Minutes of the meeting of 2 October 2012 – Brussels


Apologies: Isabelle Barthès, Michel Agostini

ETUI representatives present: Philippe Pochet, Ulisses Garrido, Nathalie De Vits, Silvana Pennella, Jean-Claude Le Douaron, Gabriela Portela, Bruno Demaître, Valerica Dumitrescu

Concha de Sena was invited to present item 6 on the agenda. Grigor Gradev was also invited to present item 4 on the agenda.

**Agenda**

0. Opening remarks
1. Interim review of the strategic plan
   - Programme and objectives
   - The working groups and the effectiveness of the organisational model
2. Conference and Education Day
   - Programme and operation
3. Programme 2013/14
   - Draft – priorities - activities and budget
4. Trade union education in the CEEC countries
   - Situation, needs and prospects
5. The Networks
   - Proposals by the education officers
6. Learning pathways
   - Interim report and working guidelines
7. Certification/validation
   - Presentation of the current core courses
8. AOB
   - “Funds and support fees”
   - …

**Opening remarks**

Ulisses Garrido (UG) made a few opening remarks. He introduced the day’s agenda. UG gave the floor to Philippe Pochet (PP), the General Director of the ETUI.

PP announced some good news:

1. The Institute’s own resources will be capped at 15% and the ETUI will see a slight increase in its budget
2. The ETUI is set to merge, the Education Department will be moved to the 5th floor
3. The Research Department will be comprised of two units, each with a “head of unit.”

PP expressed concern about the situation in Europe, the crisis facing labour law, about the collapse of labour law and the trade unions.

**Minutes of the meeting of 29 February 2012**

UG asked members to approve the minutes. They were unanimously approved.

**Interim review of the strategic plan**

One year into the 4-year strategy, the assessment is positive overall. Some weaknesses remain however, such as visibility/communication. Other elements are ongoing. This is an annual exercise and one that will have to be repeated to review progress.
The working groups

1. “Quality” working group
   Report by Jean-Claude Le Douaron (JCL).
   The question put to the working group was whether we need a quality working group in future. And what will it do?
   We (JCL, Tatiana, Marie and Bruno) have put together a tentative list of tasks that could eventually be entrusted to the group.
   a) Firstly, to develop its own quality indicators (list of indicators)
   b) To assess the quality of all training activities, but what will then happen to our evaluations?
   c) To draw reasoned conclusions from this year’s evaluations and check whether the indicators and evaluations can be reconciled
   The aim is to agree on a common system, to draw reasoned conclusions from the evaluations, thus making the pedagogical committee what, to some extent, it should always have been, a body that oversees the quality of the ETUI’s education and training activities.

   Comment: What is the deadline for the collection of indicators?
   JCL suggests that this should be discussed in Zagreb (conference) and that the system be applied as from 1 April 2013.

2. “Certification” working group
   Report by Liz Rees (LR).
   The group is small and it took some time to understand what had happened during the previous groups and to grasp the changes in the field of certification in recent months and to follow the developments in this area. Many things have changed since the last pedagogical committee. The project management programme headed by Silvana is probably the one that has made most progress. The “Young leaders-ETC” project adopts a similar approach, but with a more long-term view with a qualification potential that is maybe more significant for each participant.
   As for the ”Eurotrainers-ETT,” project, Gabriela (GP) is working on an alternative method for the certification and accreditation of academic qualifications.
   This is not an easy task given the sheer number of recognition and accreditation systems. Take the case of the EQF, which takes time to integrate all the certifications, qualifications and recognitions needed.
   It is important to work through a number of models and to have a clear idea of what we want before contacting the training institutions.

   Comment: in the text of the strategy there is a specific task to accomplish; a contract used only for certified training courses. This means that this written text cannot be applicable to language courses, because the duration of these courses and their characteristics do not reach the required minimum.

