



**FINAL REPORT**  
Vilnius 2014 Workshop Questionnaire



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## **Introduction**

Despite the announcement of different measures to support growth and employment, the economic, financial and social crisis in the European Union and in most member countries continues. In some of them, the economic and social situation is alarming especially for the rising unemployment and the increase of inequalities. This situation is worsened by the austerity measures undertaken, and for this reason, as indicated by ETUC, there is an urgent need to take a new direction for the future so as to stabilise the economic environment, create jobs and give access to welfare for everyone.

During the last year ECTUN headed a research study based on the role of the trade unions in European capitals under the European Union 2020 strategy. This research study has pinpointed many problems, especially the need to reinforce the common political and social dimension at European level. The trade unions involved in the network, in fact, firmly shared the objectives of the EU 2020 strategy but not the measures devised by the European Union to reach these objectives.

The questionnaire administered this year concerning the training course in Vilnius and the related final report can be considered as a follow-up to the previous research. With this work we intend to analyse: 1) which strategies have been adopted in the regions of European capitals, in a bipartite (trade unions -employers' associations) or tripartite (trade unions-employers' associations- local authorities- CSOs) way, in order to promote quality jobs and counter social dumping in its various forms; 2) the role/involvement of trade unions and the developed best practices.

## **STRUCTURE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

The questionnaire was divided into two parts: the first part pertains to the unemployment rate of different groups of disadvantaged workers and on the strategies developed at local level to reduce it; and the second pertains to social dumping, the situation of groups at high risk of exclusion from the labour market and the strategies promoted to include them (in the labour market).

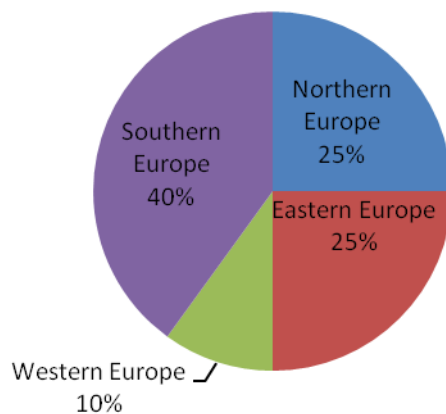
## 1. Survey sample. Trade unions involved.

The survey involved 27 trade unions active in the capitals of 20 EU countries (plus Moscow).

The trade unions which answered the questionnaire are, in alphabetical order:

- Bulgaria (Sofia): PODKREPA CL
- Denmark (Copenhagen): LO Hovedstaden
- Finland (Helsinki): SAK Finland
- France (Paris): CFDT, CGT, FO, UNSA
- Germany (Berlin): VERDI DGB
- Greece (Athens): EKA Athens
- Italy (Rome): CGIL, CISL, UIL
- Latvia (Riga): LBAS
- Lithuania (Vilnius): Vilnius Trade Union Solidarumas
- Malta (La Valletta): GWU
- Portugal (Lisbon): CGTP-IN
- Russia (Moscow): MTUF
- Spain (Madrid): CCOO, UGT
- Sweden (Stockholm): LO Stockholm

### Geographic distribution of the trade unions included in the sample.



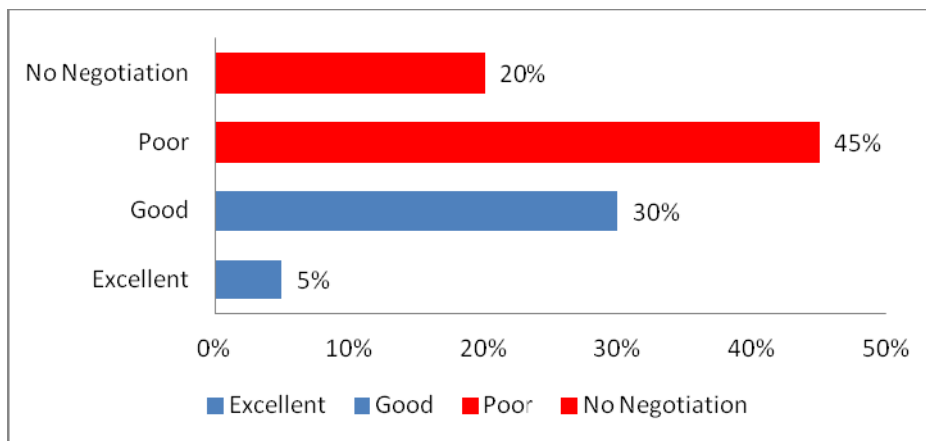
## 2. EU 2020 Strategy follow-up and employment rate

The first two questions have basically a monitoring function. Their purpose is to check the results of each trade union according to the objectives of the EU 2020 strategy.

