

# Global Union Research Network – GURN

[www.gurn.info](http://www.gurn.info)

**Newsletter 10**  
**Geneva, October 2006**

## **Table of Contents**

- I. Workshop Reports
- II. Update on the GURN website on Sustainable Development
- III. The GURN Database in Cooperation with the FES
- IV. News from the Global Labour University
- V. Presentation of a Partner Institute: the Inter-University Research Centre on Globalization and Work (CRIMT)
- VI. New Publications
- VII. Call for Papers
- VIII. Call for Nominations

Appendix

## **I Workshop Reports**

**Report on the GURN workshop ‘Social Policy in a global Economy – the Challenges for organized labour’** by Tim Wallace and Frank Hoffer, ILO, Bureau for Workers’ Activities

A GURN workshop was held on 4 October in Lisbon immediately following the joint ILO, EC and Government of Portugal World Conference “Social Protection and Inclusion: converging efforts from a global perspective”. The main theme of the GURN workshop was on pension systems, their reforms and the role of unions in shaping public debate.

There were 21 participants, being 12 men and 9 women, coming from 16 countries from South America, Africa, Asia, North America and Europe. Two papers were presented at the workshop and formed the basis of discussion.

The first, by Michael Cichon, Head of the ILO Social Security Department, reflected the analysis he had provided to the world conference: that the public provision of pensions is an effective and affordable method of alleviating poverty. He also discussed the ILO’s campaign to globally implement universal social protection. He emphasised that part of this campaign must involve winning the economic debate: a shift from an exclusive focus on growth through private pensions, and back towards public investment in redistributive social protection systems aimed at poverty alleviation.

Building on this premise, Michael Cichon discussed the role of international labour standards in setting necessary levels of social protection. In this context he suggested it

might be worth exploring together with unions whether an additional instrument on basic income for children, old age people or other groups unable to earn an income might be helpful to strengthen the campaign for the extension of social security to all.

Bob Baldwin presented a paper he prepared for the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD - "Current Pension Issues for Trade Unionists: a brief canvass of the issues". He analysed the competing paradigms surrounding pension reform: for financial markets, public pensions represent a lost economic opportunity, whereas to unions they are a public asset and a tool for social equity. Similarly, the debate on pensions has not in the past decades been about equity but about economics: budget balances, aging populations, savings and investment. Recognising this helps define for unions how best to engage in the public debate on national pension reforms. Importantly, he stressed that once pensions have been privatised they move out of the public domain and the scope for public debate and influence is greatly reduced.

In response to these presentations the workshop explored the challenges facing unions in developing or maintaining social protection systems. It was noted that in the industrialised and the developing world the focus on social protection is different: the former is mainly concerned with reforming existing schemes, whether for questions of equity or sustainability; the latter sees it as a matter of poverty alleviation. In an international debate it is important to ensure that the legitimate interest of income replacement and the urgent need for poverty alleviating universal basic pension schemes are not presented and debated as opposing models, but understood as complementary elements in a process of improving social security provisions.

Issues of changing cultural norms and ideology were discussed, particularly the need for unions to foster a philosophy of intergenerational solidarity between younger and older workers. The growing dominance of market relations among citizens has created rather atomized individuals or families less willing to support solidaristic schemes of social security. A tendency that, in part, strikes at the income redistribution inherent in public pensions and is more consistent with systems of private pensions on individual accounts.

A similar dilemma for unions is how to promote policies that see social protection systems extended to workers currently working in the informal economy. This is an issue facing the developing world (which seeks to formalise the informal economy) and the industrialised world (which seeks to reverse the increasing informalisation of the economy). A different but related battle facing unions is where governments propose cuts to existing, more generous schemes, such as for civil service workers, on grounds of affordability as a precondition for introducing universal pensions.

In addition to papers that several workshop participants tabled at the workshop, participants presented brief country reports on their national pension systems and the reform agenda unions are currently facing. The common theme of the reports was the future affordability of public pensions, along with the shift to the World Bank-preferred 3 Pillar model: a mixture of a public safety net, a system of private pension insurance accounts, plus supplementary individual savings or complementary retirement insurance. In terms of responding to this global shift, participants discussed the resources and strategies they need to develop. While noting the need to initiate and drive public debate around the ideological or philosophical issues detailed above, e.g.

intergenerational solidarity, participants identified the need for technical assistance: advice, education and analysis of proposals.

In this respect, the workshop concluded to develop a GURN website on social policy. ACTRAV will take the responsibility for gathering information resources on this topic. Information will be posted on the Web to assist GURN participants in their domestic campaigns, such as profiles of a range of national pension schemes and links to databases on social security systems. An ILO ACTRAV publication in early 2007 will compile a series of country reports about trends in pension systems. Additionally, ILO ACTRAV will explore the development of a training programme on technical and financial issues of social security, using the expertise of ILO technical departments and the International Training Centre of the ILO in Turin.

For further information contact:

Frank Hoffer  
Publication, Information and Research Unit  
ILO/ACTRAV  
4, route des Morillons  
CH-1211 Geneva 22  
Phone: +41 22 799 89 37  
Fax: +41 22 799 65 70  
Email : hoffer@ilo.org

**Report on the ICFTU/FES workshop on NAMA and GATS** by Esther Busser, ICFTU Geneva Office

A workshop for trade unionists on the implications of NAMA & GATS for development and decent work, took place from 27 – 29 September 2006 in Geneva, and was jointly organized by the ICFTU and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES) Geneva Office with support of the GURN and Solidar.

The workshop was organized to strengthen the capacity of trade unionists on the issues of Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA) and the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), which are both crucial for the employment situation and development strategies of developing countries, as well as to enable trade unions to find more effective approaches and patterns of interaction with their governments. 33 trade unionists participated in the workshop, coming from 22 countries globally.