3. “Communication” working group
   Sabine Letz (SL) reports.
   Objective, improving the visibility of the ETUI’s pedagogical activities.
   The first steps are:
   a. brochures, it is important to have the brochures translated. Translations can be entrusted to the confederations. To do this a model (template) is required.
   b. the need for a quality newsletter. Remember the AGORA? Maybe create a new version of AGORA in another format and under another name (EDUC action?).
   c. a writing team (could be put together from among the members of the working group)
   d. the target audience such as politicians, trade union departments, the European Trade Union Institute, the ETUC, the PERC, the Pan-European Regional Council, the European institutions etc.

   Content of the newsletter:
   • inform the public about educational and pedagogical activities within the ETUI at European level, at national level, among its members, ETUC members
   • proposals for resources and partnerships
   • testimonials in the field of training and education
   • testimonials on practical and methodological experiences
   • abstracts on all kinds of topical matters

   There is the language problem and it is necessary to secure the commitment of all concerned.

   Comment: the poor quality of the translations
4. "Innovation" working group
Valerica Dumitrescu (VD) reports.

Three questions serve as the guiding thread: why, who and what?
- Why innovate? To improve our own performance, to enhance our training activities.
- For whom and with whom? The ETUI staff, trainers, Eurotrainers, our networks, national organisations, the ETUC, the participants of national organisations. This is a very broad audience with whom we can work, with whom we can carry out our activities.
- What? Develop our inventiveness in terms of new activity topics, pedagogical methods, pedagogical techniques, new target audiences and new activities.

Comments:
- "a lack of any high tech tools (educational and teaching technologies)"
- "Difference between the use of traditional tools and new technologies"
- "Innovation and technology are not synonymous. Technology is part of innovation whereby technology can help innovation"

Main conclusion on the working groups:
UG had invited the working groups to take stock of their own work, to review this method of participation in the light of their practices and the difficulties encountered; conclusion, we are continuing with the model of the working groups. Maybe we can invite one or two experts or someone who can help the working groups to go that extra mile and strengthen the working group by injecting a certain expertise.

Trade Union training in the CEECs

Presentation by Grigor Gradev

The PERC is an intermediate structure between the ETUC and the ITUC (International Trade Union Confederation), covering Europe as a whole. It is a structure that pools common interests, which also focuses on all the common denominators that pull the plug on diehard myths concerning the barriers that still allegedly separate East and West Europe. But in policy terms, there is a clear synergy. In times of crisis, we need a crisis manager. Protecting the European social model should be our utmost concern. What is happening in Europe at this time has consequences. Europe is unravelling and it is increasingly failing to rise above what is happening around it. The crisis was a purely economic and financial phenomenon, but it has turned into a political crisis. The crisis is also affecting democracy. Major measures that are calling out to be implemented are being put off. This problem is not just down to the economy but has implications for democracy. Democracies are under threat in Western Europe and this issue is becoming a major talking point. In Eastern Europe, in political theory, we talk of competitive authoritarianism. This is nothing new and is a term that has been banded about for years. It is an internal mechanism that coordinates all the institutions so that the necessary action is taken, which does not concern one person in particular, or the people.

The 9th Regional Meeting of the PERC will be held in April of this year. We have identified several priorities in the run-up to this meeting. What do we want to establish, us, the trade unions in Europe? Two fields of action and key questions have already been defined: the social dialogue and democracy. We will address the subjects of training, education and vocational training, which are critical links in the chain. We need jobs; we need to create jobs for the skilled middle classes. How best respond to the decline in trade union membership? A survey conducted by the ITUC revealed a membership rate of only 30%. How can we react? What is the perception of the trade unions, even in the most advanced models, especially among young people? Young people are the future but prefer to protest outside the framework of the trade unions. They do not want to work with the trade unions. These are questions that need to be tackled because the problems are very serious. All this will be discussed in April at this major conference.

Conference and Education Day 2012
UG: For the first time, we are organising an education day following the proposal by Marcus.

The day is divided into a two parts. The morning is devoted to institutional matters. We have been liaising with our Croatian colleagues, who proposed and confirmed the participation of the Minister of Labour. They even said that it would be possible and useful to have the Minister of Education, but this is yet to be confirmed.

