), active labour market policies and public policies on training and skills – has been changing in EU member states. To map changes, a sample of country case-studies will be used. A network of 14 academic experts has agreed to participate in the project that will aim at producing an edited volume with country-case-study chapters.

Structural reforms are being put forward as the remedy that will ensure a dynamic economic growth pattern across the European Union. However, any understanding of which structural reforms are likely to promote a socially and environmentally sustainable economy seems to be absent from this approach. In order to identify the policy – or rather the policy-mix – that would allow for a sustainable economy, the ETUI will set up a task-force of leading scholars from different disciplines in a position to conduct such an assessment.

Pensions have undergone in-depth reforms over the past five years. Hence a project has been underway to analyse pension systems in Europe with specific reference to supplementary schemes. The main issues to be analysed relate to the governance of supplementary schemes and in particular their interaction with public programmes and the way they deal with common challenges. The project should address two sets of challenges affecting pension systems, their governance, and their sustainability and adequacy, analysing the role of the state and social partners (mainly trade unions) in the management of pension policy (in interaction with market forces) and in promoting solidarity in the renewed pension mix (especially in second- and third-pillar schemes). The project is now in its final stages and will conclude with the publication of a book that will be disseminated widely.

A further project will investigate changes in taxation as one of the main components of a welfare state and hence a main pillar in shaping the European Social Model. Taxation is high on the European agenda, and an issue of particular interest for the trade unions in Europe is that of tax evasion in all its forms as well as the attempts to harmonise the corporate tax base. The ETUI will set up a small group of experts on various tax issues to investigate how they are dealt with at European level and what this implies for the trade unions in Europe. External expertise will be sought on a couple of key issues to compile evidence-based research documents on aspects identified as being of particular relevance for European trade unions.

In the wake of the current crisis, many European countries have enacted labour law reforms which generally make existing labour law provisions more flexible and loosen minimum standards, shifting the emphasis to soft law (deregulation). The ongoing project on monitoring European legislation critically addresses this large-scale deregulation of labour law currently taking place, in particular its negative impact on fundamental social rights and workers' protection. The project also critically follows the Commission's 'Smart Regulation' agenda, the so-called 'fitness check', and the REFIT process.

The REFIT process will receive closer attention in this work programme. The Commission's simplification programme streamlines EU legislation in order to 'cut red tape, remove regulatory burdens, simplify and improve the design and quality of legislation so that policy objectives are achieved and the benefits of EU legislation enjoyed at lowest cost and with a minimum of administrative burden'. However, such simplification initiatives affect both the social *acquis communautaire* as well as forthcoming or pending social legislation. Understanding the philosophy and underlying implications of the Smart Regulation Agenda and its latest outcome, REFIT, is of the utmost importance to better frame the necessary trade union actions in the form of both research projects and participation in consultations. The aim of this new transversal project is to map the scope and impact of REFIT on labour and social rights; to conduct anticipatory monitoring of the development of REFIT initiatives; and to mobilize ETUI research to support trade union actions, in particular the ETUC and affiliates.

The ETUI will continue to monitor Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) case law on workers' rights. The project builds on the expertise of the ETUI Transnational Trade Union Rights network (TTUR). The experts have planned four network meetings and will publish their research results as they emerge. The current research started in 2014 and addresses the role of the European Social Charter in securing the respect and enforcement of the fundamental social rights so badly hit by the crisis. The issue of the accession of the EU to the Council of Europe's Social Charter will also be addressed.

It is not just the changes in national legislation which need to be mapped, for it is crucial also to recognise and assess the logic underlying the various policy approaches and tools, such as the Memorandums of Understanding, or the country-specific recommendations (CSRs) issued in the context of the European semester. The background analysis begun by the ETUI in 2013 will be updated, and deeper analysis will be undertaken with specific foci. As one of the main fields of rights under attack are trade union rights, the ETUI report on strike rules in the EU28 and beyond will be updated. In addition, under this project heading the researchers concerned will continue their 'traditional' tasks, in particular provision of expert input to the ETUC legal experts' network NETLEX (including provision of advice to the annual conference

organised by the ETUC) and, in relation to the Council of Europe Social Charter, monitoring of enforcement mechanisms and bodies.

Since the reforms continue unabated, the mapping exercise, which provides a comprehensive overview of recent changes in labour law enacted against the backdrop of the crisis, will be updated. This publication will be complemented by regularly updated individual country reports in which the latest developments and their impact are analysed country by country. Alongside this update and the country studies, in-depth studies on specific themes will be undertaken in 2015-2016. The series of social policy fiches, or brief summaries of EU social legislation, will be updated as necessary.

While most industrial relations actors and academics are at least broadly familiar with the changes in their own country, the range of parallels across Europe casts a different light on developments and reveals much about the overall regulatory context of an increasingly integrated Europe. The ETUI's unique contribution to the debate is its systematically European approach. In order to make this bird's eye view of the far-reaching changes accessible to a wide range of practitioners, academics and policy-makers, the updated mapping paper will be made available in five languages. Other thematic reports will appear in English with an executive summary in four languages.

A project on monitoring **Social Dialogue** seeks to critically assess the EU Social Partner involvement in the process of European economic governance. The project is intended to provide scientific coverage of issues related to the development of particular themes of European **social dialogue** of major interest to the European Trade Union movement such as evaluation of the European **social dialogue's** instruments. A first objective of this project is to conduct comparative research on the implementation and monitoring in the member states of the instruments of the cross-sectoral EU **social dialogue**, such as framework agreements incorporated into directives, autonomous framework agreements, autonomous work programmes, etc. Furthermore, this work programme covers what will be a transitional year for the EU **social dialogue**, with the new European Commission having announced that stronger attention will be paid to the EU **Social Dialogue** while not yet having proposed any specific action, and with a new joint social partners' work programme for 2014-2016 still under negotiation at the time of writing.

In general ETUI will be closely following the debate and initiatives that are taken at the European level to enhance **social dialogue** at all levels. In particular a workshop will be held that takes up the scientific debate from the 90s on collective bargaining and the EMU. This workshop will form the basis for a further analysis of the relationship between **social dialogue** and the reinforced economic governance system of today.

The ETUI will continue to enhance the visibility of its research and expertise in the field of European **social dialogue** (via, among other things, the general ETUI website, the relevant section on the Workers' participation website e.g. by updating existing material on the EU sectoral **social dialogue**, etc.). Apart from own research, the ETUI will also continue to provide its expertise in external projects run by (European) trade unions, external institutions and/ or academic experts.

Recent economic difficulties have also had implications for foreign direct investment (FDI) flows. These flows appeared, for a time after 2008, to be drying up as companies were more eager to repair their balance sheets. With the prolonged crisis, competitiveness-strengthening measures come to the fore; these include lay-offs, but also outsourcing, offshoring and the search for new markets with FDI picking up again.

A project in 2014-2015 followed FDI trends and patterns in eastern and southern Europe. A follow-up in 2015-2016 will examine the place of FDI among the future drivers of the economic catching-up process in Central-Eastern European transformation economies after 20 years of FDI-driven development. The project will address aspects of developing economic thinking and policies and will bring in outside experts.

Collective bargaining practices and outcomes have been subject to considerable change as a result of both the economic crisis and recent policy developments. The ETUI's Collective Bargaining Newsletter will continue to be produced with up-to-date information on collective bargaining developments across Europe on a monthly basis. As an additional feature, the Collective Bargaining Newsletter also comprises a regularly updated and maintained database containing all issues published since February 2008. The database can be searched via three key categories (key words, countries and date).

A project mapping changes in collective bargaining will continue from previous work in 2014-2015. The key focus of this part of the project will continue to be the wage developments and the structural reforms which took place in response to the crisis. The analysis will be based on academic literature, first-hand information gathered from representatives of the ETUC and ETUFs (and their respective affiliates) at international trade union meetings, regularly updated on-line sources such as PlanetLabor, EIROnline and the ETUI's own sources such as the Collective Bargaining Newsletter and the regularly updated country reports on labour law reforms. The result of this analysis will be published as a chapter in an edited volume.

The second strand of research will broaden the perspective by investigating how the crisis and its management affected the trade unions' capacity to act beyond the specific field of collective bargaining. This activity will be part of a book project carried out by the LRC ('Labour Relations in Context') – an international network of researchers whose explicit objective is to analyse the role of trade unions in the context of political, economic and societal change. A further result of the analysis will be a Policy Brief formulating more specific policy recommendations for alternative trade union strategies in the context of political and economic change.

