

Report on the ETUI, CGIL, CISL, UIL Training Seminar

"OECD Guidelines and Supply Chains: An Active Role for Trade Unions"

CISL Study Centre, Florence, 22-23 March 2016



On 22 and 23 March 2016, a training seminar was held at the CISL Study Centre in Florence on “**OECD Guidelines and Supply Chains: An Active Role for Trade Unions**”.

The seminar, organised following a proposed partnership between ETUI and CISL and with the cooperation of the international, economic democracy and union training departments of CGIL, CISL and UIL, was attended by 24 participants and 4 staff trainers.

The staff trainers were joined by trainers/experts from all three confederations.

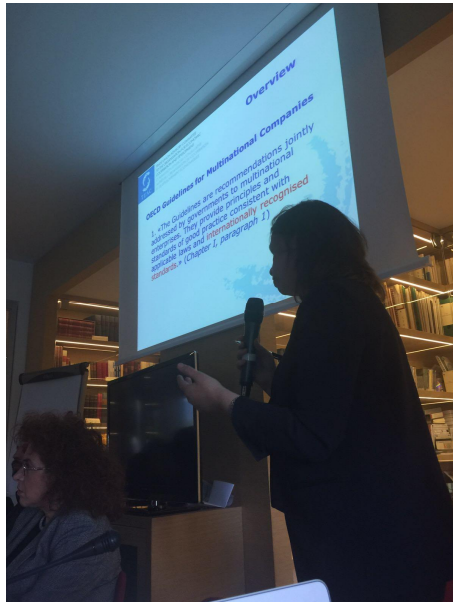
The objectives of the training seminar, developed in the framework of a political boost of the Italian confederations’ actions in specific sectors, were both informative (get to know the tools available) and operational (a joint analysis on the use of the tools).

The main tools analysed during the seminar were the following (for more details, see the section “First level training objectives”):

- OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (MNE) (including a Union Guide) – adhering countries have to set up a National Contact Point in case of alleged non-observance of the Guidelines by an MNE
- ILO Conventions – the implementation of these conventions is monitored, but no sanctions are imposed if they are not upheld
- Global agreements with the multinational enterprises of world unions
- European Works Councils
- World works councils
- Global awareness campaigns on the violation of human and workers’ rights

Another one of the objectives of the trade unions was to use group work to strengthen network relations between trade unionists involved in industrial action and negotiations in multinational undertakings.

The participants, the majority of whom were from the trade union federations for the sector (Cisl e Uil), came from different backgrounds: indeed, they comprised directors of international policy, as well as union delegates in multinational enterprises, mostly from European Works Councils.



Kirsty Drew, TUAC, Presentation

The differences in role and level were taken into account when forming working groups and were seen by both the staff and participants as a source of enrichment, rather than an obstacle.

As for the sectors represented on the day, thanks in part to the participation of CGIL, CISL and UIL, the more important ones in the private sector were present: engineering, chemical, credit, trade, energy and agro-industrial sectors.

Something positive was that all speakers were consistent, skilful and open to dialogue; indeed, not only did they stay and participate in the teaching sessions they were involved in, but they also stayed on for the other sessions of the seminar.

Presentations were made by representatives from two global unions (building and engineering) of the Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC) to the OECD, from the Italian Ministry for Economic Development, the ILO and the Clean Clothes Campaign.

The outcomes of the seminar, reached also through the various working groups, were considered useful by many participants, to be used in each reference sector or in the case of multi-sectorial cooperation, after first working on additional training kits aimed at optimising the usability of the material in different contexts.



Ambet Yuson, General Secretart BWI

Understandably, with only a programme of a day and a half, not all topics could be fully examined. This means that the participants and organisers will have more opportunities in the future for analysis and cooperation.



Debate with Global Unions and International Campaigns

The material used had the standard ETUI format, both for group work and the final assessment questionnaire.

A preparatory meeting with the staff was held in Rome on 1 March 2016.

Lastly, the two-day seminar was attended by a journalist from CISL's newspaper "Conquiste del lavoro", an expert in globalisation, who put together an interesting report. The important moments of the seminar were shared via Twitter.



Gianni Rosas, Ilo, Intervention

Contents of Speakers' Presentations

Francesco Lauria (Cisl) 22 March Contextualisation and Objectives of the Training Seminar

Kristy Drew (Tuac) 22 March: Contents and Areas of Implementation of MNE Guidelines

Rossella De Rosa – Benedetta Francesconi (Ministry of Economic Development – NCP Italy) 22 March: The Italian National Contact Point for MNE Guidelines, the non-judicial grievance mechanism in Italy and Europe

Ambet Yuson – Jin Sook Lee (BWI – The Building and Wood Workers' International) 23 March: Global awareness campaigns, negotiating with multinational enterprises, the link with national trade unions

Adam Lee (Industrial) 23 March Industrial's Experience – The Implementation of OECD Guidelines and the issue of rights in global supply chains

Gianni Rosas (ILO) 23 March: The tools of ILO and the UN for the protection of human and workers' rights. The role of supply chains in the global labour market.