The morning will begin with a presentation of inequalities in Europe and will be chaired by Philippe Pochet. The base is "Benchmarking working in Europe."
This will be followed by a presentation by Michel Agostini, working in cooperation with Mokhtar Kaddouri. The afternoon will be set aside for various panels and working groups. This is the responsibility of JCL.

Conference, the 1st day: presentation of the draft programme 2013-14 (a participatory process by the national organisations). Panels and working groups in the afternoon.

2nd day: presentation of the report of the working groups by VD and Marie Caraj (MC), presentation of educational pathways by Concha.

Programme 2013/14

UG: We have received more than twenty proposals from organisations, which is very good. They are listed in the table that you received.

One suggestion from the Swedish organisations, from LO and TCO, is to organise courses for senior trade union leaders, along the lines of the course for young trade union leaders. The suggestion is not yet included in the table. Agreement needs to be reached on whether to include the suggestion in the 2013-2014 programme.

Partnerships are not yet decided, except for organisations that have sent in their proposal. We have plans for thematic courses in cooperation with ILO/ACTRAV. We also have the economics course in conjunction with the LSE (London School of Economics), following an agreement between the ETUI and the LSE.

Comments, * in favour of the Swedish proposal for a 'senior' course along the lines of a special course for the more experienced. A high school type course on how to update themes, including major European themes, labour relations, the economy - the language barrier * - * the European elections in 2014 - * course to be macro-regional - * best practice in youth employment, 'best practice' is a ETUC priority.

The Networks

Presentation of the 5 networks

Silvana; TTUPO, Project Management, started 20 years ago, an information network on European funding opportunities.

The four main objectives of the network are: 1. to advise, review and comment on the general progress of the training work on project management, its steering and success
2. To contribute towards and assist the ETUI in the development of the strategy outlined in this field.
3. To cater to the needs of affiliate members through the production of essential training resources
4. To help promote, lobby for and advocate the importance of working around a project within trade unions

One new development is the online platform MOODLE, available since April 2012.

Gabriela; languages network, the network is concentrated above all on learning English and French. The idea is to help ETUI ensure that its members, as far as possible, can access quality training modules in English and French to become either a learner or trainer. It is important to have and there is a real need for experienced language teachers.

VD; NETYL network; Network for European Training of Young (Trade Union) Leaders, the basic role of the network is: to update and review the competency standards or, where applicable, to ensure the quality, relevance, professionalism and recognition of this training. We already have a core but would like to expand in line with the needs in order to ensure coverage of the various countries and languages. We are undergoing a certification and recognition process based on the model applied by the TUC. Communication currently takes place through an online forum, using Google + as a communication platform.

Bruno, The NET network, Network of European works council Trainers, a relatively young network compared to the others. The network was created in response to the increase in the number of requests for EWC training. The network's goal is to bring together trainers and (former) trade union officials with experience in the field of European Works Councils who can help ETUI offer seminars to European trade union representatives. The network is comprised of about 15 to 20 members, a good mix of experienced people.

Gabriela; Eurotrainers network, a restructured network that is comprised of only 10 people. The network aims to assist the training department of the ETUI ensure a high degree of pedagogical professionalism in the development, provision and evaluation of courses. There are plans to prepare educational content and for the ETT1 and ETT2 modules to be rolled out. It is also necessary to support and assist participants involved in the Eurotrainers process via portfolio development.
Pedagogical pathways
Concha de Sena (CS) presents the interim report of the pedagogical pathways of the European trade union representatives.
The objectives are: 1. To systematise the ETUI's training provision for the EWCs and provide learning pathways that can be adapted to the needs of the EWCs, 2. To come up with future ETUI training programmes that meet the needs of the EWC and provide them with the necessary knowledge and support the development of the necessary capacities, 3. To create or strengthen the European trade union identity of our representatives through ETUI training courses and to secure their loyal participation.
It is not very easy to devise clear pathways and programmes for them. We have tried to ascertain what the work they did actually entailed, what their responsibilities were and, most importantly, what their training needs were; because that it is the objective we need to meet. She thanked her colleagues who participated in the focus group and with whom she worked.
After having established the training needs in terms of knowledge, ability and attitude, we will present some of the EWC courses. The course we would like to highlight is the first, which, according to the team, is a course model where the emphasis really is on the capacity to be developed, given the vast spectrum of knowledge a trade union representatives working in European contexts must have.
When can you effectively claim that a trade union representative is truly competent and has acquired enough knowledge?

