

Building on recruitment and organising successes

Representatives of six trade unions from Hungary, Czech Republic, Serbia and Slovakia met in Budapest on 22 November to discuss progress with their recruitment and organising work. Five of the trade unions had been part of the 2015-16 EPSU project on recruitment involving the experienced organiser Eddy Stam, formerly of the Dutch FNV trade union. On the basis of the training and advice provided by Eddy the five unions had taken a number of initiatives that had begun to pay off in terms of membership recruitment. They were now looking to consolidate this to establish a long-term approach to the challenge of increasing membership and encouraging activists at workplace level.

For the GSZSZ health union in Serbia, a series of training seminars for activists had begun to pay off with 11 new workplace organisations established covering over 1100 members. The OSZSP health union in the Czech Republic had decided to set up a recruitment team that would meet regularly to develop its strategy and plan campaigns, with a particular focus on improving communication with members and potential members.

The BDDSz childcare workers' union in Hungary had developed their workplace mapping and underlined the importance of face-to-face recruitment, resulting in 300 new members over the year. The HVDSz 2000 municipal and waste union had also set up new teams to plan their campaigning and communications work. They discuss quarterly objectives and propose specific targets for recruitment, with workers in the district heating sector being the current focus of their organising efforts.

The KKDSz culture workers' union had put a lot of work into ensuring that the union was more visible at the workplace and into better support for the activities of their local officials. The union had seen steady recruitment figures over the year but acknowledged, as did the other unions, that a combination of workers retiring or leaving the sector was taking its toll and that recruitment successes were still only delivering modest net membership gains.

The three Hungarian trade unions had decided to work together to draw up an

ambitious recruitment and organising strategy involving a national media campaign, regional promotional activities and a proposal for training activists.

EPSU welcomed the opportunity to discuss the unions' work and their plans for the next couple of years. It would be looking at the new proposals to see how it could offer support.

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