In the case of NAMA, the proposals currently on the table would have a serious impact on employment in developing countries, increasing already high unemployment and encouraging further competition in low-cost production sectors with extremely poor working conditions. Furthermore, the NAMA proposal would affect future industrial development by reducing substantially the already limited policy space for governments. Given the important effects of an agreement on NAMA, the workshop aimed at assisting trade unionists in understanding the significance of these negotiations and proposals, to assess what is at stake for their countries and for workers, and to develop adequate strategies on how to promote and influence a beneficial outcome from the negotiations.

In the case of GATS, the workshop focused on the current commitments that would limit severely the regulatory capacity of governments in many services areas. It also invited

trade unions to look into the possible impact such commitments would have on access to services, quality of services and working conditions in services. The workshop assisted trade unions in identifying issues in their countries that must be addressed in order to ensure services liberalization that supports development.

The workshop brought together trade unionists from around twenty different countries (Argentina, Brazil, Barbados, Costa Rica, Colombia, Nigeria, Senegal, Philippines, India, Benin, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Ghana, South Africa, Australia, Canada, France, Belgium and Italy), as well as some participants of the GUFs, ILO/ACTRAV staff, ILO staff and NGOs based in Geneva.

A wide variety of experts (from WTO missions based in Geneva, UNCTAD, ILO, WTO, Third World Network, South Centre, Oxfam and ICTSD) shared information and experiences with the participants, both with an aim to increase knowledge on services and NAMA negotiations but also on the wider impacts of those negotiations on development, employment and decent work.

The discussions around NAMA showed the importance of engagement in these negotiations in order to ensure future industrial development, and showed clearly that negotiations at both the multilateral and bilateral/ regional level need to be assessed. Strategies towards trade need a coherent focus on the bilateral and multilateral level with actions at both levels. The discussions on NAMA showed the threat that NAMA poses for development and the very far-reaching demands of developed countries in the NAMA proposals. Demands that can be considered disproportionate compared to preceding rounds of negotiations, compared to Agriculture proposals and compared to autonomous liberalization that has already been undertaken. Furthermore, the need to analyse tariff liberalization at the sectoral level, and the need for an important role for different industrial trade unions was stressed.

On services it was noticed that liberalization mainly works through deregulation, transparency in regulation and non-discrimination in applying regulations. Relating this back to the quality of services and the role of services in development, this area is one of key importance for trade unions to address. Many concerns were expressed during the workshop on the ongoing negotiations at the multilateral level, but as was pointed out, bilateral agreements cover much more concessions most of the time. It is clear that current commitments are not very far going at the moment, and that countries seem reluctant given that the rules that will apply to these commitments are still under negotiation as well. Many countries are also faced with a lack of capacity to assess the strength and weaknesses of their services sectors before they can identify areas for commitments. Another issue that remains on the table is mode 4, including for low skilled workers.

Other issues that were discussed were the investment provisions in bilateral agreements and the negative developmental effects that flow from these. Trade and decent work was the subject of a session focusing on the ways to make trade more responsive to the decent work agenda. The discussion covered both bilateral and multilateral trade agreements and raised a number of challenges for the ILO in this area. Another session addressed the issue of policy space in NAMA and the relative importance of tariffs as an instrument for industrial development due to a lack of alternative instruments. Attention was also given to the importance and ways trade unions could interact with their governments on trade issues. The way to influence the WTO is through the negotiators,

the WTO members. At the same time it was understood that the level of interaction and effectiveness of engagement would depend on the level of knowledge that trade unionists have, stressing once again the need to understand the issues under negotiation as well as their impacts. And finally examples were exchanged of trade union experiences with research, lobbying and campaigns. These showed that effective strategies depend on engagement by trade unions on several levels, including lobbying, research, campaigns and advocacy.

Participants appreciated the usefulness and quality of information they had received during the three days, the good timing of the workshop, the discussions on the different topics, and the interactions with delegates and other experts. They left with a good understanding of what is at stake in the negotiations and in their respective countries. Follow up work was identified by participants, in particular in the areas of engagement with governments, work with affiliates and different industry unions, the need to extend knowledge and cooperation to more unions, work on adjustment measures, need for (continued) work at the regional level, the need to build global trade union solidarity, reassessment of national trade union strategies, the need for sectoral research, and the need for assessment of trade liberalization within the broader framework of sustainable development (strategies).

For further information contact:

Esther Busser  
Trade Policy Officer  
ICFTU-Geneva Office  
Avenue Blanc 46  
1202 Geneva  
tel. (41 22) 738 4202  
fax (41 22) 738 1082  
esther.busser@geneva.icftu.org

### **Report on the Research Committee on Labour Movements at the World Congress of Sociology** by Verena Schmidt, ILO, Bureau for Workers' Activities

The World Congress of the International Sociological Association (ISA) took place in Durban, South Africa from 23-29 July, 2006. The ISA is a non-profit association for scientific purposes in the field of sociology and social sciences and was founded in 1949 under the auspices of UNESCO. The goal of the ISA is to represent sociologists in order to advance sociological knowledge throughout the world. Its members come from 109 countries (for further information see <http://www.ucm.es/info/isa/>).

One of the research committees of the ISA is the research committee on labour movements (RC44). This was established in 1990 with a view to encouraging international research on labour movements, with a focus on their role both in industrial relations and in the political arena. The research committee has about 80 members from all regions.

RC44 publishes a quarterly newsletter and serves as a clearing house for information on labour movements' research, publications, conferences and educational programs. It convenes regional workshops and organises labour movements panels at the ISA World

Congresses (for more information see:

<http://www.socsci.mcmaster.ca/globallabour/rc44/index.cfm>).

