



Minutes of the VI meeting of the Trade Union Journalist network

The Meeting took place at the ITUH building on February 20th. 17 participants from 10 European countries took place with 4 apologies from 4 more countries. The countries represented were Belgium, Cyprus, Finland, France, Italy, The Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom & Malta [those that had sent apologies were from Spain, Ireland, Moldova, Lithuania].

The meeting started with a round of presentations and expectations from the meeting and the network. About half of the participants were first timers in a meeting. This was the first meeting since the network had a major re-adjustment of their members.

Carola Fischbach-Pyttel, EPSU General Secretary, opened the meeting highlighting the main issues for EPSU in 2012 and what has 2011 given us in terms of communication and the No to austerity campaign, making the link with the difficult situation for workers, and particularly public sector workers, in Greece, Romania, Hungary, Portugal...

The main urgent item in the agenda was the mobilisation at the European level on February 29th against the "Fiscal compact treaty". And other action such as the strike on March 22 in Portugal. Other issues high of the agenda for EPSU are the negotiations of the Working Time Directive, the Water campaign to be launch in March at Marseille and the "*Closing the tax gap campaign*".

Then the meeting continued to have a debate about the common identity for a European federation as well as for Public Services International (PSI). How unions in Europe can relate in their image with a European Federation and how to improve our internal communications are the major challenges for EPSU and also for its affiliates.

A concrete proposal was made to hold a conference on this issue in Cyprus taking advantage of the Cypriot presidency. PASYDY will consult about this proposal at their annual delegates meeting on March 14th. The result of the consultation is positive and the date of the meeting should be decided in the coming weeks to hold a further meeting of the network in Cyprus. The idea is to host a full conference with journalists and media experts to increase the European sense of all EPSU affiliates.

A general appraisal of the participants is that in many countries [Sweden, France, etc] the European angle of news is very limited. There is general agreement on the need of increase the communication between communicators as well as to ensure a better common entity. The campaigns are seen as a good tool but they have to be left to the local knowledge of the affiliates. Personal stories are seen as a good angle to develop a common European media strategy. Following the "[wrong target report](#)" exemple, other reports will follow.

A more concrete social media strategy is needed. The secretariat will launch several aspects [Facebook is seen as appropriate]. The water campaign will certainly have this aspect. National debates will also be organised throughout 2012- 2013 in several unions/countries to develop the European angle. EPSU welcome all such initiatives. The secretariat also encourages the sharing of information in the form of newsletters and short briefings. The

different way of understanding issues [different national cultures and as well as different trade union cultures make the task harder].

The group will be added to the water campaign "water splash". EPSU will try to build this identity picking one or two issues at a time [in 2012 water and taxation, although not "sexy" will be used to try to achieve this"].

The event continued with Teresa Marshall, Coordinator of Communications at PSI, who presented the PSI work of 2011 (FTT at Cannes, the Arab Spring, Wisconsin, the creation of the [Communication Action Network](#)). EPSU network integrates, with its specific needs to this joint effort to improve our internal and external communications.

In the global arena, as well as in Europe, there is an attack against trade unions and public services. We need to build bridges with friendly intellectuals, bloggers, journalists to build a block of support.

PSI raises the issue of the QPS campaign as well as the [PSI Global Congress in Durban](#). Teresa presents the Communication Action Meeting in Wisconsin in March. Several participants of the Communication Action Network meeting in Tunisia comment on the experience.

A debate about what type of communications took place: There is general agreement on the attack to public services. In Belgium, Italy and so on... Polls asked by the Swedish unions. In other places, the media is against but the public is in favour, for instance in France. PSI & EPSU need to know of the national reality regularly. The members of the network are encourage to send regular brief notes about what happens in their countries.

The participants will have a month to comment on the notes of the seminar once they are sent. Between the notes and the Cyprus meeting the Trade Union Journalist network will decide a road map for communications.

A campaign to get all EPSU and PSI links to the website of the unions will be launch. Members of the network will help getting their unions to talk about their international organisations.

EPSU will continue to develop and spread the decision of the network.