The current economic crisis in Europe, and in particular the various political measures pursued in the context of its management, led to far-reaching implications for national collective bargaining systems. However, what is missing is a comprehensive overview of the state of play of collective bargaining in the EU28. Against this background, a project will be started aimed at putting together an edited volume that will provide a comprehensive overview of collective bargaining institutions' current situation and processes in all 28 EU countries. Planning and coordination will start in 2015 so that the writing of chapters can begin in 2016.

In the light of the growth of the low-wage sector and deflationary tendencies in many EU countries, the debate about a European minimum wage is back on the political agenda as part of a broader macro-economic re-orientation towards a demand-side and wage-led growth model. Much of this debate focuses on the appropriate level and the diversity of national minimum wage regimes. The purpose of a new project will be to compare different methods of implementation and monitoring across countries. This will start with desktop research; a short questionnaire addressing key questions will be sent to academic experts from different countries belonging to the ETUI's TURI network. The first result will be a working paper.

In several EU countries, the sector-biased increase in unemployment rates and the growing share of long-term unemployment have been explained by a lower matching efficiency of the labour market, which is often attributed to inefficient job-search or lack of the 'right skills' on the supply side. A research project will investigate the effects of including features of the demand side in the analysis with implications for the design of efficient ways of tackling the skills-mismatch. The focus will be on the micro-level focus and restricted to adult training and education. PIAAC micro data based on proficiency in literacy and numeracy, and microdata from recent OECD work, will be used to follow the likelihood of being well-matched/under-skilled/over-skilled controlling for socio-demographic and job characteristics. Results will be disseminated in the first instance in a working paper.

Research will also continue on cross-border labour mobility. Based on the empirical findings of the previous projects, but also from newly available data, there is a rich data basis to exploit for further research. Detailed branch-specific employment characteristics of EU migrants on EU15 labour markets will be followed to analyse the utilisation of their skills potential. A working paper and a workshop will be devoted to investigating how intra-EU labour mobility functions, to what extent it is living up to its potential, the risks involved and the possible need for policy correction.

2. Worker participation

As the European market continues to integrate, we also see parallel decentralisation and the erosion of sector-level and national-level institutions of industrial relations (IR). It has become clear that the key to successfully meeting the challenges of simultaneous processes of Europeanisation and decentralisation of IR at the company level lies in strategically combining the various instruments for information, consultation and board-level participation, as well as linking them to collective bargaining structures more generally. These linkages involve varying constellations of actors and instruments across borders, from the local to the national and European levels. New sources of influence and coordination emerge, while others disappear or become weakened.

The work of the European Workers Participation Competence Centre (EWPPC) will continue to explore and foster the strategic and anticipatory interlinkages of these processes, actors and levels.

This area of increasing importance for the trade unions across the European Union is driven principally by the implementation of Directives on employee representation and worker information and consultation rights that are simultaneously central to safeguarding and further developing the interests and safety of workers; these innovative institutional arrangements are also one of the main drivers of the Europeanization of industrial relations. The implementation of the Recast EWC Directive in particular has highlighted the necessity and challenge of effectively articulating processes of information, consultation, collective bargaining and board-level participation across the national and transnational levels. Simultaneously, despite being a fundamental right, workers' participation in corporate governance bodies at company level remains a controversial issue. In order to better capture the dynamic nature of this fast-developing field, the ETUI takes a broad definition of workers' participation to mean the representation of employees' interests, notably via information, participation and negotiation, across multiple levels -- from the local and national levels to the European level -- and including also the representation of

employees on the governance boards of companies where such arrangements are in place.

The monitoring, investigation and understanding of – as well as active support for – the development of various forms and levels of worker representation and interest mediation, and the dynamic relationships between them, have constituted an important and constantly growing area of the ETUI’s activity over the years. One of the key contributions of the ETUI to this field is the development of a genuinely European comparative and cumulative knowledge base. The ETUI will continue to carry out research, pool knowledge via networks, evaluate legislative proposals, train trade unionists and workplace employee representatives, and technically support efforts to strengthen the protection of workers’ interests and the representation of those interests in all parts of Europe and at different levels of society.

The main issues to be dealt with include:

- Understanding of the various instruments and avenues for information, consultation and board-level employee representation within multinational companies, in particular those which stem from European legislation (employment law, company law, health and safety legislation) and evolving innovations in practice;
- Monitoring legislative developments (particularly the REFIT process) for information and consultation legislation and company law;
- Exploring emerging gaps in the legal and practical regulation of cross-border board-level employee representation;
- Understanding of multinational strategies and their implications for workers’ representatives;
- Adjustment of the EWC (European Works Councils) and SE (Société Européenne) databases to meet changed current and future needs;
- Exploratory research on the functioning of European works councils, works councils of European companies and board-level employee representation;
- Evaluation of the EWC Recast Directive;
- Continuation and expansion of the knowledge website ‘workers-participation.eu’;
- Strengthening the work on EWPC and EWPF.

A main focus of the ETUI has always been to support trade unions in the process of European integration, and in particular to encourage and support the Europeanisation of trade unions’ policies and strategies, by equipping them with the knowledge and perspectives to move forward. Via monitoring, information provision, research, and training courses, the ETUI has provided trade unions, workplace employee representatives, and other relevant audiences across the European Union with detailed and up-to-date material on developments in this sphere and their implications for industrial relations systems. Special emphasis is being placed on developing a network of trainers who can act as multipliers and reinforce this dimension of the ETUI’s work. A further emphasis is placed on making the wide-ranging expertise of the ETUI more accessible to practitioners; this approach not only applies to issues of workers’ participation per se but will seek also to cover a broader range of fields, such as employment law, health and safety, or sustainability. This material will be presented in

a variety of flexible forms which can be adapted to the needs of practitioners, such as manuals, overviews, checklists, and slide presentations, and will be made available in a wide range of languages.

Employee representation in health and safety is central to any workplace health policy. Structured worker representation is the precondition for workers to have an impact on health and safety. Many surveys have shown that a direct connection exists between a company having a workers' representation body and the quality of workplace prevention policy. But simply having representation is no sure-fire recipe for effective participation. In all but a very few cases, there is a general lack of knowledge and debate about the factors and conditions by which workers' representatives can exercise a key role in a preventive strategy. The ETUI will continue researching what makes for effective workers' representation in health and safety, will collect information on the history and current research, and will work towards transferring that knowledge into both policy debates and support for practitioners. One output of this project will be in the form of a book.

As an integral part of its strategy, the ETUI will continue its work based on the wealth of experience and accumulated competence already gained in the field of workers' participation. To this end, the internal cross-departmental 'European Workers' Participation Competence Centre' (EWPCC), which aims to bundle and coordinate the ETUI's expertise in research, education and health and safety policies with respect to their relevance for workers' participation, will continue to explore ways to pave the way forward in European policy and practice. The EWPCC works in close cooperation with the ETUC and the European Industry Federations. In particular, board-level representatives on supervisory or administration boards of European companies, who are newly emerging agents of Europeanisation of workers' participation, are continuously being identified, contacted and offered a range of activities, such as advice, workshops, training and research in the field.

The ETUI will also continue to support the members of EWCs and SE-WCs via training and information services, in close cooperation with the European Industry Federations. The work programme will encompass a wide range of such activities, building on the experience already gained in research and training courses. In order to provide the trade unions with up-to-date information and analysis concerning developments arising out of European legislative activity, such as employment law, information and consultation legislation, and corporate governance, the research department will continue its research on and monitoring of these issues.

The EWPCC Conferences regularly bring together board-level employee representatives and other practitioners, academic experts, trade unions and policy-makers to discuss relevant research and debate topical issues around workers' participation. Building upon the 2014 and 2015 Conferences, the focus of the 2016 EWPCC Conference will lie on exploring the possibilities and limits to the articulation of employee interest representation across all levels of the company. Casting the multinational company as a multi-level system of institutional arrangements marked by highly variable practice, the key questions are: How and why are processes of information and consultation articulated from the local to the national to the transnational level, and how are these linked to employee representation on the supervisory boards? What are the risks and opportunities therein? What is the role of trade unions and their European federations in facilitating these processes? How can this be brought to match the parallel processes of hierarchical decision-making within companies? If we better understand the actual workings of multi-level employee

interest representation, how can this understanding be brought to bear on the conceptualisation of workers' participation in general and the policy debate on information, consultation and participation? One outcome of the conference should be to identify those areas or interfaces between levels in which knowledge is lacking as a basis for a further research framework in this field.

2.1. Board-level employee representation and corporate governance

Several projects will continue to monitor the development of workers' board-level participation at European level by means of the founding of SEs or European Cooperative Societies (SCEs) Directive, as well as by the application at national level of the 10th European company law Directive and other European initiatives in the field of company law and corporate governance (e.g. 14th Directive, REFIT approach to several company law Directives). Indeed, it emerged in 2013-2014 that a significant number of supervisory boards had been internationalised due to the application of the rules of the Cross-Border Mergers Directive. The ETUI will step up its efforts to identify these new European bodies and include them in its analysis.