The GURN was introduced in a special session of the research committee on 'Intellectuals and the Labour Movement: a panel discussion'. This session was organized by Prof. Edward Webster from the University of Witwatersrand in South Africa. The other discussants were Oupa Odipe from NALEDI in South Africa who presented NALEDI's work in South Africa, Prof Sakhela Buhlungu from the University of Witwatersrand who analysed the potential pitfalls and opportunities on the cooperation between the labour movement and academics, and Prof. Christoph Scherrer from the University of Kassel who presented the Global Labour University. The research committee was very keen to intensify cooperation with the GURN and encouraged close exchange between the research committee and the GURN.

During the Congress 75 papers were presented along the following eight sessions (the description is based on the organisers' description):

#### SESSION 1: THEORISING THE FUTURE OF WORLD LABOUR

Drawing on empirical cases from different world regions and global industries, the panellists in this session critically engaged with the central theses posed in Beverly Silver's recent book *Forces of Labor: Workers' Movements and Globalization since 1870*. The book recasts labour studies in a long-term and global framework, arguing that the "creative-destructive" processes of historical capitalism have led to the recurrent making, unmaking and remaking of working classes and workers' movements in new forms and on shifting (geographical and industrial) terrains; and explores the likely forms that emergent labor movements will take in the future.

#### SESSION 2: LABOUR HISTORY IN THE ERA OF NEO-LIBERAL GLOBALISATION

This session complemented the theory session, i.e. the significance of labour as a category, and the significance of a labour history at a time when the category of labour is itself questioned. This session showcased cutting-edge labour histories both in the north and in the south.

#### SESSION 3: GLOBAL CORPORATE RESTRUCTURING AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

Economic deregulation has intensified global competition, which has resulted in an acceleration of mergers and acquisitions, labour process change, work intensification, internal labour market segmentation, factory closures and waves of investment in the south. These processes have been accelerated and consolidated by the new institutions of global governance such as the World Trade Organisation, which complements the strategies of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The current proliferation of bilateral free trade agreements is a key facet of the new global architecture that legitimises and enforces these processes. This session explored these changes and considers their implications for labour movements.

#### SESSION 4: CHANGING WORLDS OF WORK

Labour restructuring in the current period has reinforced old divisions and generated new divisions in the workforce. One important fissure concerns the employment contract. It divides full-time permanent waged work from other forms of employment such as casual, fixed-term and agency work; as well as varied forms of 'dependent' self-employment. Outside the many officially recognized categories of work lies the informal

sector, which embraces large numbers of workers in the south. A new more casualised workforce is growing in numbers in several countries, as part of a broader set of changes in wages and working-time conditions. This session explored the implications of these changes for the structures and strategies of labour movements.

#### SESSION 5: GENDER AND LABOUR

This session focused on the gender implications of the restructuring of work and the responses of labour to these changes. In addition, gender relations within the labour movement were examined, particularly with regards to the role played by women in union revitalization. Globalization has led to the massive growth of the economy, in particular the service sector. The session explored whether and how forms of managerial control in these new sectors are gendered and what this implies for collective organization.

#### SESSION 6: LABOUR AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

This session examined the impact of neo-liberal globalisation on labour movements as well as the responses of labour movements to these global challenges. In particular, the session explored whether (and how) labour movements are finding common cause with other working class movements who are facing marginalisation and social exclusion.

#### SESSION 7: MODELS OF UNION ORGANISATION

Models of unions maintaining high levels of mobilisation and membership involvement in union affairs have continued to elude union movements across the world. Furthermore, the changing nature of work as well as the changing composition of the workforce calls into question the existing models of union organisation. This session explored new ideas about existing and emerging models of union organisation.

#### SESSION 8: TRANSNATIONAL ORGANISING

This session focused on the limits and possibilities of current attempts for transnational organising. It took an historical perspective of transnational organisation of the labour movement in different parts of the world.

### **Follow up to the international research conference organised by the GURN and the ISS on 'The Impact of Global Production Systems on Trade Union Strategies'**

As reported in the last GURN newsletter, the GURN organised in the Hague an international research conference on Global Production Systems during May 10 -11, 2006 together with the Institute for Social Studies (ISS).

In addition to various representatives from national trade unions and academics, six Global Unions participated in the Conference and presented papers: International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI), International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Union (ICEM), International Metalworkers' Federation (IMF), International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers' Federation (ITGLWF) and International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF). The last newsletter unfortunately omitted the very important contribution of IMF on the 'Organising in Global Electronic Supply Chains'.

The authors of the conference papers will be contacted shortly about their contributions. The ISS and ILO ACTRAV plan to publish a book in 2007 with the most important contributions of the workshop.

## **II Update on the GURN website on Sustainable Development**

The page on *Sustainable Development* (<http://www.gurn.info/topic/susdev/index.html>) was launched in July - simultaneously with the new trade union Sustainable Development Unit's website, in cooperation with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), Sustainlabour and Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD (TUAC). The two websites make available the Trade Union "country-by-country" profiles on a wide range of sustainable development issues: energy, climate change, occupational health & safety, 28 April International Commemoration Day (ICD) for Dead and Injured Workers, asbestos, HIV/AIDS, trade union rights, as well as corporate accountability.

Already in August 2006, i.e. one month after its launch, the web page hit second place of the most visited GURN topic pages. The page is coordinated by Mr. Lucien Royer and Ms. Anabella Rosemberg in TUAC and Ms. Lene Olsen in ACTRAV.

