

International Workshop at Warwick Business School – University of
Warwick, United Kingdom

Friday 18th November – Saturday 19th November 2005

**Europeanisation and Organised Labour:
An Unsolved Dilemma?**

Organiser: Prof. Valeria Pulignano
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Industrial Relations Research Unit (IRRU) - University of
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*In collaboration with the SEEurope network (ETUI-REHS) at Brussels
(Belgium) coordinator: Dr. Norbert Kluge*

Objectives and aims of the workshop

Research indicate that as multinational companies become more internationalized in their operations and management structures, unions at supranational level are increasingly having to internationalize their perspectives and strategy within companies. This provides new challenges of linking different traditions and practices of national and local trade unionism, rooted as they are in the workplace. Hence, an examination of union strategies of intervention at European level needs to include an analysis of the differences in the diverse national union positions towards Europe.

The workshop aims to provide an opening base discussion on the diverse national union positions and attitudes towards Europe as well as on union policy and strategy at both local and national, and European/international levels in order to examine prospects and constraints of union internationalism. What does it mean to be European for national trade unions today? How can a European dimension to trade unionism be defined and developed? What kind of socio-political and legal framework is European trade unionism based on?

Developing a robust analysis of the issues in question necessarily involves an international and comparative approach. By bringing together international scholars and experts interested in labour, the workshop will provide a basis for wide-ranging and rich discussion on the themes of Europeanisation and international labour. In particular, debate will focus on assessing the extent of trans-national trade union co-operation while discussing employee representation, participation and democracy at work as potential mechanisms for deepening such co-operation. What can the role of collective bodies and systems of employee participation and representation at EU level (i.e. European Works Councils, EU statute regulating company law or European Company Statute) be with regards to creating effective European, and even global, networks of employee representatives and trade union co-operation across borders? Is there a space to articulate between national/local and European levels of employee representation and trade union organisation and (if any) how and why?

Programme

Friday 18th November, 11h 00 – 13h 00

Joint SEEurope - IRRU activity "Europeanisation and Organised Labour: An Unsolved Dilemma?"

Employee Participation and European Industrial Relations: Issues for Trade Unions

Prof. Paul Marginson (IRRU Warwick University – United Kingdom)

"How can trade unions gain from obligatory workers' participation at European level?"

Mr. Jozef Niemiec (ETUC)

Round table: Debate

Moderator and Discussant: Prof. Colin Crouch (Warwick University – United Kingdom)

13h 00 – Lunch

Friday 18th November, 14h 00 – 18h 00

"Europeanisation and Organised Labour: An Unsolved Dilemma?"

14h 30 – Plenary

Prof. Miguel Martinez Lucio (Bradford University – United Kingdom)

"Meaning of International and European Labour Co-operations: Challenges and developments"

Prof. Christian Levesque (University of Montreal – Canada)

"Union Renewal through International Alliance: Evidence from North America"

Dr. Ronald Erne (University College Dublin) – Discussant

16h 00 – Coffee break

Prof. Jeremy Waddington (Manchester University – United Kingdom – ETUI-REHS – Belgium)

"The Relationships between Trade Unions and EWCs in the Chemical Industry"

Dr Volker Telljohann (Istituto per il Lavoro – Italy)

"Coordination or Competition between trade unions within the EU 25?"

Dr. Norbert Kluge (ETUI-REHS – Belgium) - Discussant

18h 30 – Dinner

Saturday 19th November, 9h 00 – 13h 00

"Europeanisation and Organised Labour: An Unsolved Dilemma?"

9h 00 – Opening Plenary

Prof. Herman Knudsen (University of Aalborg – Denmark)

"Scandinavian Skepticism - an attempt to explain why Scandinavian Trade Unionists are Reluctant to go European"

Dr. J-E Dølvik (Fafo Institut for Labour and Social Research – Norway)

"Redrawing boundaries of solidarity? Nordic approaches towards European trade union integration"

Dr. Tony Huzzard (National Institute for Working Life – Sweden)

10h 30 – Coffee Break

11h 00

Dr Udo Rehfeldt (*Institut de Recherchers Economiques et Sociales* - IRES - France)

"Perspectives for company bargaining on the European level"

Prof. Valeria Pulignano (KU Leuven - Belgium/IRRU Warwick University - United Kingdom)

"Going national or European? Trade Union Politics within Multinational Business Contexts"

Dr. Guglielmo Meardi (IRRU Warwick University - United Kingdom) - Discussant

13h 00 – Lunch

Saturday 19th November, 14h 00 – 16h 00

14h 00 – Group work: *"Europeanisation and Organised Labour: An Unsolved Dilemma?"*

Networking and future research activities

16h 30 – End of the day