Apart from updating of the database containing all SE and SCEs, with a particular focus on their governance structure, case studies of instances of this particular form and their implementation, including in a cross-enterprise comparison, serve as a starting point for analysis and assessment. Analytically, this work aims to ascertain the contribution made by worker participation to the Europeanisation of industrial relations.

It also aims to map the real impact of participation instruments in EU company law. In recent years, various instruments of company law designed to promote company mobility in Europe have resulted in the europeanisation of board-level employee representation. It has become clear that it is as a result of the application not only of the SE Directive but also of the Cross-Border Mergers Directive that the mandates of employee representatives on boards have begun to cross borders. Furthermore, some national legislation also provides for the extension of mandates across national borders. These developments give rise to new concerns; they have also revealed important inconsistencies. The ETUI will investigate these issues further with a view to better understanding this emerging process of europeanising workers' participation at board-level. Furthermore, a better tracking of these heretofore largely unnoticed developments will be monitored in order to provide input into the EU company law debate.

Over the past years, the SEEurope network has developed into a key resource for research and advice on the topic of the European Company (SE) and worker participation issues in general. The heart of the SEEurope project is an active network of legal, economic and industrial relations experts. They have been chosen from different research institutions and academia on the basis of their research profile as well as their country of expertise, aiming to cover all 30 concerned EU and EEA member states. Only eligible costs will be incurred under the work programme.

Over the past years, the focus of the network has widened to include related developments in the fields of industrial relations in general and in the area of European company law and Corporate Governance in particular. In 2013-2014, after nearly 10 years of operation, the SEEurope Network reviewed its current and future structures, tasks, and composition. For the period 2015-2016 the structure and composition of the network will remain largely the same, with a correspondent from each EU member state and a broad mix of expertise and disciplines related to both

company law and industrial relations. Based on a division of labour with the GOODCORP network (of which several SEEurope members are also members), the focus of the SEEurope network will continue its shift to a broader approach to workers' participation and industrial relations. For its part, the GOODCORP network will focus more on issues of corporate governance and company law and will support the SEEurope network with specific information on emerging issues with implications for workers' participation.

The Voice of Labour project, which was the large-scale questionnaire-based investigation of the activities, roles, decision-making criteria and networking of board-level employee representatives across Europe launched in 2008, will be terminated in 2016. In the Work Programme 2015-2016, the focus will lie on dissemination in a variety of ways: 1) key results to respondents; 2) promoting the book publications in English and German; 3) developing topic-based spinoff publications in academic journals and specialist practitioners' media.

Work will also begin on a collaborative edited volume which seeks to create a synergy between the pan-European findings of the Voice of Labour research, and existing country-based empirical research. Researchers who conducted past country-based empirical studies will be invited to shed a new light on the 'Corporate Governance and Voice of Labour' survey data related to their country.

The ETUI will continue to address future directions for employee board representatives and European corporate governance, building on an alternative to the 'shareholder value' model of corporate governance which, for roughly a decade, has dominated the debate on the reform of corporate governance in Europe. This work is primarily channelled through the GOODCORP network, which brings together academics and other experts concerned with company law and corporate governance issues. Key goals are to monitor and analyse developments at the EU level in company law and corporate governance, to identify and develop alternatives to shareholder value, and to encourage discussion of these issues among worker representatives in Europe.

The ETUI is assisted for all activities related to Corporate Governance, sustainability and new European Company forms by an external expert. In line with the adjusted orientation of the SEEurope and GOODCORP networks, GOODCORP will place a special emphasis on providing company law expertise related to worker' participation arrangements, such as provisions on information and consultation procedures as well as board-level employee representation in European company law. In the work programme 2015-2016 two workshops are planned. The members of the GOODCORP network will complete a research task focusing on worker rights under the EU Cross-Border Mergers Directive.

A second task focusing on worker rights under cross-border divisions in Europe will be undertaken. Regarding ongoing responsibilities, the network will continue to monitor overall developments in EU corporate governance and company law, as well as developments on the national level that have significance for European corporate governance and the European trade union movement. Furthermore, the network will continue to provide support to the ETUC on these issues, including assistance in preparing responses to consultations and advice on analysing and responding to new policy developments.

The qualitative research on SEs will continue. A first project will analyse SE agreements' specific provisions by drawing upon on the ETUI's unique database on European

Companies (ECDB), which provides information, in particular regarding arrangements for workers' participation, on all registered SEs. In approximately 50 SEs, board-level representation (participation) rights have been negotiated in addition to information and consultation rights. A large share of these agreements is available to the ETUI and can be analysed according to specific criteria. Together with the complementary EWPC's database on board-level employee representatives (BLER) in SEs, they offer an exclusive resource for assessing the role of board-level representation in SEs. Key questions examined in the report will include structural analysis (such as models chosen, numbers of board members, spread of nationalities, etc); the 'before-and-after principle' in practice; eligibility rules and selection/nomination methods for board members and in particular the role of SE-WC and/or national representation structures in this process; the notion of a 'European mandate'; articulation between the board and SE-WC; and rights to training and expertise.

Complementary to the research on quantitative developments conducted via the SE Database and the new comparative and comprehensive information about SE-WCs and board-level representation (BLER) within SEs emerging out of ongoing analysis of agreements, a second research project will investigate how board-level representation actually functions in practice in a number of selected SEs. By means of a number of exploratory case studies, the focus will lie on developments and changes through the SE: What difference does the SE make? During this year, a first set of 6-8 small case studies will be conducted based on concise semi-structured telephone interviews with at least 2-3 employee representatives (at least one of whom should come from a country different from the headquarter country) from selected SEs. The case studies will focus on the evolution of worker involvement since the setting-up of the SE. Respondents will be asked to assess the impact of the SE process. Special attention will be paid to the structures and processes of workers' participation across levels (articulation). The results will be published as a discussion paper.

In the light of the continued incoherence of EU legislation on board-level employee representation, and the widespread variation in actual practice, discussions have been ongoing about the potentials (and limits) of a genuinely European approach to board-level employee representation. One strand of this debate was aimed at developing a European legislative standard for worker's participation and a limited set of issues or principles that were shared by most of the actors involved has emerged. However, a number of highly complex issues that needed more technical examination and further reflection before a shared assessment could be developed have also been identified.

These issues include: 1) the choice of the scope of application for future legislation on BLER; 2) the need to develop a genuinely cross-border democratic selection process (or set of equivalent processes) in order to bolster a European mandate at board level; 3) the need to identify a balance between different models anchored in national traditions (e.g., parity representation vs 1/3 representation); 4) the status and rights of BLER; 5) the ways in which European legislation and/or trade union policy should foster articulation between BLER and other levels and forms of worker participation and trade unions' activities.

As a contribution to this debate, the ETUI will develop expert knowledge on how such technical and complex issues could be solved. On the one hand, there is scope to develop harmonisation approaches, but for other aspects it may prove necessary to develop instead a set of criteria along which the functional equivalence of different models or solutions could be measured.

In 2015-2016, the ETUI will closely follow the evolution of the debate up to and in the wake of the ETUC Congress in September 2015. The actual topics to be addressed by research will depend on those developments

2.2. European Works Councils and SE-Works Councils

Monitoring EWC developments and supporting EWC members has been an important part of the ETUI's work programme ever since these bodies emerged prior to and in the wake of the adoption of the first EWC Directive in 1996. Now that the Recast EWC Directive of 2009 has been transposed into national law, the ETUI continues to explore the implications of the new provisions for the functioning of EWCs and will intensify its efforts to adjust the ETUI's activities accordingly, in particular with respect to its monitoring and training activities.

The ETUI will continue to develop, maintain and update the EWC database and its website portal www.ewcdb.eu. Activities for 2015-2016 will cover two pillars, the first being primary data collection, processing, updating and analysis (EWC agreements and other contents) of data stored in the ETUI database of EWCs. This pillar will include also maintenance and development of EWC the website portal www.ewcdb.eu. The rebuild of the website, begun under the work programme 2014-2015, is expected to be completed and implemented during this reference period.

The second pillar is the dissemination of knowledge on EWCs in the form of printed publications. The dissemination of the findings under the work programme on the transposition of the Recast EWC Directive and the EWCs' access to justice will be the primary focus.