## **III The GURN/ FES Database – Exchange of Trade Union Research**

Since 2005 the library of the Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation cooperates with GURN and supports transnational relations and information exchange of trade union researchers worldwide (<http://library.fes.de/gurn/>) and most notably on the GURN database. At the moment 150 research reports and papers on the GURN priority topics are available as full texts - such as of Mike Waghorne "Regulating civil society (notes for a presentation at the session on "Moving beyond burdens on business" on 18 September 2006, at a meeting of the OECD Working Party on Regulatory Management and Reform)". To download the paper, click on (<http://library.fes.de/gurn/>), select 'GURN database of research papers' then type in 'Waghorne' as author or use the shortcut: <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/gurn/00172.pdf>.

We would be pleased if we could add more research papers to the database and if the number of the users increased further to make trade union research more well known. The GURN database offers a great chance to contribute to this. Let us use this chance!

Rainer Gries  
Deputy Director  
Library of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES)  
D-53170 Bonn  
[Rainer.Gries@fes.de](mailto:Rainer.Gries@fes.de)  
FES-Library: [http://library.fes.de/library/index\\_gr.html](http://library.fes.de/library/index_gr.html)

#### **IV Global Labour University – A new Masters’ Programme in South Africa complementary to the one existing in Germany**

Starting in January 2007 the Global Labour University offers a one year Masters’ programme on ‘Labour and Development’ at the University of Witwatersrand in South Africa. This is in addition to the one year Master’s Course on ‘Labour Policies and Globalization’ which has operated in Germany since 2004/5. The programme provides the opportunity to study partly in South Africa and partly in Germany.

The Global Labour University is a new approach to strengthen the intellectual and strategic capacity of trade unions and to establish much stronger working relationships between trade unions, the ILO, and the scientific community. It strengthens trade union capacity and competence to promote the values of the Decent Work agenda. It also enabled trade unions to engage more effectively in social and economic policy issues like employment, social protection, and the implementation of international labour standards.

The Master’s programmes support trade unions to substantially improve their intellectual profile by building a channel for the development of qualified trade union leaders, as well as supporting the recruitment of younger experts. The global network provides a unique possibility of research and policy development in a truly multicultural and multiregional environment. In the following years the programme will be disseminated to other universities in Latin America, Asia, Europe and North America. Whenever possible, students from all regions will be represented in the course. Global workshops, conferences, publications and internet working groups facilitate genuine global dialogue and sustainable international networks.

The deadline for the next Masters’ course is March 1, 2007 for the course starting September 1, 2007 in Germany and October 1, 2007 for the course starting January 15, 2008 in South Africa.

For more information see <http://www.global-labour-university.org> or contact

Mr. Christof Dieterle at the University of Kassel  
Phone: +49 (0)561 8043113  
Fax: +49 (0)561 8043464  
E-mail: [ma-lpg@uni-kassel.de](mailto:ma-lpg@uni-kassel.de)

or Ms. Mandy Moussouris at the University of the Witwatersrand  
Phone: +27 11 7174466 /4460  
Fax: +27 11 7174469  
E-mail: [mandy.moussouris@wits.ac.za](mailto:mandy.moussouris@wits.ac.za)

#### **V Presentation of a partner institute: The Inter-University Research Centre on Globalization and Work (CRIMT) by Marc-Antoin Hennebert**

The Inter-University Research Centre on Globalization and Work (CRIMT or le Centre de recherche interuniversitaire sur la mondialisation et le travail) is a Canadian-based inter-university research centre on the theoretical and practical challenges of institutional renewal for work and employment in a global era.

### **Research team**

Physically located at Université de Montréal, Université Laval (in Québec City) and HEC Montréal, CRIMT is a centre of excellence in research and a fertile training ground for graduate students in industrial relations, human resources management, sociology, economics, management and labour law. It is made up of roughly fifty university co-researchers: twenty from the province of Québec; ten from other Canadian provinces and more than twenty other researchers in other countries. More than one hundred and twenty graduate students work on projects that have links to the Centre. We are engaged in a wide range of research partnerships and collaborations and actively seek research partners to engage in our research programme.

### **Research activities and objectives**

CRIMT pursues an interdisciplinary, interuniversity and international research program on multiple aspects of work and employment in a global era. Our objective is to understand, empirically and theoretically, what we see as an increasing “disconnect” between the prevailing institutional framework for work and employment, which in many ways harkens back to a previous industrial age, and current changes sweeping the world of work.

Our central research question concerns how to achieve both organizational efficiency and economic well-being for workers in an increasingly international age. In order to answer this general question, we ask three more specific questions.

- First, what kind of institutions exist for new workplaces?
- Second, what is the impact of globalization on national and local institutions for work and employment?
- Third, is there and can there be a citizenship at work in the new workplace?

Each of these questions entails a set of theoretical propositions that are subject to the kind of interdisciplinary debate and empirical enquiry that should take us the forefront of debates about work and employment. Each is organized in distinct sub-projects at different levels of analysis (workplace and firm or organization; forms of collective representation and negotiation beyond the workplace; public policy). Each entails significant dialogue between the research projects. Each seeks to respond to three important types of query. First, empirically, what are the significant trends? Second, theoretically, what are the appropriate theories and paradigms that allow us to understand these trends? Finally, in normative terms, what are the paths for institutional renewal that are likely to result in better outcomes for workers and organizations? In other words, what does the research tell labour market actors and public policy makers about the new world of work in a global era?

The research projects are structured around three cross-cutting, interdisciplinary

research themes: (I) the understanding and emergence of institutions for work in the new production models; (II) the interface between national and transnational sources of work regulation in the global economy; and (III) citizenship at work in a global era.