Q1: (How do you consider the involvement of the social partners in the negotiation, at the local/regional level, of measures aimed at reaching the targets of the EU 2020 Strategy?)

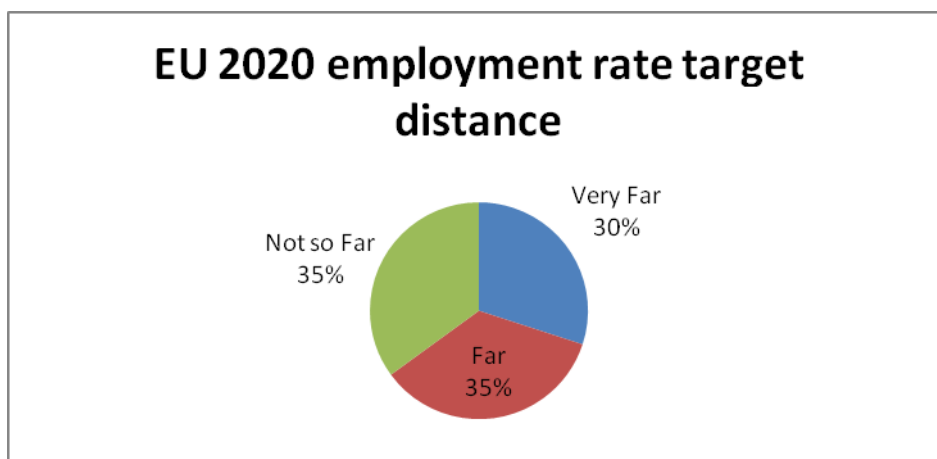
More than half of the trade unions have not signed agreements with their social partners or have poor communication with them.

Seven trade unions in all have given positive answers, and of these, Copenhagen's trade union has given the best possible answer.



Q2 (Concerning the employment target rate of the EU 2020 Strategy, how far is your region/area from achieving the target?)

An essential balance prevails in this question but it's very important to notice that a little more than one-third of the sample has answered that it is not far from achieving the EU 2020 employment rate target.



*From question 3 until the second part of the survey, the questionnaire focuses on the employment rate in the areas/regions of the European capitals of the trade unions involved. Reaching an employment rate of 75% is really an excellent objective but as in the case of some other targets of the EU 2020 Strategy, sometimes there is a risk of having good intentions only on paper.*

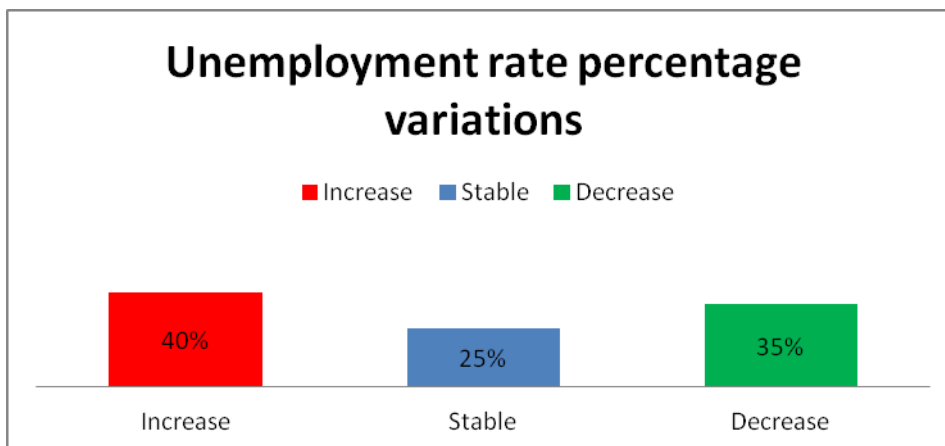
**Q3 (Unemployment rate in your region)**

The unemployment rate is below 10% in 60% of the the sample, while Bulgaria and Russia keep the rate under 5%.