Furthermore, a new and expanded edition of the ETUI's highly successful publication 'European Works Councils: Facts and Figures', prepared during the work programme 2014-2015, will be published. This publication will showcase the ETUI's unparalleled collection of EWC and SE-WC Agreements. The book will draw upon the tradition of earlier editions of this publication from 2002, 2004, 2006 and 2011, and will extend their scope by including some results of the ETUI's ongoing analysis of agreements. The source of data is the ETUI database of European Works Councils (www.ewcdb.eu). In response to past requests from national-level unions and practitioners, an extended summary of the publication will be translated into German, French and two other languages (tbc, one Eastern-European and one Mediterranean language) to maximise the dissemination impact. The publication's added value stems from the unique character of the source data, from the broad sample as well as from the original concept of a systematic and uniform analysis of EWC agreements which has never before been completed. The project's outcome is intended for multiple audiences including mainly academic/research, European and national trade union organisations, as well as practitioners, i.e. worker representatives, experts and advisers to EWCs. Parts of the printed publication will be used to feed the ETUI's existing free electronic publications (websites): www.worker-participation.eu and www.ewcdb.eu.

Further dissemination will continue to take place via contributions to trainings for EWCs, SE-WCs, and SNBs (special negotiating bodies) organised by the ETUI Education Department under separate heading/projects. EWCs' key role in securing employee input will be promoted through training and information activities carried out in cooperation with the European Trade Union Federations. We will develop tools for the development of competences of European Works Councils in this field.

In 2012, a first ‘Manual for European Workers’ Representatives’ was published. The concept was to have a very accessible, easy-to-read series of booklets on topics of interest for EWC members. The language is simple and direct, containing practical tips rather than technical or legal references, alongside numerous illustrations, making it attractive for a very broad audience. What is more, translation was provided into as many different languages as possible (English, Swedish, Dutch, French, German, Spanish, Polish and Greek).

The first issue, entitled *How to make your meetings more successful* was very well received by both trade union officers in charge of coordinating EWCs and by the EWC members themselves. In 2012-2013 a draft second number in the manual series, dealing with communication, was written, and scheduled for completion under the Work Programme 2014-2015. Work has begun on a third number, this time focussing on financial information.

A new project evaluating the impact and compliance with the Recast EWC Directive aims to contribute to the upcoming debate about whether and how to further develop the legislation and practice of European Works Councils (EWCs). The development of both best and worst practice will be monitored, with a view to identifying success factors and hindrances. The project will systematically canvas the views and experiences of practitioners at the national level with the improvements and shortcomings of the transposition of the Recast EWC Directive. It will combine these insights with an ad hoc network of EWC research, thereby providing a European hub for exchange across the increasingly differentiated EWC research landscape. Finally, in cooperation with industriAll, the ETUI will explore the practical and political implications of its work on articulation of worker participation. The ETUI will conduct, with the help of external experts, an independent analysis of past experience in five companies, in which restructuring was addressed at the local and European level, with a view to identifying both successes and shortcomings. Throughout 2015, industriAll Europe will develop its company policy guidelines for managing change in multinationals, partly on this basis. The project will culminate in a conference in December 2015 at which industriAll will present its revised guidelines to its affiliates and stakeholders for discussion.

2.3. Information and consultation

An overarching element in dealing with worker participation is the various provisions stemming from the EU level on information and consultation. The number of provisions for workers’ information and consultation is estimated at around 30. This begs the question of whether differing definitions and content of information and consultation rights generate variations in practices and possibly competition between various bodies of employee representation. The REFIT process recently launched by the European Commission brings these questions into sharp focus. ETUI research in this field draws on the results of the stocktaking of the myriad provisions on information and consultation rights in EU legislation, which was completed in the last budget period. That research found that, since the beginning of the crisis, information and consultation rights have been further eroded via recent labour law reforms and reforms of the collective bargaining systems. Furthermore, at the European level, various parallel initiatives have put additional pressure on information and consultation rights. The European Commission’s Fitness Check of three Directives on information and consultation rights, which started in 2010, and its subsequent launch of the REFIT programme which envisages a consolidation and/or recast exercise of those three information and consultation Directives – despite the experts’ recommendation not to

harmonise these European legal acts, points to the potential of further erosion. The maintenance of the information and consultation *acquis* -- and indeed, its overdue improvements in the areas of consistency and compliance -- will require in-depth research and mobilisation of both legal and practical arguments.

2.4. *Multinationals' Strategies and Workers' Participation*

Networks have been developed to further research on multinational corporations (MNCs) and international business strategies, approaching the key questions in the field from the perspective of employee representatives. The underlying question of the project is 'How do MNCs develop and deploy their strategies and what does it mean for employees and the multiple-level system of worker representation in Europe?' More specifically, the field of international business strategy is relevant for the worker involvement in MNCs in Europe (through EWCs, SE-WCs, and their articulation with national and local levels) from two perspectives: 1) the politics of decision-making in MNCs and 2) the political economy of international business strategy.

One project for 2015-2016 will complete and lead on from the 2014-2015 project on outsourcing across borders – that investigated the nature and implication of sub-contracting on working conditions, employment, and industrial relations – by focusing on MNCs and production networks with a high degree of vertical disintegration. Activities in 2015-2016 will include finalising and printing of an edited volume, and producing practitioner-oriented materials.

New research will look further at the recently-observed trend towards tasks with high skill content to East European locations as well as outside of Europe. Such outsourcing will have important implications for employment and working conditions in Europe. Moreover, it is likely to have important wider implications for innovations systems in Europe. This project will map trends and implications of offshoring of high-skilled engineering work across sectors, involving researchers coming from social science, industrial relations, management, and engineering backgrounds. The aim is to produce an edited volume as well as more practitioner-oriented materials with information from individual chapters. A workshop will be held for practitioners presenting the book on 'outsourcing across borders', discussing implications for strategies of unions and employee representatives.

An accompanying project will allow regular and continual tracking of business and labour strategies and related restructuring of production networks and organisational forms in Europe. It will include commentary, analysis, external advice and reactions to developments. Research will be conducted as third-party data is published (e.g. European Restructuring Monitor, UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) investment reports) and issues arise with ongoing attention to the implications on employment, working conditions, and industrial relations in Europe. Results of research will be disseminated through publications, through participation in events, and by direct advice, primarily to ETUC and individual trade unions and federations.

A further specific project will follow the strategies of newcomer MNCs, particularly from China. This project will focus in particular on the impact on employment, labour conditions and industrial relations in Europe. Activities for this budget year will include finishing an existing project on Foxconn and a workshop for practitioners presenting the book. Moreover, two case studies will be commissioned (Huawei/ZTE, Denza) and an

exploratory/preparatory workshop will be run in this work programme. The work in the following years will draw on this to produce an edited volume on the topic.

2.5. Overarching issues

It is an essential part of the EWPCC's mission to make the knowledge gained accessible to a wider public. Several websites operating at the ETUI under the umbrella of the EWPCC provide a wealth of information on workers' participation, the European Company (SE), and our unrivalled collection of EWC and SE-WC agreements. In the period 2015-2016, moreover, the EWPCC will continue its special focus on developing a new range of materials aimed at practitioners which draw upon the expertise of the ETUI and associated researchers on a wide range of topics.

The *worker participation web site* seeks to meet the increasing need for accurate and easily accessible information on worker participation by giving its users access to what is happening across Europe in the field of employees' rights to information, consultation, co-determination and board-level representation. With more than 12,000 unique visitors per month, the website is a recognized online resource on issues such as EU28 (+ Norway and Switzerland) industrial relations systems, European Works Councils (EWC), European Companies (SE), the European information, consultation and participation framework, Corporate Governance & EU Company Law and European **Social Dialogue**.

An important element of the website is the *European Company Database* (ECDB). The ECDB delivers key data to facilitate observation and analysis of developments in this dynamic field of European company law and European industrial relations. It is the reference database on European Companies, widely used by researchers and also by the European Commission. The information is compiled and continuously updated by the ECDB team with support of the SEEurope research network.

The WP.eu website and the ECDB are updated and new contents added on a continuous basis. With the update of the National Industrial Relations section completed in 2014-2015, a new information section will be added to the website, for example on the right to training for employee representatives and on health and safety representatives. In 2015-2016, the electronic newsletter WP.eu News Bulletin and the SENews will be merged and published three times per year. In 2015-2016, the website will most likely move to a new content management system. A mobile application for the portal's content, in particular the comparative information on national industrial relations systems, could be developed, thereby enabling users to quickly look up information on mobile devices.

