



TUDCN WORKING GROUP ON EU DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND ADVOCACY

18-19 SEPTEMBER 2017 – HOTEL BLOOM, RUE ROYALE 250, BRUSSELS

MEETING REPORT

The meeting documents are available online: <https://www.ituc-csi.org/TUDCN-EU-WG-Sept2017>

Members of the TUDCN Working Group on EU Development Policies and Advocacy gathered in Brussels on 18-19 September 2017, including ETUC Confederal Secretary Liina Carr. The meeting also counted with the participation of Yves Ehlert and Patrick Van Brugge from the European Commission.

MONDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2017

SESSION 1: PRIVATE SECTOR IN DEVELOPMENT

After introduction of the participants, Yves Ehlert, European Commission DG DEVCO policy officer, gave a presentation of the EU External Investment Plan (EIP), aimed at encouraging investment in EU partner countries in Africa and the EU Neighbourhood region, to strengthen partnerships and contribute to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), while helping addressing some root causes of migration. The EIP has three pillars: 1) financing through the European Fund for Sustainable Development (EFSD), 2) technical assistance and 2) promotion of a conducive investment climate. The finance pillar supports the other two pillars. Ehlert explained the role of guarantees and its modalities, and the application process for funding, as well as the one-stop-shop website that will centralise all information. There will be a yearly report and stakeholders including trade unions could be observers in the EIP boards. Full presentation available [here](#). Paola Simonetti linked the EIP process to the discussions at OECD-DAC level on principles for blended finance and the need to have a coherent approach.

Questions and debate revolved around business accountability principles and criteria to fund projects, as well as complaint mechanisms and support to SMEs. Participants also stressed that partnering with trade unions at EU and partner countries is crucial to achieve decent work. They also pointed out that formalisation of the informal economy should be a requirement of SMEs seeking EIP support.

In the second part of the session, Joan Lanfranco presented a draft trade union matrix on private sector engagement criteria, which is meant to be used by donors that devote ODA funds to private sector instruments. This is to match the responsible business community and acquis with the SDGs and development finance world.

Questions and debate revolved around ex-ante quality assessment of for-profit entities, global framework agreements (GFAs), exclusion criteria, size of beneficiaries, freedom of association and collective bargaining, commitment to SDGs, national legal frameworks.

The TUDCN Secretariat will provide a new draft based on WG feedback. Future research on private sector accountability will incorporate this trade union criteria for private sector engagement.

TUESDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2017

SESSION 2: DONORS ENGAGEMENT ON DECENT WORK

Matt Simonds presented the TUDCN work to improve the way donors report their contribution to the Decent Work Agenda (DWA) at the OECD-DAC, through the Credit Reporting System (CRS). Currently, DWA elements fall under different codes. A [recent study by TUDCN & ODI](#) recommended to rework the purpose codes by development objectives, and to develop a “policy marker” where donors can signal whether certain projects have a stated decent work objective. TUDCN made a proposal to the OECD-DAC Working Party on Statistics based on these two recommendations, which is currently under discussion. The next WP meeting is in autumn 2017 this fall and by June 2017, there might be a proposal.

Questions and debate revolved around social dialogue, social protection, advocacy to national governments.

The TUDCN Secretariat and members will continue gathering support from national DAC delegates.

SESSION 3: ASSESSMENT ON AGENDA 2030 STRATEGIC APPROACH

Joan Lanfranco provided an update of trade union involvement in the [UNECE 2017 Forum on Sustainable Development](#) and [2017 UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development](#) (HLPF). At UNECE, the ITUC work on the care economy was highly regarded, although improvements are needed on institutional engagement of UN Major Groups in the regional review process. A CSO engagement mechanism for the UNECE region is in the making. At the HLPF, there was positive feedback from governments and CSOs on the [TUDCN SDGs country profiles](#) for Sweden, Italy, Belgium, Brazil, Argentina, Zimbabwe, Brazil and Argentina. The thematic review during the 1st week provided many opportunities for trade union engagement. However, the way countries presented voluntary national reviews (VNRs) during the 2nd week did not allow for truly multi-stakeholder dialogue.

Questions and debate revolved around future strategies towards future HLPF editions. In 2018 the focus will be in climate and environment, whereas in 2019 most trade union priority SDGs will be in the spotlight (SDG8, 10, 13 and 16). It was suggested to organise an advocacy seminar with governments in future HLPFs.