Certification/validation
1. Silvana presents us with the inventory of this two-year project. The ETUI has been discussing validation, accreditation and certification for a long time but without taking any real action. A meeting was organised with the TUC and Liz shared with us the experience of the TUC. We chose to test this method on the project management course. Choosing this TUC method was valuable in providing guidance for the analysis and review of the course by pinpointing the key elements that allowed us to improve the benefits of this seminar.
The methodology: we checked what already existed in the British units and what was applicable to the activities of the project management course. We highlighted the learning outcomes that are similar to the British model. There is no examination, but the course is validated on the basis of the work performed during the seminar with reports, exercises, activities, etc.
The TUC has appointed an assessor, Colin Arthur, who is now also a member of our network. He had the time and opportunity to get an inside view of the activities and to familiarise himself with them and to capture, on the spot, the participants’ reactions. He submitted his results to an accreditation body officially recognised in Scotland and England and this accreditation body issues certificates examples of which are given in the report (ETUI website).
To organise such courses, the contributions of some organisations are absolutely essential because not only do they input ideas, but they have also delegated trainers and participants who help us implement this training module in three seminars.
2. Valerica: the certification and accreditation pilot will be rolled out in the ETC course together with Rob Hancock from the TUC. It is still necessary to identify level 3 of the EQF for this training. We have already identified six units that we have taken over from the British system. We are at the beginning of the certification process.
3. Gabriela, we have specific themes (ETT) in the field of trade union training that no other institution tackles. It is quite legitimate to seek approval, an independent certification. We told ourselves that it would not hurt to go to see in a new country, a different country to study the prospects for approval. There was a first meeting with the University of Artois and we will also look at the experiences of the University of Lille. The two universities have a long experience in the certification of learning outcomes from the specific point of view of trade union learning.

AOB
Funds and support fees, dues, EWC-registration fee
UG; There is a slight change in the ETUC dues system. Instead of two groups, now we have 3 groups, the countries who pay dues to the ETUC at a rate of 100%, 40% and 25%.
ETUI still applies 100% and 25% for the registration fee. The question is, can we take the decision to apply a direct increase when there are so many difficulties? How? What are the alternatives, the solutions?
Yuliya and Paula met to talk about this problem after the ETUC Executive Committee, 3 groups were created, 100%, 40% and 25%. The ETUI registration fee is to be changed, two groups already exist, the 100 and 25%. What to do with the 40% group? This means that some countries will pay a higher registration fee. Will they accept? The risk is to have fewer participants. Perhaps richer countries can help. Here is a proposal hinged around solidarity, group I = 60 € (50 € +10 € solidarity), group II = 20 € and group III = 15 €. The list of countries included in Group I, II or III is the same as for the ETUC dues.

Comments, * what is the participation rate of some organisations, some members of some organisations, we don’t have the statistics. Sometimes statistics are compiled in rather a haphazard way.

Comments on the actual capacity of organisations from the CEEC to pay the prices set without solidarity measures. In the face of this, PP suggests that it is better to align our dues on the matrix of the ETUC, a new matrix that has been developed with extraordinary efforts. We must fall in with the rules.

**Dates of other meetings**
The next meetings are scheduled to be held on 4 and 5 March and 8 and 9 October 2013 in Brussels. The dates for the 2013 conference are 20 and 21 November, with arrival on 19 November.