Since early 2014, the SE-WC agreements contained in ETUI's unique database on European Companies (<http://ecdb.worker-participation.eu>) have been completely integrated into the ETUI's **EWC/SE-WC Database**. Containing over 1700 coded EWC and SE-WC agreements, the European Works Councils Data Service is thus the only remaining comprehensive database of EWCs and SE-Works Councils in existence. As such, it is an invaluable resource for practitioners, policy-makers and academia alike, as demonstrated by the average of over 2000 unique visitors coming to the site every month. The agreements have been newly analysed and systematically coded so that the database is searchable along a very wide range of criteria. The fact that, in an increasing number of cases, both the original and renegotiated versions of the agreements negotiated at individual companies are available opens up new avenues for exploring developments over time, such as the effects of new legislation, or the emergence of a new negotiated standard architecture of EWCs.

In 2015-2016, primary data collection, processing, updating and analysis of EWC and SE-WC agreements and other contents will continue. Work on the EWC data service and website in 2015-2016 will include regular maintenance, updating and further development of the EWC database and its website portal www.ewcdb.eu. In addition, a new, more user-friendly interface will be introduced based on the extensive redesigning exercise conducted in 2014-2015.

Building on the positive experiences of previous years, it is the intention to continue offering (at least) one dedicated training for board-level employee representatives on the ETUI work programme. Since the vast majority of SEs with board-level employee representation has been established in SEs based on the German SE legislation, and the non-German employee representatives are as a rule in a very small minority on those boards, there is a need to provide training which is adequate to address this constellation, since it has important implications for the nature and degree of 'Europeanisation' which is possible amongst the employee representatives. Hence the ETUI has designed a seminar to be attended by small delegations from different SE boards. This approach enables the participants to be trained in the plenary sessions on issues related to their work on the supervisory board and to exchange experience with employee representatives from other companies, while at the same time giving them the space and opportunity to work closely with their colleagues from the same company in order to improve their cooperation and mutual understanding.

In addition, topical workshops will be held, for example taking up the issues raised in the research on the europeanisation of board-level employee representation.

The need for both basic and advanced training for European workers' representatives continues unabated and the added value of the training offered by the ETUI lies in the multi-national, multi-cultural composition of the participant group and training team. Therefore, the EWPCC launched a three-year plan whereby five such open seminars will be offered across Europe to five different clusters of countries in order to cover all EU/EEA states. Participants from each EU member state will have the opportunity to apply for participation at least once. Care will be taken to ensure a balance of regions, sectors, and countries. Furthermore, applications from members of the same EWC will be encouraged, so as to increase the longer-term effects of such training. Only eligible costs will be incurred under the work programme.

The seminars will continue to focus on effectively implementing the rights laid down in the Agreements and in the legislation, and in particular on strengthening the information and consultation rights based on the 2009/39 recast EWC Directive in practice. The seminar will also address the challenge and modalities of linking the work of the EWC and SE-WC with information, consultation, and negotiation processes taking place at the national level (as stipulated by the Recast EWC Directive), as well as linking it to the work of employee representatives at the board level (where such arrangements exist). A special effort will be made to accommodate the specific needs of the members of SE-Works Councils.

Given the growing demand for training for European Works Councils, Special Negotiating Bodies and SE Works Councils – not least because the 2009 Recast EWC Directive established the right to training for EWC and SNB members regardless of national provisions or provisions in the agreement – a network of specialised EWC trainers with a close relation to the trade union movement has been developed led by the ETUI's education department.

The coordination of the network of European Works Council trainers (the N.E.T.) requires a continuous exchange and communication, as well as regular workshops to share experiences and develop new materials. Since 2009, an annual workshop for EWC trainers has been organised. This approach will continue in 2015-2016. The workshop has two aims: 1) to strengthen the pedagogical skills of the participants and develop new training materials; and 2) to allow the network members to share experiences and discuss practical aspects concerning the organisation of EWC training with the ETUI Education department. A specific project aimed at development of training materials was launched in 2014-2015 and will be continued in 2015-2016.

Since 2009, the ETUI has hosted the European Worker Participation Fund (EWPF). This fund collects a part of the fees received by trade union board-level representatives in companies set up under the European Company Statute. The fund is allocated to support the board-level representatives and worker participation issues across Europe, e.g. training, yearly conference, manuals, and meetings facilitating the knowledge transfer of workers' representatives and their trade union support. Some of these activities are described under the 'worker participation' priority. In 2015-2016, the European Worker Participation Fund will be formally evaluated on behalf of the ETUC Executive committee.

2.6 Workers' participation in technical standardisation

The ETUI will continue its work on the safety of machinery and ergonomics in the standardisation process. The project will continue the revision of standards, collection of users' knowledge and experiences for the reconstruction and comprehension of the actual work and real activity for the improvement of technical standards, design, manufacturing, and use of the machinery. The project covers the Feedback Methodology, including the ergonomic analysis to be applied in European standards to improve machinery safety. Alongside this approach, attention will be paid to the interface between human beings and working systems and to the efficiency of the man-machine couple (ergonomics) through the ErgoMach platform.

The ETUI will explore the competences that trade unions and industry federations have for their involvement in machinery standardisation. It will help shape the priorities on future activities and continue to support workers' participation in standardisation processes, by bringing their knowledge into Technical Committees and National Standardisation Bodies, and by discussing the difficulties that this implies in the network seminar.

The project will yield input into diverse working groups at CEN and CENELEC and for the benefit of diverse networks of experts, practitioners and stakeholders.

According to Regulation 1025/2012 ETUC has concluded a framework agreement with DG GROWTH. The framework agreement will enable the ETUC to engage into the work on standardisation and represent social interests. In this respect ETUC has received an operating grant agreement from DG GROW (SA/ETUC/ENTR/2015-01). The division of work between the ETUC and ETUI has been thoroughly established. The ETUI will continue its work on machine standards and ergonomics thereby improving the safety standards. ETUI will in general deal with its current field of health and safety issues. The ETUC will engage in service standardisation and broader industry issues. From time to time health and safety issues could arise within the ETUC field of action, in this respect the ETUI will be consulted as to ensure that there is no double work taking place on these aspects. ETUI will report in a transparent manner its activities on standardisation and report on the interaction with the ETUC

that could occur on health and safety issues. The activities will be organised so as to ensure transparency, complementarity and avoiding any risk of double-financing of activities.

3. Sustainable development and industrial policy

Sustainable development was high on the European as well as the national agendas before the crisis set in. It currently seems to have been placed on the back burner with increasing priority being accorded to unregulated business development. Initiatives are being taken that have implications for how the European Union will shape its future in a resource-scarce society and a de-regulatory agenda that decreases safety and increases social inequality. Sustainable development is to be understood as both socially and environmentally sustainable development. It is about understanding how to shape a context that respects both environmental as well as social standards and give rise to quality employment. Re-industrialisation of Europe is being called for as a necessary condition to get Europe back on to a sustainable growth path. It is important that the agenda, combining issues of sustainability with industrial development and policy, be followed closely in order to understand and assess the implications for trade unions and workers in the European Union. The 'future of work' will be a part of this agenda.

The main issues to be dealt with under this priority include:

- Macroeconomic considerations of a future sustainable growth model based on scenarios of 'crisis growth', 'green growth', and 'de/low/no-growth';
- Monitoring EU policies on sustainable development, and the implications of member states' policies under the impact of austerity, pointing out gaps between targets and reality;
- A continued mapping of employment effects, with a focus on social and employment risks (in sectors); quality of employment and working conditions in low-carbon sectors; sectoral analyses highlighting controversial issues (e.g. coal and nuclear energy, biofuels, extreme energy); further development of the sustainable company approach and a stakeholder-oriented corporate governance (i.e. which includes trade unions and the workforce);
- Developing a trade union-oriented approach to no- and low-growth scenarios as well as sustainability debates;
- Analysis and better understanding of the future of work;
- Continuation of the debate on 'Beyond GDP' and alternative indicators;
- Increasing the capacity of trade unions to influence scientific and technological developments as well as emerging risks at work on the basis of a social and safety assessment and an open debate on their impact on employment and society.

A project on the effects of austerity policies on energy transformations will be completed with editing work on a book and publication planned for 2015-2016. Dissemination will formally complete this project,

A new project will focus on restructuring patterns and challenges for traditional industrial regions. The case of the German Ruhr region is a good starting point. Based on this case, policy practices with both negative and positive consequences can be identified and lessons for other industrial regions drawn. Studies on further restructuring practices in selected western European regions will be used for

comparison with locations in Central-Eastern Europe. A working paper on the Ruhr region experience with lessons to other regions will be the starting point, preparing the way for the larger comparison with CEE industrial regions. This issue will be debated at a Monthly Forum in the run-up to the COP21 in Paris.