Each of these themes also concerns different institutional levels of analysis for work and employment: (A) the way that production and work are organized; (B) the degree to which there is collective representation about work, the way that actors are structured in that representation and the institutional understandings that may or may not underlie the interactions of these collective actors; and (C) public policies concerned with work, be they in terms of employment policy, social policy, or labour law or some other dimension of state policy.

### **International and interdisciplinary focus**

Our focus is international because in the context of globalization it is only through comparative and transnational enquiry that we can understand emerging patterns and the role of different institutional configurations. It is also interdisciplinary because the core problems that concern us require multiple lenses and, undoubtedly, the emergence of new theoretical frameworks.

### **Teaching and Other Activities**

CRIMT students pursue degrees in a variety of disciplines. The Centre is developing interdisciplinary and inter-university courses and further helps students to engage in research exchanges with other institutions affiliated to its projects. It is embedded in both national and international research networks and sponsors collaborative international research teams on its core projects. It organizes frequent conferences, seminars and symposiums, most often in partnership with labour market institutions and actors, and sponsors annual Global Research Fellows from countries of the South. Details of all our projects, news and contacts details can be found on our extensive website: [www.crimt.org](http://www.crimt.org)

## VI New Publications

### Labour Education on Labour Inspections

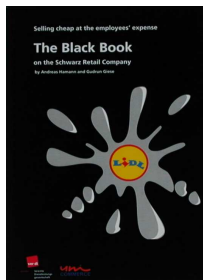
The latest issue of 'Labour Education' was recently published with the title 'The Global Challenges of Labour Inspection'. 'Labour Education' is the journal of the ILO's Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) which is published four times a year in English, French and Spanish and is edited by Luc Demaret from the Bureau for Worker's Activities. You can download all articles free of charge from the following website :

In English : <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/actrav/publ/ledpubl.htm>

En français : <http://www.ilo.org/public/french/dialogue/actrav/publ/ledpubl.htm>

En espaol : <http://www.ilo.org/public/spanish/dialogue/actrav/publ/ledpubl.htm>

### New book on the Lidl campaign of ver.di – the German United Service Union by Agnes Schrieder from ver.di



In autumn 2004 ver.di started a corporate campaign against Lidl, Europe's most successful and aggressively expanding discount chain. Lidl is nearly completely unorganised, the company is extremely union hostile and refuses any collective bargaining with the trade union. The Lidl campaign started with the publishing of the "Lidl black book" on the International Day of Human Rights on 10 December 2004.

Ver.di's purpose in conducting the Lidl campaign ver.di is to support Lidl employees to impose decent working conditions and co-determination rights within their workplace. At present 40,000 employees, most of them women in part-time or in marginal part-time jobs (mini-jobs), are working without protection or workers' representation through work councils. Work councils exist in only seven of the 2600 Lidl branches across Germany.

The "Lidl black book" contains statements from current or former employees, shop assistants as well as management staff, which document the intolerable abuses they suffered in their daily work within the branches. These include degrading controls, permanent monitoring, unfair dismissals, work overload, unpaid overtime and systematic prevention of the establishing of work councils. The "Lidl system " is based on fear.

The goal of the Lidl campaign is to achieve an agreement with the company about establishing work councils in all Lidl branches in order to improve the working conditions of shop assistants. In doing so ver.di also seeks to protect employees in other retail companies against the undermining of working conditions and social standards through low-cost competition.

### Public debate about "discounterisation"

Lidl is one of the most avid promoters of the low-cost philosophy in the retail sector. Therefore; as part of its Lidl campaign Ver.di has taken up the issue of the progressive "discounterisation" of the whole of society. It has implemented a public debate about "cheap" products being at the expense of workers and its impact on social and environmental standards here and worldwide. Ver.di collaborates in this campaign with other civil society groups like christian workers associations, human rights and development initiatives, womens organisations, "ATTAC" and other civil society groups. Prominent people from politics and culture have also expressed their support for this

campaign.

### **Lidl in Europe: The Schwarz group**

Lidl is the most rapidly growing discount chain in Europe with more than 6,000 branches in 23 countries. In total, an estimated 60,000 people are employed in Lidl branches. A second company strand is the extensive self-service department store Kaufland, which has also expanded in recent years in other European countries. Both retailer chains form the Schwarz group, located in Neckarsulm (federal state Baden-Württemberg) - a completely non-transparent network of hundreds of independent companies, commercial foundations and holdings. However, behind this network stands the sole owner, Dieter Schwarz.

### **European Lidl Black Book**

One year after the publishing of the Lidl black book in Germany ver.di wants to expand its investigations of Lidl to other countries in Europe. With its new branches in Europe the Schwarz group also exports the 'Lidl' system of fear and degrading working conditions. Therefore the European Lidl black book is designed to inform people about working conditions and the state of trade union rights and social standards in Europe's most successful low-cost retail chain. Using selected examples and interviews the black book will provide an insight into the daily work of shop assistants. It aims also to collect country specific information about business practices, the economic state and development in this industry; and the behaviour of Lidl in relation to others. This research will provide the basis for a European assessment of the company and possible future actions.

### **European Lidl campaign**

In conjunction with the writing of the European Lidl black book, existing contacts to trade unions in different countries should be extended and new contacts formed. We hope to set up a new momentum with this campaign and to initiate new access to Lidl employees in countries where they haven't existed until now, as well as encourage joint 'cross-border' trade union activities in the retail sector.