Deborah Lucchetti (Clean Clothes Campaign) 23 March The link between trade unions and civil society. The Rana Plaza Tragedy (Bangladesh). Critical considerations on greater synergy between international tools, industrial action, and action by civil society.

Methodology

First Level Training Objectives: Areas of Knowledge

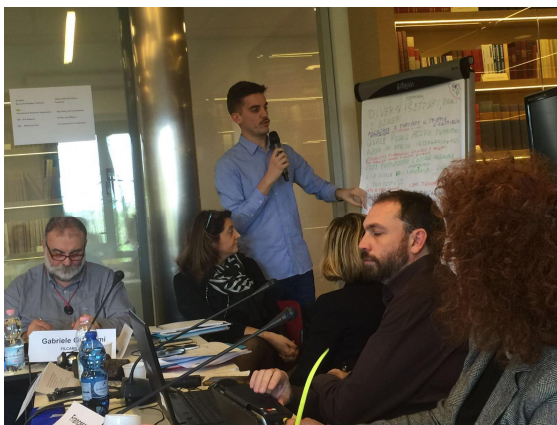
- Provide a general overview and basic knowledge about:

- Main contents and structure of the OECD Guidelines
- Implementation of the OECD Guidelines (through concrete examples)
- Data on the implementation of the Guidelines in recent years
- Strengths and areas for improvement of the Guidelines
- Role, composition and functions of National Contact Points in Italy
- Notification of a "specific instance" at a National Contact Point
- Action of Global Unions
- Industrial action in global supply networks
- Tools and good practices for industrial action at global level: Global union networks, implementation and monitoring of Framework Agreements, the OECD Guidelines and ILO Standards, information/awareness campaigns

Second Level Training Objectives: Area of network relations

- Facilitate the comparison and exchange of experiences within the group of participants
- Facilitate the construction of an informal network amongst participants
- Promote the development of ideas/proposals to strengthen industrial action at international level

Teaching Methods

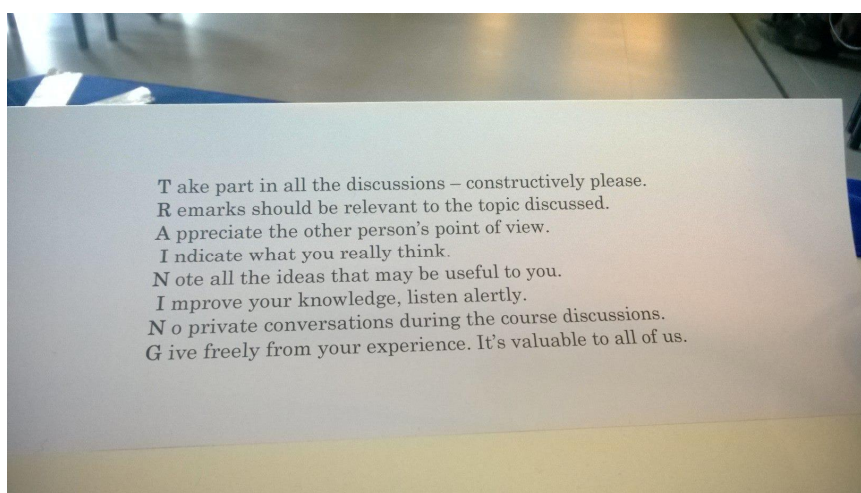


Active Methodologies and Informal Discussions

Elements that determined the training and methodology choices:

- Attention to the formation of the group, which included people with varying roles and experiences, from all three trade unions, i.e. CGIL, CIL and UIL: EWC delegates for MNEs, the heads of International Affairs of federations for the sector, EWC delegates and heads.

- Attention to the learning process, through detailed planning of work phases, teaching tools and training aids (e.g. sending preparatory material and the slides of each presentation, providing simultaneous interpreting services, printing presentation material in the mother tongue of the participants)
- Attention to the classroom atmosphere, by constantly guiding training staff.
- Integration of classic teaching methods (traditional teacher-led lessons and classroom debates) with active teaching methods (social activities, group work, presenting group work to the experts before they speak, encouraging dialogue even in traditional teacher-led sessions).
- Attention to the formation of the working groups, to be created based on the criterion of heterogeneity: roles, membership organisation and international experience; regards to gender balance criteria.



Worksheets and Tools

Activity	Tool	Description	Aims
Initial socialising in small groups	Oral exercise	Each participant was asked to work with another 2 colleagues he did not know. They were asked to introduce themselves (role and main experience) and compare notes on their expectations of the seminar. A spokesperson was then appointed by each group to present himself and his 2 colleagues during the plenary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate the creation of a pleasant and informal atmosphere - Promote getting to know each other and the sharing of experiences - Share and compare notes on expectations of the seminar - Verify the existence of gaps between expectations and the proposed training path.
Gathering participants' expectations of the seminar	Duration: 15 minutes in sub-groups 45 minutes in plenary session		
Sharing during a plenary session			
Group work on OECD Guidelines	Worksheet "Contents of OECD	A grid of open questions on the contents and areas of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Verify participants' comprehension of the main