A continuing direction of research will follow the issues of informality in economic activities and corruption which figure permanently on the political agenda in Europe. In 2012 the World Bank issued a special report on informality, *"In from the Shadow"* denoting a policy shift by recognising it as a policy challenge. The ILO started an official discussion at the ILC 2013 with the aim of adjusting its long-term engagement with the issue to the changing realities and possibly backing it with an international instrument at ILC 2014 to make it more efficient. At the same time, in the summer of 2013, the European Commission conducted a public consultation procedure on the issue with the similar aim of revisiting and improving the policies adopted to deal with 'undeclared work' in the EU. The ETUI will follow these developments and will develop further, including in the field, to take stock of existing ideas, policies and practices and to assess and update/adjust them to better face the challenges of the realities in regions. Outputs will include discussion papers, policy briefs and country overviews.

In 2015-2016, the ETUI will continue to seek ways to bring the principles of sustainability to bear on the work of employee representatives. The main aim of the project is to explore and discuss the potential role of worker representatives in promoting sustainability and the circular economy broadly defined (social, environmental and financial) at the company level, and thereby to disseminate best practice across Europe. A sectoral approach is chosen because of great variation across sectors in the specific sustainability issues that are of greatest concern to worker representatives. The target audience for workshops on particular sectors includes: EWC/SE works council representatives, board-level employee representatives (BLER), shop-floor worker representatives and trade union officials coordinating the activities of worker representatives. Drawing upon the work of the GOODCORP network and the experience gathered at the four workshops held since 2012 (in the retail, automotive, construction and agricultural sectors), a further workshop will be conducted in a yet-to-be-determined sector.

A high percentage of all occupational diseases reported each year in the EU are related to exposure to chemicals and the number of work-related deaths remains high. The ETUI will continue its work on the protection of workers against chemical hazards.

A focus will be the REACH regulation which has the potential to improve health and safety at the workplace and to help in reducing the number of occupational diseases and fatalities caused by hazardous chemicals. At the same time, the ETUI will continue monitoring ECHA (the European chemicals agency), exchanging information on EU legislation related to chemicals safety at the workplace, and consolidating the ETUI network of national trade union experts on chemicals. Work will continue on known or presumed carcinogens, mutagens, reprotoxic substances, the follow-up of the revision of the Carcinogens Directive and occupational exposure limit values, endocrine disrupting substances and nanomaterials safety. As an outcome of this project, dissemination of the information will take the form of seminars and network meetings and input in different expert groups within ECHA and WHO. A study on endocrine disrupting chemicals will be published.

4. Working conditions and job quality

The economic crisis and the reinforced economic governance system have been associated with changes in employment levels, employment conditions and labour law, leading to a weakening of workers' rights and challenging the role of trade unions as agents for raising social standards. It is therefore essential to follow both employment levels and the nature of jobs that may be created, in terms of pay, stability, work organisation, health and safety and other factors.

Themes that fall under this heading include:

- Understanding the link between the growth of precarious employment and the deterioration of working conditions; studying the implications of ageing, gender and psychosocial risk factors;
- Evaluating and influencing the continuation of the European strategy on health and safety at work in order to reinforce the culture of occupational health prevention and to reduce social inequalities;
- Following and understanding the implications of the crisis management on job quality and the labour market at large (including wages);
- Developing indicators of job quality that can be applied across countries to monitor developments;
- Supporting the process and implementation of European **social dialogue**;
- Monitoring labour law reforms and assessing the potential implications for workers as well as trade unions;
- Assessing the instruments at the European level to counter the drive towards a lowering of social standards, including fundamental rights;
- Continuing to assess developments in the sectoral **social dialogue**;
- Reinforcing cooperation with EU member states and candidate countries on the role of **social dialogue** in health and safety, the links between other pieces of legislation and workers' rights (free market and competition vs. fundamental collective rights, market regulation and working conditions);
- Understanding the role of soft law and new ways to regulate complex issues like technical standards in different sectors, chemicals, nanotechnologies and nanomaterials, and ergonomics, and the challenges they pose for trade unions.

Further research will be undertaken on occupational health and safety, as well as on work alliances and other networks. Particular attention will be paid to:

- The importance of preventative occupational safety and health strategies for future generations. To tackle this issue, various projects will be carried out, one of which will analyse the costs of inaction on occupational safety and health – in particular on musculoskeletal disorders, occupational cancers and psychosocial risks – and the benefits of preventive legislation. In parallel, a scenario project – described below – will explore what type of health and safety challenges will be passed on to future generations in the absence of preventative action now. Worker compensation also plays a key role in preventative strategies and is an aspect that currently to operate efficiently; hence the ETUI will work on a new project designed to formulate alternatives in this area and to draft a proposal for a trade union policy that would better enforce prevention through worker compensation systems.

- Occupational cancers cause around 102,500 deaths per year in the EU. With regard to workers' exposure to hazardous substances, the ETUI will undertake research in collaboration with experts on endocrine disrupting chemicals and reprotoxic substances which may contribute to carcinogenicity and other occupational diseases. The strand of expertise on nanotechnology and nanomaterials will also be continued as part of the ETUI's work. The ETUI will continue to participate in the relevant working groups within ECHA and to seek the necessary expertise to inform workers in Europe about the issues at stake. Additionally, the ETUI is a partner in the FP7 project NanoDiode responsible for producing easily accessible material on nanotechnology. This project will feed into the networks previously established by the ETUI, thereby creating a multiplier effect. Costs for the project are kept separate from the work programme.
- Work-induced musculoskeletal disorders. The European survey on working conditions conducted in 2010 reported that 46% of European workers complained of backache and 43% of muscular pains in shoulders, neck and/or upper limbs. The relative heterogeneity of the medical and legislative contexts of the European member states is a factor that makes it difficult to compare their health data. The project aims to provide expertise during the revision of standards at CEN Technical Committees on 'Ergonomics design principles' and 'Biomechanics'. The planned output will result in identification of those standards which may hamper health and safety at work and participation in various conferences aimed at improving the quality of working life.
- Psychosocial risks –which are often described as emerging risks – will continue to be analysed in relation to work organisation. The ETUI will focus its research on prevention and on strengthening the related networks of trade unionists and academics. The planned output will result in a publication that will provide an assessment of psychosocial risks in Europe, including a typology of the different tools used by European trade unions to assess these risks. A second publication will analyse national legislation on psychosocial risks in a comparative manner and will present recommendations for a possible policy initiative. A seminar has been planned to strengthen the network's collecting and sharing of information.

Unemployment levels vary widely across EU member states, reflecting longstanding positions, the extent of employment reduction following the 2008 crisis, and also the extent of new employment creation. EU-level policy arguments increasingly imply that, given the requisite labour market flexibility, employees rejected by one workplace could quickly find another. Alternative explanations emphasise aggregate demand, meaning that this is a phenomenon linked to macroeconomics. International agencies have given advice that would appear compatible with both approaches, and analyses to back that advice have included elements of each. Research conducted in 2014-2015 in connection with the project on internal devaluation tested the importance of influences deriving from different theoretical approaches; the findings will be published in book form. Research related specifically to labour market developments will continue with a detailed study of the employment effects of recent changes in regulations affecting employment security and collective bargaining coverage. The method will include the collection and comparison of quantitative data, primarily from Eurostat, to show employment and unemployment changes in a selection of countries. The quantitative overview will then form the basis for more detailed comparisons of selected countries, using a network of outside experts. The project will lead to publications – starting with working papers – aimed at both trade union and academic audiences.

A further labour-market topic is the notion of social dumping. Research in this area will continue a project from previous periods. A book will be produced by an external publisher and chapters will be adapted, as appropriate, for other forms of publication. Further work will investigate the responses from specific trade unions on the social dumping issue.

Alongside concern with the *quantity* of jobs available, research has been undertaken over a number of years to measure job *quality*. Research for the current period – within a continuing project – will follow the quantitative analysis of developments in job quality and employment from a comparative cross-national perspective. This will seek to identify any relationship between job quality and job quantity in the EU as well as possible relationships to other labour market and economic indicators. It will also follow progress in articulating job quality in public policy and the development and updating of cross-nationally comparable and relevant indicators of job quality.

The research methods will involve conceptual work on the development of comparable cross-national measures of job quality, as well as quantitative analysis of secondary EU-wide survey data. The former will be partly carried out in an already established collaboration with researchers from the University of Cambridge and the University of Chile (only eligible costs will be incurred). The main data sources are the European Working Conditions Survey and the European Labour Force Survey. Expected outputs include an academic paper.

Job quality may also play a role in female labour market attachment after childbirth. A project will continue research carried out with outside collaboration. Obtaining a better understanding of the factors influencing women's decisions to remain in the labour market is crucial for policy discussions aimed at increasing women's employment rates. However, despite the importance of better job quality for health, well-being or social integration, there is little empirical evidence on the connection between job quality and female labour market participation.