### ***For further information contact :***

Agnes Schreieder  
Vereinte Dienstleistungsgewerkschaft  
Bundesverwaltung, Fachbereich Handel  
Paula Thiede Ufer 10  
10179 Berlin  
Schreieder, Agnes" <agnes.schreieder@verdi.de  
Telefon 030 / 69 56 - 27 39  
Telefax 030 / 69 56 - 38 71

***Winners or Losers? Liberalizing Public Services***

**Edited by Ellen Roskam**

**International Labour Office, Geneva 2006**

**New state of the art review, available upon request by emailing your name/address to: [secsoc@ilo.org](mailto:secsoc@ilo.org).**

**Approx. 400 pages. Free of Charge. Available from ILO Geneva**

Public services are being liberalised world wide, opened to foreign service providers, often turned into private services through privatization, commercialization, marketization, and deregulation. Yet the privatization of public services means that many, many people can no longer benefit from such services because they cannot pay, or because they do not belong to the social class for whom the private services are intended. Little is known about the changes taking place in services long considered to be a public “right”, or about the widening social disparities that result from liberalization. What are the impacts on the social and economic security of employees in public services turned private? What happens to employees and “clients” when part of a public service turns private, effectively turning into “competition” for the public service? How rapidly is the liberalization of public services taking place, in which countries, and by what means? These are some of the questions this book attempts to answer through a state of the art review of the extent of the liberalization of public services around the world. Seven areas of public services are examined: health services (including mental health services and nursing home provision), secondary and higher education, pensions, public employment services, labour market training, criminal care services (particularly prisons), and social care services for children and the elderly.

International experts in these seven areas of services provide insight into the mechanisms leveraging the liberalization of social services and the impacts on employees’ income security, employment security, labour market security, on health and working conditions, on opportunities for skills and career development, and on voice representation security. The book addresses questions of governance and makes policy recommendations for consideration by policy makers, employers, trade unions, civil society, academics, and international organisations. Issues discussed include the role played by international financial institutions, how foreign firms enter the market for provision of services, the impact of GATS on services, impact on clients receiving services and the impact of liberalization on the quality of service delivery. The research project was conducted jointly between the International Labour Office and Public Services International, the Global Union Federation of public service workers.

**New ILO Study on Working Time and three recently updated Databases** by Jon Messenger, Conditions of Work and Employment Programme (TRAVAIL), ILO

Working time has been a central workforce issue since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, and was also the subject of the very first international labour standard, the Hours of Work (Industry) Convention in 1919. Over the years, working time has continued to be central to the work of the International Labour Organization (ILO), which has adopted international standards for a variety of working-time related subjects, including not only standards establishing limits on working hours, but also those

providing for minimum weekly rest periods, paid annual leave, protections for night workers, and equal treatment for part-time workers.

The ILO's new book on working time, *Decent Working Time: New Trends, New Issues*, an edited collection of papers from some of the leading international scholars in the field, reflects on the profound changes in working time, and indeed the nature of employment itself, which have been occurring across the industrialized world. The new trends which have emerged over the past decade or two include the common use of results-based employment relationships for managers and professionals; an increasing fragmentation of time to more closely tailor staffing needs to customer requirements (e.g., short-hours part-time work); and the dramatic expansion of operating/opening hours with the move towards a 24-hour and seven-day economy, necessitating, for example, increased weekend working. The result has been a growing diversification, decentralization, and individualization of working hours, as well as an increasing tension between enterprises' business requirements and workers' needs and preferences regarding their hours. This new reality has raised some new issues as well, such as those regarding increasing employment insecurity and instability; time-related social inequalities, particularly in relation to gender; workers' ability to balance their paid work with their personal lives; and even the synchronization of working hours with social times, such as community activities.

*Decent Working Time* reviews this broad sweep of trends and issues regarding working time, and then, based upon both the existing international labour standards on working time and recent research on working time trends and developments focusing on industrialized countries, identifies five significant dimensions of "decent working time". These five dimensions are as follows: working time arrangements should be healthy; "family-friendly"; promote gender equality; advance enterprise productivity; and facilitate worker choice and influence over their hours of work. The five dimensions of "decent working time" provide a broad policy framework—grounded in long-standing ILO principles such as equality of opportunity and treatment between women and men in the world of work<sup>1</sup>—that provide a basis from which to consider how the goal of Decent Work can be advanced in the area of working time. Towards this objective, the book also offers a range of research-based policy suggestions that could be used to advance decent working time along each of these five dimensions.

In addition to this new book, the Conditions of Work and Employment Programme (TRAVAIL) also provides a range of other resources for ILO constituents. One particularly important resource is the TRAVAIL Database, which consists of three online databases covering national laws on working time, minimum wages, and maternity protection in over 100 countries around the world. These three databases are available from the Programme's website, which is located at: [www.ilo.org/travail](http://www.ilo.org/travail).

---

<sup>1</sup> This principle is enshrined in a number of international labour conventions, most notably the Discrimination in Employment and Occupation Convention, 1958 (No. 111).

**Social Dialogue Indicators, Trade union membership and collective bargaining coverage: Statistical concepts, methods and findings ILO Working Paper. Geneva, October 2005.** Review by Sophia Lawrence, ILO Statistical Department

The Social Dialogue, Labour Law and Labour Administration Department - ILO focal point for social dialogue, and the ILO Bureau of Statistics - responsible for international standards for labour statistics, collaborated on a project covering 68 countries to collect and document statistics related to trade union membership and collective bargaining coverage. Developing different indicators representative of social dialogue is one important means to monitor achievement of ILO's strategic objective: strengthening tripartism and social dialogue. The project therefore held regular consultations with the ILO Bureau for Workers' Activities and the ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities and other international experts. The 17th International Conference of Labour Statisticians, 2003 session, also held a Working Group on Social Dialogue Indicators that discussed preliminary methodological proposals.