What is of interest, and above all a cause for concern, is that a consistent part of the sample records unemployment rates between 15% and 30%.

**Q4 (Define the unemployment rate percentage variations in your region during the last year)**

Another worrying statistic emerged in this question: 40% of the sample in fact, declared that there was an increase of the unemployment rate, while said rate remained stable in a quarter of the sample (this statistic could be seen in a positive or negative way). The remaining 35% of the sample report an encouraging decrease in the unemployment rate (Bulgaria, Denmark, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia and Sweden).



**Q5 (Define the following categories of workers)**

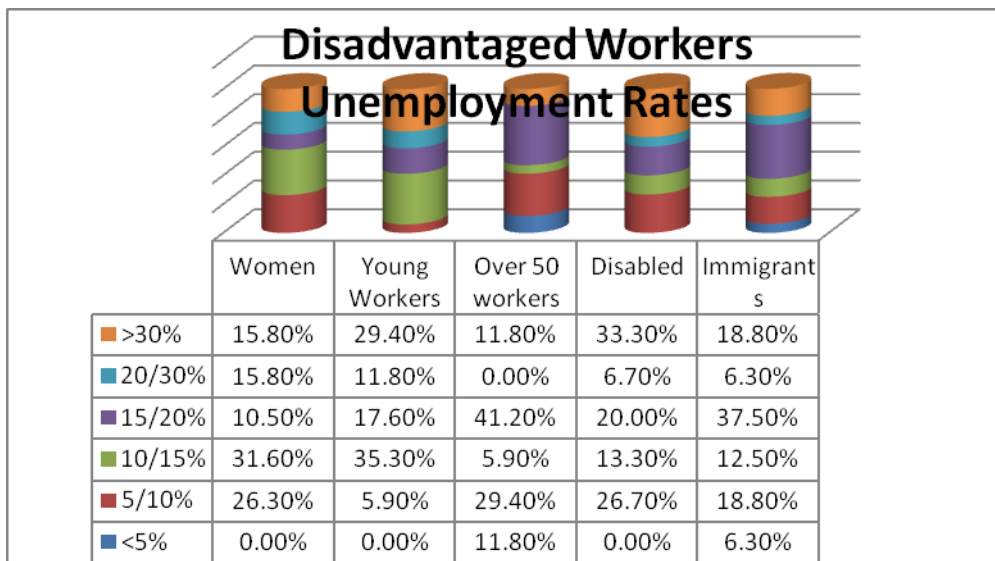
Analysing this question we can say that the percentage of workers with non-permanent contracts is around 15%. It also seems that the percentage of dropouts from school is increasing. It is significant that in the Rome region, the percentage of workers with part-time contracts is higher than the percentage of those with full-time contracts. Precarious workers represent the dominant part.

**Q6 (Concerning the groups of disadvantaged workers, indicate the unemployment rate in your region for each of the following categories) –Note: Denmark does not regard women as disadvantaged workers-**

The highest rates of unemployment are represented by young workers and the disabled, with several instances where the unemployment rate exceeds 30%.

Unfortunately women still represent a disadvantaged category in the labour market, together with workers over fifty, even though in Bulgaria and Malta their unemployment rate is under 5%.

The discourse on immigrants is much more complicated because it reflects other political and administrative problems. However the average unemployment rate for this workforce is between 15% and 20%, with some cases in which the rates exceed 30%.



Q7 (Do any strategies aimed at reducing unemployment exist in your Region/Territory?)

Q8 (Is your territorial organisation actively involved in these strategies/policies?)

Q9 (Has your organisation signed agreements with the employers' associations aimed at increasing the employment rate?)

The first two questions show a strong participation of the trade unions in the fight against unemployment, with positive responses of 85% and 60% respectively.

This positive trend turns negative in Q9 where only 30% of the sample declared that they have signed agreements with the employers' associations (this issue could be discussed in the meeting).

### 3. Social dumping and disadvantaged workers

*Social dumping is a harsh reality for disadvantaged workers, and often a widespread phenomenon in the labour market. In the second section of the survey we asked the participants to rate the most at risk disadvantaged workers category first, and then whether there were any strategies capable of helping these categories.*

Q10 (Regarding the groups at high risk of being excluded from the labour market, which of these groups is mostly at risk in your territory? (rate from 1 to 5)

Q11 (Are there any strategies for promoting employment for these categories in your region/territory?)

