

Building unions in Central and Eastern Europe

(12 February 2016) Twenty union activists and officers from five countries met this week in London, at the head offices of public services union Unison, to discuss organising and recruitment strategies and tactics.

The seminar was organised by EPSU and the ETUI trade union training organisation and targeted at affiliates active in health and social services in Lithuania, Romania and the Czech and Slovak Republics. National and local representatives from these countries were joined by representatives of Unison's health section.

The two and a half day meeting included discussions about strategy, planning campaigns, mapping workplaces and monitoring progress. Eddy Stam, currently seconded to EPSU from the Dutch trade union FNV, led a number of the sessions including ones on creative campaigning and face-to-face recruitment.

Greg Thomson, head of strategic organising at Unison, outlined his union's approach to organising and described a specific campaign aimed at increasing membership and the number of activists at a major residential care company.

Danny Bertossa of Public Services International also contributed, highlighting some of the key lessons from one of the many organising campaigns he had been involved in.

The seminar was organised with a view for follow up activity, with Eddy Stam available to provide the four unions with advice and support on planning and carrying out organising campaigns.

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