This working paper is a product of the joint project, written by Sophia Lawrence, STAT and Junko Ishikawa, DIALOGUE. Part I describes two main social dialogue indicators, namely trade union membership and collective bargaining coverage, and documents the statistical concepts and definitions. Various methods and calculations are proposed with a view to better understanding the statistical implications and preparing more comparable indicators. Also provided is an analysis of the statistics collected, including rates of trade union density and of collective bargaining coverage, from the industrial relations and methodological perspectives. The variety of industrial relations systems and situations are reviewed by region. Country methodological practices are systematically documented in country profiles that make up Part II of the Working Paper. Four tables of results and the questionnaires developed to obtain them are presented.

The field of social dialogue is relatively weak with respect to statistics, statistical standards and tools to capture and monitor progress in union membership and bargaining coverage. One-third of ILO member States (government, workers' and employers' organizations) compile some kind of statistics related to social dialogue, yet no international consensus has been achieved. There is a need to develop international statistical guidelines on social dialogue indicators to strengthen the capacity of national statistical authorities and the social partners to collect, apply and understand them and so lay the foundation for the creation of an authoritative, internationally accepted set of social dialogue indicators.

For downloading the working paper click on:

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/download/wp59final.pdf>

## VII Call for Papers



# Labour and the Challenges of Development

- *Labour, growth and development* – what kind of state-society linkages are necessary to avoid ‘enclave’, ‘uneconomic’ growth and development?
- *Labour, development and trade* – what role does trade play in undermining or enhancing inclusive development?

**Call for Papers**  
**International Workshop**  
**at the**  
**University of the Witwatersrand**  
**Johannesburg, South Africa**  
**1-3 April 2007**

## **Workshop background**

The Global Labour University [www.global-labour-university.org](http://www.global-labour-university.org) is a network of trade unions and universities that aims at facilitating research, debate and qualification programmes in order to address global labour issues. At its annual workshop in 2007 trade unionists and scholars are invited to present papers and discuss the challenges for organised labour as outlined in the two lead questions, which are elaborated on below.

Unions around the world operate in a complex and rapidly changing environment. In response to the industrial revolution of the 19<sup>th</sup> century organised labour fought for legislation and welfare provisions to make the ruthless dynamic of a 'free' market compatible with a democratic and inclusive society. Within many Northern industrialised countries this struggle has been remarkably successful during the second half of the twentieth century, with many achieving near full employment and a substantial social wage. However, much of the Southern developing (or majority) world experienced low or at best 'enclave' development, where a few cosmopolitan elites enjoy the fruits of 'development', while the majority experience massive unemployment, informalised work, low wages and poor working conditions. For many, this experience of *under-development* is a direct result of colonialism and neo-colonialism, which arguably was a necessary condition for the development of the North

At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century the new wave of 'neo-liberal' globalisation has shifted jobs from the North to parts of the South. While on the one hand this has boosted employment in parts of the South (especially Asia), it has prevented states from spreading the benefits of economic development to all their citizens. In the North it is eroding the regulatory capacity of the nation state and the capacity of trade unions to defend social achievements. Most countries in the world now experience diminishing labour rights and welfare provisions, informalisation of employment relations and growing inequality and poverty. Indeed, on a global scale, the rich have become richer and the poor poorer

### **1) Labour, growth and development**

"In many international cases, the developmental state has been characterised by a high degree of integration between business and government. The South African developmental state has different advantages and challenges. While we seek to engage private capital strategically, in South Africa the developmental state needs to be buttressed and guided by a mass-based, democratic liberation movement in a context in which the economy is still dominated by a developed, but largely white, capitalist class." (paragraph 20, ANC National General Council, July 2005, Consolidated Report on Sectoral Strategies).

While South Africa has unique challenges, this statement arguably applies to much of the developing world, particularly the rest of Africa and Latin America, where foreign multinational corporations dominate key sectors of the economy. The key question is: what *kind* of developmental state is needed to achieve inclusive development, and what is the role of organised labour as a transformative actor in relation to the state, capital and the rest of civil society?

Where the state has been mainly embedded with an emerging indigenous industrial bourgeoisie, labour and other civil society actors have often been excluded or suppressed. Even if organised labour is incorporated, the question remains whether development that is subordinated to economic growth, in a context of extensive labour-saving technology and fierce global competition, will achieve inclusive or enclave development. Will a different paradigm, that of a *democratic* developmental state that is embedded primarily with organised labour and other civil society actors - such that growth is subordinated to development (or human needs) - achieve holistic, balanced and inclusive development?

Papers are invited that:

- a) interrogate whether democracy and active civil society participation (including in particular a mobilised and organised labour movement that straddles the formal/informal and trade union/new social movement divisions) is necessary for inclusive socio-economic development and an effective 'developmental state'; and/or
- b) analyse the relationship between the state, society and the market - including the view that the nurturing of indigenous entrepreneurs is in the long-term interests of labour and development; and/or
- c) analyse the notions of 'development', 'economic growth' and 'uneconomic growth', with reference to experiences of 'enclave' development that benefit a small urban elite linked to globalised networks of privilege, while the majority reside in urban and rural squalor; and/or
- d) develop new proposals for balanced, sustainable development that creates quality jobs and enhances the welfare of all citizens, without unduly harming the natural environment.

## **2) Labour, trade and development**

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) aims at the progressive elimination of all barriers to trade in goods and services. The imbalance of past agreements has led to severe implications for development in developing countries. While the advocates of neoliberal globalisation argue that "free" trade enhances growth and reduces poverty, the experiences of many countries in the developing and developed world is that often this is not the case. In a context of depleting energy reserves, many now also question whether accelerated globalised trade is sustainable, given the huge amounts of energy involved in transporting goods across the world.