The responses of the sample show that the minimum risk factor for the categories analysed is 3 on a scale from 1 to 5; for women and workers over fifty, it is 4.

Several campaigns and strategies have been undertaken by the trade unions involved to promote employment for these groups at risk of exclusion from the labour market, especially for the categories of young workers, workers over 50 and disabled workers, but the problem of social dumping is still far from being solved.

Q12 (Has your organisation signed agreements with the employers' associations aimed at increasing the employment rate of disadvantaged workers?)

Q13 (Has your organisation developed good practices about the quality of jobs?)

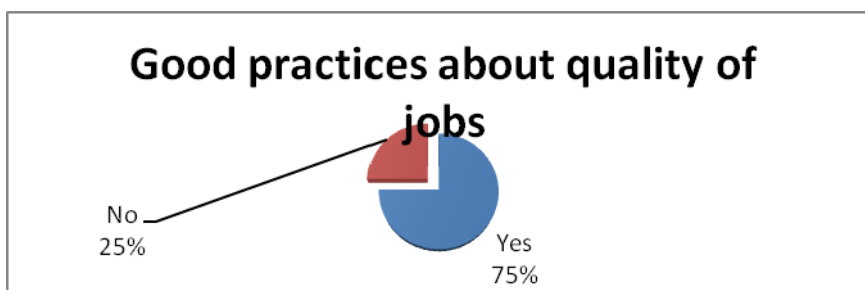
Again, a difficulty emerges for the trade unions in signing an agreement with the employers' associations, as only 25% of the sample in fact have given positive responses to Q12.

Instead the percentage in Q13 is firmly positive with a solid 75% of good responses.

## 4. Good practices and final considerations

As the results of the survey show, the regional and local administrations in most EU Countries are responsible for all the policies relating to the EU 2020 Strategy, such as the employment/unemployment rate, exclusion from the labour market, social dumping and all kinds of discrimination. Cooperation in the Net is crucial to translate the objectives of the Union into concrete facts in practice.

In a context in which all the trade unions involved are active in trying to solve the problems mentioned in the questionnaire, there are several good practices which, if adopted internationally, could be really helpful.



In the field of labour market and employment, many types of good practices have been reported, aimed at favouring the creation of jobs even with new types of contracts or working schemes.





A forum has been introduced in Paris for the employment of young workers and to bring people and businesses together in an inter-union setting.

Furthermore, as of January 2011, working time in part-time contracts may not be less than 24 hours.

In Sofia two projects have been introduced, known as “PIER” and “New Employment- key competences for new jobs”, both of which focus on young unemployed workers with professional guidance and training.

Good practices have also been reported from Rome, where specific measures for “inclusive” traineeships have been adopted by the Lazio region to enable disadvantaged groups to take part in traineeships (disabled, ex drug-addicts, human trafficking victims, etc.). A Job Pact was concluded together with the agreement on the European Youth Guarantee project, and finally, the “Staffetta Generazionale” [Generational Relay] project was created to promote the inclusion of young workers in the labour market.

Another remarkable project is “Enhanced Understanding of Decent Work for Teachers” in Riga.

Outputs of the project: improved collective agreements with campaigns, seminars, conferences on assessment of working places, for securing decent work conditions.

For immigrants, a multi-year project in Stockholm which alternated language teaching with practice at the workplace, enabled 85% of its participants to find a job.

A series of campaigns and projects were undertaken in Berlin, the most important being the “Berlin braucht dich” project (which promotes more employment for people from a migration background in the private and public sectors), the “Job Option” project (which is a transformation process from mini-jobs to jobs covered by social security ) and “Maßnahme 50 +” (which guarantees special measures for unemployed workers over 50).

Finally good practices come from Moscow, where the use of technical inspectors who investigate occupational accidents is being introduced to protect the life and health of workers.

In a worrying scenario where the EU 2020 Strategy is becoming considerably more inconsistent with the current situation and where precarious work has become a widespread leitmotiv in most European Countries, ECTUN’s informal network has to work to enhance the exchange of information (collective bargaining, projects, improvement of the website, etc.) in order to fight effects of the crisis and of the austerity measures.

