

TUDCN WORKING GROUP ON EU DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND ADVOCACY

15-16 FEBRUARY 2018, CSC, RUE DE TRÈVES 31, BRUSSELS

Meeting report

Link to documents webpage: <https://www.ituc-csi.org/TUDCN-EU-WG-Feb2018>

Members of the TUDCN Working Group on EU Development Policies and Advocacy gathered in Brussels on 15-16 February 2018, including ETUC Confederal Secretary Liina Carr. The meeting also counted with the participation of Bernard San Emeterio from the European Commission, Mariella di Ciommo from the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) and Barbara Caracciolo from SOLIDAR.

DAY 1: THURSDAY 15 FEBRUARY 2018

The meeting was opened by Paola Simonetti, who after welcoming the participants presented the agenda. After a round of presentations, Joan Lanfranco introduced the main highlights of the working group for 2017 and the key issues to look at in 2018. Updates were given on the possible adoption of new Creditor Reporting System codes on the Decent Work Agenda that could be adopted by the OECD-DAC.

SESSION 1: PRIVATE SECTOR IN DEVELOPMENT

The first session started with a presentation by Javier Pereira, consultant, on the draft TUDCN study on donors' policy on private sector engagement in development cooperation programmes. The research looks at development results in terms of labour standards, workers' rights, policies on offshore financial centres, monitoring systems; but also at mutual accountability: transparency (project information), and complaint mechanisms. The support to the private sector will probably increase in the future, as there are a whole new set of tools which are being created. Development Finance Institutions (DFIs) are the institutions that are the most likely to be used to engage with the private sector. Some DFIs are fully owned by the government, whereas others have participation from the private sector and international investors, but the majority are still in the hands of the State. However, even when owned by the State they are not usually accountable to parliaments. Stakeholder participation from DFI donor countries is very limited and usually not required from developing countries, except in the case of high-risk projects.

Following the presentation, participants highlighted the need to advocate for having trade union representatives in the boards of DFIs who could also make the link with the unions of developing countries. The trade union matrix for private sector engagement, which will be part of the study, will provide key criteria that can be used for advocacy. The trade union-DAC Forum will be a good space to put forward our advocacy on private sector engagement, as the key actors to ask for accountability will be present and so will the Global Deal representative.

After the discussion, the latest version of the trade union matrix on private sector engagement criteria was presented and discussed. Comments from participants included the need to ask the DFIs to make the link with trade unions, advocate to put funds aside to strengthen unions, focus on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) (as the enterprises that create more jobs) and reinforce accountability.

SESSION 2: TRADE UNION ENGAGEMENT ON 2030 AGENDA

In the first session of the afternoon, Liina Carr, ETUC Confederal Secretary, introduced the ETUC engagement in the new EU Multi-Stakeholder Platform on SDGs, and its different subgroups. This gave way to a discussion in which participants highlighted the importance of mainstreaming the SDGs into the political document for the ETUC Congress.

Marco Cilento from the ETUC secretariat followed with a presentation on the implementation of the SDGs in Europe, showing the relevance of EUROSTAT in this process and the importance of the European Semester as the place where the policies that should help Europe advance towards the SDGs are put forward. He made the link between the SDGs and the social scoreboard, which is attached to the social pillar, although only one third of the indicators of the social scoreboard are matching the SDGs. There is a need to integrate the SDGs into the European Semester. This will be taken up in an ETUC meeting, on the 27th of April, with TU officials who are following the Semester and the SDGs. ETUC will associate the trade union SDG country reports to its page on the Semester.

The trade union SDG monitoring template was then reviewed and updates were given on the preparations for the upcoming UNECE Regional Forum on Sustainable Development. After this, participants were divided into working groups to provide inputs on the main trade union messages for the SDGs that are under review at this year's High Level Political Forum (HLPF): SDGs 6, 7, 11, 12 and 15.