This research project will analyse a large-scale cross-sectional survey – the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS). The research will adopt a comparative approach to understanding the institutional-level factors that influence the relationship between female labour market attachment and job quality. Expected outputs include an academic paper and presentations to international academic conferences and seminars.

To gain a better understanding of the gender dimension in occupational health, taking into consideration the different approaches in various European countries, another project, based on the proceedings of the conference 'Women, Health and Work' carried out in 2014-2015, will tackle the health impact of working conditions for women and the social inequalities between women and men in the labour market, employment, working conditions and occupational health and safety. The ETUI will also work on consolidating a network of trade unions and academics working on gender and occupational health and equality on the labour market.

The political context of health and safety in Europe has been playing a critical role, since the REFIT programme has set a deadline for issuing the Commission's occupational health and safety strategy. The ETUI will embark on a multi-annual project involving the development of scenarios that will address the future of health and safety in Europe, thereby devising guidelines for possible forms of action. Another

outcome of this project will be a publication bringing together and analysing several cases from the European Court of Justice that have involved interpretation of the provisions of health and safety directives.

Furthermore, a particular effort will be made to empower European trade unionists to engage with the European health and safety *acquis* as well as to exchange information and good practice. A series of regional workshops will be organised to this end.

5. Trade union renewal

Falling trade union membership continues to be one of the main challenges to trade unions across Europe. It is essential that trade unions across Europe gain a better understanding of what lies behind falling membership and, furthermore, that they share with each other their experiences and good practices. In order to keep pace with European integration, the potential to join forces across borders in developing trade union renewal initiatives should be explored. These questions should be seen in the light of the ongoing crisis and deregulation of the labour market.

The main issue to be dealt with includes:

- Analysing the functioning of trade unions in terms of participatory collective bargaining and financing

A long-term project continues to map the development of trade union structures in the new member states (NMS). The current project aims to map in a consistent manner the variations in union organisation and membership in Romania since the end of the 1980s or early 1990s. Country experts will be contacted to help gather the data and establish contacts with key persons who can be asked for (questionnaire-based) data or interviewed. A country report will be written – based on the questionnaires – dealing with the realities of unionism on different levels of analysis (country, confederation and national union organisation). As part of an additional project, a database is being constructed bottom-up in order to re-aggregate the data for each confederation and country, offering organisational information and union membership series. The aim of both of these academic endeavours is to facilitate and encourage the comparative and historical study, by fellow researchers, of changes and variations in trade unionism in the NMS.

In line with a voluntaristic view of trade unions, the ETUP's research on trade union revitalisation is particularly focused on the membership dimension, as just one of the many dimensions of trade union revitalisation (or renewal). To this end, the project's main focus is on the transferability of the 'organising model' to continental Europe but it serves also as an 'umbrella project' for issues related to questions of union membership such as strategies for retaining members and letting former members re-join the union.

Today most – but not all – trade unions in continental Europe have *common* problems related to their membership. Albeit with noteworthy cross-country variation, their membership is ageing and its composition does not entirely reflect that of the global workforce. Membership, above all in the private sector, has proved unable to catch up with employment growth, even in countries where membership has been on the rise, resulting in a further decrease in union density in most countries; density rates still differ significantly, however, between countries. In the English-speaking countries membership decline became widespread earlier than in most countries of continental Europe. This explains, to a certain extent, why, since the late 1990s, there has been a

voluntary ‘policy transfer’ of member recruitment policies between unions in – particularly – Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States. Predominantly, this transfer of intensive recruitment policies refers to a process in which knowledge about the ‘organising model’ in another region or country is used by a union elsewhere for the development of its own revitalisation.

Over the last decade or so certain unions in continental Europe have also been showing increasing interest in policy transfers of this kind. Based on a literature review and additional interviews, the argument will be developed that unions in Germanic and Nordic Europe are better equipped, for various reasons, to develop their own understanding of the organising model than unions in central-eastern Europe and particularly southern Europe. To explain this emerging pattern, reference will be made to unions’ identity, the institutional structure of national industrial relation systems and strategies of unions, employers and the state. Attention is also paid to the policy transfer *in itself* for explaining the emerging national and sub-national patterns. As a closer look at the process will most likely help to better understand the particular substance of the organising model in different national contextual settings, an analytical distinction is made between the process and substance of the policy transfer of the organising model.

Since systematic country-studies are still lacking on the organising model in continental Europe, it is difficult to have a precise understanding of the origins, extent and significance of the organising model on a European scale. Currently most research on union recruitment policies and the organising model is in the form of case studies evaluating union campaigns in specific economic sectors. What is more, little is known about the process of the policy transfer, while the knowledge about and understanding of the substance of the transfer is also still in its infancy. So, in essence, this project reflects upon the emerging patterns of the policy transfer of the organising model from the English-speaking countries to continental Europe, its limitations and its prospects. As a consequence, this project provides an agenda for further academic research while trying, at the same time, to stimulate the debate within unions about the organising model. Research results will be disseminated via congress participations, ETUI working papers and publications in (an) academic journal(s).

In the light of decreasing trade union density and more adverse conditions for trade union action, there has been a lot of talk in the industrial relations literature about the need for trade unions to involve their rank-and-file members in internal decision-making processes so that trade unions, as institutions of collective interest representation, do not lose touch with the interests and needs of their membership. A project, coordinated jointly by the ETUI and the WSI in Düsseldorf, will investigate internal communication and participation processes at the different stages of the collective bargaining process. The project will look both at different sectors (comparing practices in the metalworking industry with practices in the public sector) and also at different countries representing different geographical regions and industrial relations traditions. The in-depth country studies addressing the questions mentioned above will be compiled by external experts with close contacts with the union movement in the respective countries. In order to ensure comparability of the country reports, each will follow the same framework and research questions. The results of the project will be published as an ETUI report including country studies prepared by the national experts and introductory and concluding comparative chapters.

A long-term project on strikes and collective action serves as an ‘umbrella’ for monitoring the strike behaviour and social protest of workers (particular during socio-

economic crises) in Europe and for external meetings and publications covering those issues. Apart from a yearly update of a database on strike data, disseminated via a visual presentation or infographic on the ETUI website, this project will focus – mainly but not solely – on co-coordinating and co-editing an issue of *Transfer* on historical and recent developments in strike and social conflict. A workshop will be organised, probably in Brussels in June 2015, to present the draft articles, exchange ideas among the various authors, and streamline the articles.

A follow-up project on youth will build upon previous work on the opinion of youth officers on mobilising, recruiting and representing young workers. Building upon evidence based on that survey conducted among primarily young unionists across Europe, this project will further explore and report upon the unionists' insiders' perspective with regard to the integration and participation of young members in union life and the internal structures of national unions towards young workers, i.e. the unions 'deliberative vitality' towards young workers. The ETUI is also involved in an international project comparing – via case studies – successful instances of young worker interest representation in five countries. Research results will be disseminated via congress participations, ETUI publications and publications in (an) academic journal(s).

Another project aims to contribute to an assessment of techniques, organisation and outcomes of trade union recruitment initiatives. The project supports a transnational organising initiative involving about fifteen trade unions that represent members in a single company. To this end, the project comprises a single meeting of trade union representatives from company 1 who will discuss the possibility of establishing an organising network within the company. It is envisaged that further meetings will be held in subsequent years if the network is established and the representatives wish to pursue the initiative. The second strand of this project will consist of a single meeting of trade union representatives from company 2 who will discuss the development of an organising network within the company that to date has held six meetings. The network members now meet the cost of their own accommodation and travel while the ETUI pays for interpreting and meeting room. This project, carried out with the University of Manchester which was awarded a contract following a call for tender issued by the ETUI, enjoys the support of UNI-Global and UNI-Europa. It is envisaged that further meetings will be held in subsequent years.

A new project on trade union finances will commence in September 2015 and will initially comprise a pilot investigation into the availability of information on trade union finances in three countries (Belgium, Germany and the UK). Efforts will be made to design a database and to collect information on aggregate (country-level) union finances. If comparable data can be unearthed, comparisons between the three countries will be made.

A further project will focus specifically on CEE trade union movements. As a follow-up to a previous project on mapping crisis developments in CEE, the results of which were summarised in an ETUI Working Paper, the role of unions within the political economic systems of their countries, as well as their participation in the anti-crisis policy management, will be investigated. Polish developments will be summarised in a book chapter published by WSI in Düsseldorf. Polish trade unions' involvement in specific areas of EU politics will also be followed.