Developing countries point to double standards by developed countries. They argue that, on the one hand, developed countries pressurize developing countries to open their markets, while on the other hand these same countries protect their own markets through non-tariff barriers and subsidised agriculture. This prevents developing countries from building their trading capacity, increases their vulnerability, and would make many of them further dependent on aid, and thus more vulnerable to pressure by developed countries and agencies such as the WTO, World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF). In the current context, developing countries are particularly concerned about the developmental impact of concessions they are being asked to make in Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA) negotiations and under the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS); in addition, they are concerned about the impact on agricultural livelihoods if multinational agribusiness seizes all of the gains available through the Agriculture negotiations.

Papers are invited that:

- a) analyse the industrial, employment and development (including environmental) policy implications of liberalization through trade deals such as NAMA and GATS; and/or

- b) critically address the social and economic arguments around respect for core labour standards in relation to trade and socio-economic development; and/or
- c) identify effective strategies to communicate these social and economic arguments as well as successful policies based on the use of these arguments; and/or
- d) consider the different approaches to the negative effects of neo-liberal globalisation (particularly the migration of jobs and investment) from the perspectives of workers in the North and those in the South, and ways to overcome perceived differences (such as over alleged 'protectionism') and to maximise global solidarity among workers; and/or
- e) analyse whether the stress on jobs, as opposed to alternative livelihood strategies, is the most appropriate labour approach to trade and development debates; and/or
- f) develop proposals to build the capacity of less well-resourced developing country union movements to respond to the employment and development effects of liberalising trade and investment.

**Format**

The workshop will bring together an international group of scholars and trade unionists. It will feature working groups, paper presentations, and panel discussions involving both academics and trade unionists. Papers will be presented mainly in small interactive working groups to allow for in-depth discussion and development of ideas for possible future research and cooperation. A selected number of papers will be published in the 2007 GLU Yearbook. Proposals for papers should be sent by 1 November 2006 to:

**Prof Devan Pillay,**  
 Department of Sociology  
 University of the Witwatersrand  
 Pvt Bag 3, Wits 2050  
 South Africa  
 pillayd@social.wits.ac.za  
 Fax: +27 11 339 8163

*The proposal should be a one page abstract that*

- 1) gives the name, address and institutional affiliation of the author/s;*
- 2) outlines the main idea; and*
- 3) indicates what methodology will be used.*

**Sponsors:**



## VII Call for Nominations

ILO Decent Work Research Prize, 2007

### Call for nominations

Pour la version en français :

<http://www.ilo.org/public/french/bureau/inst/index.htm>

Para la versión en español:

<http://www.ilo.org/public/spanish/bureau/inst/index.htm>

The ILO's International Institute for Labour Studies has created a research prize to annually reward outstanding contributions to the advancement of knowledge on the ILO's central goal of decent work for all, and calls for the nomination of candidates.

### The prize

The prize will be awarded during the next International Labour Conference (to be held in June 2007 in Geneva, Switzerland) where the winner will be invited to give a lecture to a global audience of government, employer and worker representatives. There will be a financial award of USD 10,000. The winner will be made Honorary Fellow of the International Institute for Labour Studies ([www.ilo.org/inst](http://www.ilo.org/inst)) for 2007-08.

### Criteria for award

The prize winner will be selected by a five member jury consisting of eminent personalities with an international reputation and proven expertise in labour and social policy issues. This being a research prize, the jury will examine publications of the candidates.

The prize can be awarded for:

(1) Major specific contributions to the understanding of socio-economic relationships and policy instruments for the advancement of decent work as defined by the ILO (see <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/inf/download/ecosoc/decentwork.pdf>).

The jury will look for new and original ideas;

or

(2) A lifetime contribution to knowledge on the central concerns of the ILO and its constituents (i.e. Governments, Workers and Employers) which reflects and advances understanding of the different dimensions of decent work (creating jobs; guaranteeing rights at work; extending social protection; promoting dialogue and conflict resolution; with gender equality as a cross-cutting objective).

In either case, both the excellence of the work and its practical relevance for policy purposes will be taken into account.

### **Who can nominate?**

Individuals and institutions (e.g. members of the ILO's tripartite constituency) can nominate candidates. Neither the International Labour Office nor current ILO staff members can nominate candidates.

### **Who qualifies as candidate?**

Only individuals qualify as candidates; the prize cannot go to an institution. ILO staff members and former ILO staff members are not eligible. Each nominee must have the support of at least one organization from the ILO's tripartite constituency (i.e. a government, a workers' or an employers' organization) and one leading academic (in the area of labour and social policy), coming from different regions of the world.

### **The dossier to be submitted**

- The candidate's full contact details.
- The candidate's CV (in full and a brief summary).
- A statement by the candidate that s/he agrees to be nominated.
- The publication(s) to be screened by the jury, along with an executive summary or abstract of the publication(s). Where these publications are in languages other than in English, French or Spanish (the ILO's working languages), a translation into one of these languages will be required.
- Two letters of support (one from a member of the ILO's tripartite constituency and the other from a leading academic in the area of labour and social policy) setting out the reasons why this candidature should be retained.

### **Timing**

- Deadline for candidatures: A complete file has to arrive at the ILO's International Institute for Labour Studies (IILS) by 31 December 2006.
- Decision: The jury will take its decision by mid March 2007, and the IILS will immediately notify the winner in writing.
- Award of prize: At the 2007 International Labour Conference (29 May – 14 June 2007).

### **International Institute for Labour Studies**

(ILO/BIT/OIT)

Case postale 6

1211 Genève 22

Switzerland

Tel.: +41 22 799 6128

Fax: +41 22 799 8542

E-mail: [prize@ilo.org](mailto:prize@ilo.org)