Patrick Van Brugge, policy office at the European Commission Secretariat General, provided an overview on the EU strategy on SDG implementation and monitoring. A SDGs Multi-stakeholder platform will see the light in the coming months, which will advise the European Commission and all stakeholders involved on the implementation of SDGs in the realisation of events and to share best practices. Social partners should be represented in this platform, as well as the European Economic and Social Committee. The EU is engaged in the SDGs, and in the last two years, more than half of Member States have done a VNR. The European Semester contributes to a number of SDGs, but it is not all encompassing. The final set of EU 100 SDG indicators by Eurostat will be released in November 2017. These indicators look at internal and external aspects, where the EU has an influence. The EU will be presenting a VNR in the 2019 HLPF.

Liina Carr, ETUC Confederal Secretary, outlined the institutional involvement in monitoring SDGs implementation in Europe. Carr described the ETUC comparative table comparing the European Semester Scoreboard and the SDGs targets and indicators.

Questions and debate revolved around the process that led to the 2017 [TUDCN SDGs country profiles](#) and how to improve and streamline the process in the 2018 round, where Spain, Ireland, Poland and Switzerland, among other European countries, will present VNRs. There were suggestions to improve the scorecards on transparency, consultation and social dialogue; on the baseline on which indicators are measured; on coordination within and among national trade unions; on advocacy with employers and governments; and how to undertake an EU monitoring based on the data provided by a potential update of the OECD-DAC CRS. It was also suggested to have the TUDCN SDGs country profiles ready before each SDGs regional forum.

An extended assessment of the TUDCN SDGs country profiles will be done at the 2017 TUDCN Open Coordination Meeting.

SESSION 4: FUTURE PRIORITIES

Joan Lanfranco provided an update on the [3rd Africa-EU Civil Society Forum](#), in preparation for the 5th Africa-EU Summit in Abidjan, in November 2017. Trade unions participated through a strong delegation which positively influenced the final declaration. Regrettably, there was no representation of African trade unions, with the exception of ITUC Africa which was part of the EU CSOs delegation. CSO participation in the actual Summit will be limited, but an EESC event will be held a week prior. TUDCN, together with ITUC Africa, is preparing an advocacy two-pager for the Summit. Other related events include a workshop by WSM, ACV-CSC, CGSLB and ITUC-Africa on social protection. The Trade Union Network on Mediterranean and Sub-Saharan Migration (RSMMS) is planning a mobilisation on the fringe of the Summit.

Liina Carr introduced the ETUC reflexion and position on post-2020 EU budget (MFF), which includes input from TUDCN on the future of [EU external financial instruments](#). The MFF proposal will most likely be published in May 2018. The European Parliament is already discussing its position.

Joan Lanfranco presented the proposed WG EU work plan for 2017-2018, which was endorsed.

Paola Simonetti outlined the main points of the meeting and the WG action points for 2017-2018:

- Private sector in development: The TUDCN Secretariat will share a new draft of the matrix based on WG feedback. Future research on private sector accountability will incorporate this trade union criteria for private sector engagement. The WG EU mailing list can be used to exchange information on private sector in development. Trade unions will push to have observer status at the EIP boards.
- OECD-DAC CRS: TUDCN will push for the draft proposal to be adopted and request support from members when needed. A webinar on OECD-DAC statistics will be organised by TUDCN.
- 2030 Agenda: TUDCN will push for a more political HLPF. The methodology of the TUDCN SDGs country profiles will be reviewed at the TUDCN OCM. Complementarity will be granted between TUDCN and ETUC monitoring on the Social Pillar and the European Semester. TUDCN will push for trade union participation at the UNECE 2018 Regional Forum on Sustainable Development. European TUDCN SDGs country profiles should be ready by end March 2018.
- Africa-EU: advocacy efforts will concentrate at national level, for which a 2-pager will be prepared by TUDCN.
- MFF post-2020: TUDCN will coordinate with ETUC on next steps and in negotiations starting in 2018.
- OCM 2017: besides the assessment on the TUDCN SDGs country profile, the meeting will touch upon the ILO discussion on effective development cooperation in 2018, how to foster a strategic



approach on social dialogue and the SDGs and how to better use this work to strengthen trade union advocacy.

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