DAY 2: FRIDAY 16 FEBRUARY 2018

SESSION 3: EU MULTI-ANNUAL FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK (MFF) POST-2020

The first session of the second day started with a presentation by Bernard San Emeterio, Team Leader for the MFF at DG DEVCO of the European Commission. Bernard gave an insight into how the EC financing instruments will need to be adapted from 2020 onwards. He highlighted the commitment to 0.7% of GNI and hinted that the new instruments should be simpler and more flexible. The main idea is to have a broader international cooperation instrument in which development cooperation will still remain prominent. This instrument would include the current priorities, to promote greater synergies amongst them, and would englobe the entire world. There would, however, still be some smaller separate instruments. There would be a budgetisation of the European Development Fund (EDF) and a reserve of 20% for crisis.

The proposal for the MFF will come out on the 2nd of May and those for the specific instruments will come out soon afterwards. The communication already gives some hints, but the discussion is at the level of member states. The thematic approach will continue and so will the geographic approach.

The presentation by Bernard was followed by the one from Mariella Di Ciommo from the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM). Mariella, highlighted that flexibility and rationalisation are the key words around what is being discussed and analysed the narrative behind the single instrument, looking at the opportunities and challenges of this.

Liina Carr from the ETUC informed that the ETUC will issue a position on the communication and responded with concerns around the focus on security.

The morning presentations were followed by a plenary discussion on the MFF post-2020 and the way forward for trade unions. In this discussion, the budgetisation of the EDF was overall considered as a positive element, as there should be greater democratic scrutiny. The European Investment Bank will have a greater role so trade unions will need to respond to upcoming challenges related to this. Trade unions should continue pushing for an actor based approach in light of the more geographic approach that is being undertaken. Social partners need to be at the core of this new instrument. Trade unions should also advocate for our role in the EIDHR as trade union rights are human rights.

SESSION 4: REGIONAL AGREEMENTS: ACP AND LATIN AMERICA

The following session looked into EU regional agreements with Latin America and the Caribbean and with ACP (Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific) countries.

Barbara Caracciolo from Solidar presented on the EU relations with Latin America and the Caribbean. A communication on EU-Latin America and the Caribbean will be produced this year in September-October. The process is starting now with consultations with several stakeholders and will look into the areas of: economic growth (with a strong emphasis on trade and investment); security; and human rights, democracy and governance. The main messages that put forward by CSOs focus on the role of the EU and EU offices in promoting human rights and the importance of tackling inequality when dealing with security. In the CSO position there is a chapter on decent work and social protection.

Karin Debroey from the ACV-CSC presented on the renewed EU partnership with ACP countries. Karin reviewed the characteristics of the Cotonou Agreement. She underlined the role of Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) are playing to integrate the ACP countries and highlighted that non-state actors are not being considered as strategic actors. A new communication will come out in December talking about a more partnership-oriented approach and strengthening regional partnerships through separate regional compacts under an ACP umbrella.

In the discussion that followed, participants stressed that the Cotonou construct is related to colonial relations and that we should move away from this approach towards a regional focus. The need to discuss our position with ITUC-Africa in an inclusive way was also put forward.

SESSION 5: TUDCN EU WORKING GROUP WORKPLAN 2018

The meeting ended with the presentation of the conclusions and the working group work plan for 2018. For each of the areas that were discussed the following conclusions were put forward:

On the DFIs study:

- The consultant will contact the organisations from countries that are part of the study individually.
- Comments on the trade union matrix on private sector engagement are still expected from the members of the working group.

On SDGs:

- The ETUC will continue its engagement in the EU SDG platform, the Semester and the Social scoreboard.
- The TUDCN secretariat will participate in the ETUC meeting of the 27th of April. The link between TUDCN members and the persons participating in this meeting from the unions will need to be made.
- Organisations are encouraged to complete the trade union SDG monitoring report.
- The inputs given in the working groups will be put together to elaborate common messages on the SDGs under thematic review this year.

On the MFF:

- We will work at national level and European level to react to the different communications on the MFF and we will look into how we can put forward our messages in light of the European Elections.

Latin America EU:

- The ETUC has a specific working group which will follow-up on this



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