In the early 2000s, a large comparative study examined revitalisation strategies of trade unions in the Western world and accounted for specific strategies employed by unions in different institutional settings. Work now proposed in this area would bring

in outside experts to look at innovative strategies within CEE trade union movements. This will involve mapping 'best practices', presented in the form of country studies and case studies covering specific initiatives. The experts' accounts will be compiled and published in an ETUI report.

B. OTHER PROJECTS

1. Education Department

All the training offered by the ETUI education department serves the ETUI's strategic options and respects its work priorities. These are, in turn, the priorities of the European trade union movement and the European Trade Union Confederation.

The political choices of the recently renewed European Commission are, naturally, taken into account.

The socio-political context, along with an environment which is unfavourable to trade unions as decisive social actors, has not improved. Trade union education is thus increasingly important, but also faces increasing difficulties.

Unemployment and insecurity, deteriorating pay and rights, inequality and poverty, but also **social dialogue** at all levels, social protection, and the European social model present constant challenges to education – which aims to bring about changes in participants and their organisations – and, in one way or another, across the whole education programme presented here.

The growing and dangerous populism and the strengthening of extremist forces which are threatening the European project mean that the educational aims of the European trade union movement are faced with new needs and new horizons.

This programme cannot ignore the difficulties at the level of recruitment and organisation, of trade union renewal in the face of continuing policies of austerity or emphasis on controlling public debt, of negotiation and agreement when agreements are either impossible or fail to produce concrete results, of participation in a context of discouragement and disaffection. Taking these obstacles into account, the programme seeks to cover the most basic educational needs identified, from the workplace to the highest European level, in each case with a European dimension and with the aim of contributing to an integrationist and progressive vision of Europe.

The present programme of training courses is intended as a balanced response to the current situation and includes short- and longer-term views of a range of technical, scientific and socio-political subjects.

In pursuit of these objectives, synergies and close cooperation with the researchers of and scientific products produced in the Research Department are essential, as is the maintenance of relationships with universities and other scientific centres, alongside ongoing contact with networks.

The programme benefits from the participation of the members – national confederations and European federations – who propose activities according to their identified training needs and are capable of acting within a European dimension; it is subject to the scrutiny of the Education Council; and its main options are approved by the European Annual Trade Union Education Conference (EDU CONF).

The present programme includes the annual conference which has come to constitute an important forum for knowledge and sharing of experience and know-how, experimentation and innovation, and is attended by increasing numbers of delegates.

The European Trade Union Education Day (EDU DAY) is also part of the programme. This initiative, launched some years ago, is an action for visibility and dissemination that is worth continuing.

The education system and all its activities are classified on the basis of the curriculum produced over previous programmes. This allows learning pathways to be defined on a

personal or organisational basis, creating individually tailored educational provision that meets the requirements identified.

Networks constitute a key element of the normal development of the education programme. Initially created as communities of praxis, the networks of educators which are organised to specialise in the key and core themes of the education programme are taking on a role of reflection, innovation and experimental practice, helping the whole system to move forward.

The network of trade union education centres and schools (community of praxis), focused more tightly on methodological practices and the use of educational technologies, will be able to develop around the creation of educational outputs for transversal use at European level.

Progress is being made – albeit more slowly than initially envisaged – on the implementation of a distance-learning system.

Assessment of the last five years of training courses for young trade union leaders continues and will be completed during this programme.

The department also continues to refine its definition of the participants' targets and profiles in order to produce a more suitable and challenging range of educational provisions.

Collaboration with universities has stabilised and is being continued with appreciable results. High-level specialist training in economics is being developed in conjunction with the London School of Economics. With the educational sciences department of the Université de Lille 1 we are delivering coaching for educators and portfolio content for the skill certification process set up earlier.

This programme will offer a chance to participate in the preparation of a new four-year strategy.

Core training and certification process

Core training includes courses for Eurotrainers, European Works Council members and young trade union leaders, in project management and in languages (EN).

As to the core training, it is worth pointing out that training actions for Eurotrainers are systematised, at both the general level and the intermediate workshops. The range of specialised courses in the system is extended with the strategic intent to strengthen the educational quality and efficacy of the learning process, as well as to enlarge the number of those who, once qualified, extend the offer of cooperation with ETUI.

The certification and validation process is running, in accordance with the European framework and in cooperation with Lille 1 University.

The training of young trade union leaders is a strategic training scheme. During this programme the results of the impact study will be taken into account in order to refine and update subsequent courses.

Relations with the ETUC Youth Committee will become closer and more frequent; the same will apply to other training actions for the same target audience.

Training for the members of European Works Councils is an important priority for the ETUI. The aim is to provide more training in connection with companies. Resources to this end will be stepped up and the organisational improvements already initiated will be continued.

Training in designing, managing and assessing projects is now systematised. The last level of the system is still in progress. This final phase is modular and will use the distance-learning platform. The certification in accordance with the UK system is already in operation.

Language training, now exclusively in English, takes place under the programme and different courses are simultaneously available, some of them with specific targets and appropriately tailored programmes.

French-language courses have been discontinued for lack of participants but could be resumed were a practical need to become apparent.

While the educational activities that make up the programme on offer address, above and beyond the key topics noted above, a broad range of themes of various levels of specialisation, the European dimension permeates them all. Particular attention is paid across the board to content such as the EU's decision-making mechanisms and processes, the ways in which citizenship and trade unionism operate and their role as a key social partner in the **social dialogue** process, a component of the European social model. Worker participation, with a particular focus on EWCs (European works councils), also has a major impact on the programme.

A vast set of subjects to address varying needs

The educational activities now offered are grouped by theme, as follows:

- Strengthening the European social model
- Equality and social cohesion
- Sustainable development and industrial policy
- Trade union and leadership renewal
- Working conditions and quality of employment
- Project management and finance
- Languages and communication
- Eurotrainers – teacher training
- Worker participation
- Strengthening the EWCs' actions.

2. Research Department

Co-operation with the Pan-European Regional Council network (PERC)

PERC is a body set up by the ETUC and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) to deal with European issues.

Expertise is provided for the PERC network and its economic expert group by the ETUI participant on the impact of the Eurozone crisis on Eastern Europe. This involves participation at key PERC events, in some cases with the involvement of a further expert. Additional expertise is provided in the health and safety area, the aim being to exchange information about health and safety management, as well as to

undertake data collection on safety representatives in the EU countries in comparison with countries of the PERC network.

Networks, experts and dissemination

The ETUI is a partner of GURN – The Global Union Research Network – and contributes to the network by providing it with expert knowledge on priorities dealt with at the ETUI. Based on the positive experiences and frequent requests to share research results, the ETUI will also participate in other international trade-union-institute-related networks such as the European-Asian network on minimum wages. This cooperation involves a maximum of four days of work in one year and a travel budget to attend the meetings.

Another forum at which the ETUI will be present, in order to incorporate the European dimensions and contribute to the exchange of information and in-depth discussion between labour researchers and trade union leaders, is the annual ‘Transatlantic social dialogue’, where issues of concern for the trade unions in North America and Europe are debated between researchers and trade unionists from both sides of the Atlantic. A similar initiative is planned with CRIMT (*Centre de recherche interuniversitaire sur la mondialisation et le travail*) in Canada insofar as relevant opportunities emerge. Eligible costs alone will be incurred under this work programme.

Capacity-building of trade unions in the Balkans is another area of ongoing cooperation. Activities in this context will continue to focus on building the capacity for the region to run capacity projects by themselves, supporting the building of university courses on industrial relations and labour law, and collaborating, supporting and providing expertise for expert networks. Eligible costs alone will be incurred under this work programme.

Glossary

BLER	Board-level employee representatives	GOODCORP	Network on corporate governance
CAWIE	Collectively agreed wages in Europe (project)	GURN	The Global Union Research Network
CJEU	European Court of Justice	HBS	Hans Böckler Stiftung
CRIMT	Centre de recherche interuniversitaire sur la mondialisation et le travail	ILO	International Labour Organisation
CSR	Country-specific recommendation	IR	Industrial relations
ECHA	European Chemicals Agency	MNCs	Multinational companies
EGOS	European Group for Organisational Studies	N.E.T.	Network of European Works Council Trainers
ELFS	European Labour Force Survey	OSE	Observatoire Social européen
EPSU	European Federation of Public Sector Unions	PERC	Pan-European Regional Council network
EQF	European Qualifications System	PIAAC	Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies
ESS	European Social Survey	REFIT	Regulatory Fitness and Performance
EWCDDB	European Works Councils database	SEER	South East Europe Review on labour and social affairs
EWCS	European Working Conditions Survey	SEEUROPE	European Company network
EWPCC	European Workers Participation Competence Centre	TTUR	Transnational Trade Union Rights (network)
EWPF	European Workers Participation Fund	TURI	Trade Union related research institutes