and “specific instance” procedures at NCPs	Guidelines” (see Attachments) Duration: - 35’ group work - 25’ in plenary session	implementation of the Guidelines. The participants were divided into mixed sub-groups and asked to answer the questions. During the plenary, their answers were presented and compared.	contents of the Guidelines and their areas of implementation - Consolidate participants’ knowledge about the Guidelines and the procedures for “specific instance” at NCPs.
Group work on possible areas / actions for improvement for the dissemination of good practices in international industrial action	Worksheet “Towards global industrial action: building possible paths” Duration: - 45’ in sub-groups - 30’ presentation in plenary session (before the speakers)	Grid of open questions on participants’ experience using the tools available for international industrial action and the potential areas/actions for improvement to reinforce the dissemination of the tools.	- Facilitate a debate based on participants’ experiences with union strategies and practices at transnational level. - Identify possible areas and actions for improvement to strengthen global industrial action - Identify working areas and actions that can help disseminate the tools available within unions

Summary of Participants’ Discussions



Working Together

Analysis

On the whole, the debate revealed that the OECD Guidelines are poorly used, largely due to a lack of knowledge about the tool, about its potential use as a union tool, about how the procedures for “special instance” at the NCPs can be activated.

Greater knowledge and awareness about the potential use of these tools needs to be shared, within the unions and at all levels.

Another source of concern that emerged is the absence of a structured network at union level, in particular the fragmentation of industrial action and insufficient synergy within unions, federations, national, European and World Federations. Said absence of a network is seen as critical for the development of industrial action by the EWCs.

Where human and/or workers' rights are indeed violated by multinational enterprises, the most common practices cited by the participants include the involvement of European and international Federations, information campaigns and boycotting, as well as the traditional method of negotiating with the company.

Areas for improvement and possible actions:

a) Training / internal awareness-raising

1) Creation of training / information initiatives aimed and usable at all levels (even RSUs)

2) Preparation of a basic tool / training kit on:

- OECD Guidelines, contents and areas of implementation (including concrete examples and case studies)
- The "Specific instance" procedure at NCPs (including concrete examples and case studies)
- Global Framework Agreements (including concrete examples and case studies)
- EWCs and how they operate (including concrete examples and case studies)
- Global supply chains
- Human and Workers' Rights
- ILO Standards and their application in unions (including concrete examples and case studies)
- Global union networks (including references and contacts, in addition to concrete examples of action)
- Information campaigns and boycotts (including concrete examples and case studies)
- Information material featuring the contact details of the union organisational structures (national, European, international)

The kit should also recommend training methods and tools to deal with numerous issues.

3) Periodic information on:

- Data on the violation of human and workers' rights worldwide (Biannual report)
- Best practices that are slowly developed

b) Strengthening global industrial action:

1) Consolidation and development of European and Global union networks:

- At national level, create a benchmarking tool for the federations for the sector of CSIL, CGIL and UIL, capitalising on the centrality of the federations in terms of representation.
- Promote continuous dialogue on transnational issues amongst the federations

- Strengthen / develop relations between EWCs and national, European and global unions, by creating an intranet for companies, to which all workers have access, the aim being to reduce the distance between global and national unions.
- Foster synergies with development cooperation bodies
- Promote and support the development of global union networks

2) Innovation

- Promote greater use of information campaigns and boycotts (improve communication skills, e.g. through language innovation)
- Recommend, like the OECD, that any notifications of “specific instance” at NCPs be published in the Social Budgets of multinational enterprises
- Explore the topic of industrial action at local level in case of any conflict of collective interest

Participants’ Assessment and possible changes to the seminar

Overall, the seminar was well received and much appreciated by the participants, as shown by the results of the satisfaction survey.

Number of questionnaires collected: 19 (out of 24 participants)

Meeting expectations	91%
Clear objectives	91%
Preliminary information	16 said yes, 3 did not answer
Contents	89.47%
Presentations	87.37%
Visual aids and teaching material	81.58%
Group work	87.37%
Time allocation	82.35%
Usefulness	90.53%
Training centre	91.58%
Organisation of course	94%

In particular, both orally and in writing (see the attachment “Participants’ Comments”), the participants expressed their appreciation for both the level of the speakers and the contents of their presentations, and the group discussions. The seminar was deemed very useful, an experience to be repeated and explored further.

As for the teaching methods, the participants suggested greater use of concrete case studies to further explore the themes of the seminar, although they do realise this would require more time.

Both the group work and final comments of the participants revealed that certain topics need to be explored further. It was suggested that:

- Benchmarking tools for these topics be created;
- Projects and information and training material be put together to increase knowledge about the tools available and for internal awareness-raising.

The staff believes that this last recommendation, i.e. preparing teaching and training material, could easily be introduced, even by including some of the participants.

This initiative could be launched by setting up a unitary "Design Lab", so as to provide all three unions with useful material that can easily be consulted by their different organisational levels.

Attachments:

Programme

Speakers' presentations

Group work material

Participants' comments

Photo Gallery

Press Release

The training team,

Francesco Lauria (coordinator),

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Francesco Lauria". The signature is written in a cursive style with a vertical line on the left side.

Roberta Villa, Bianca Cuciniello, Jacopo Cesari