

THE ITEM PROJECT

Four European trade unions: the FILCAMS Federation of the Italian CGIL, SIPTU from Republic of Ireland, WETCO-CITUB from Bulgaria and CCOO-Catalunya have been participating at the project ITEM with a main goal: “Fostering employee involvement at company level by training main actors dealing with European multinationals”. Over the last year each of the partners of the project has developed three seminars, with specific key ideas and proposals to innovate and improve training of European Work Councils for different actors (EWC representatives, Union officers, coordinators...)

In the case of CCOO de Catalunya this three seminars were organized as follows:

1. A first seminar took place on 21-23rd October 2015, and was addressed to TU officers with main leadership roles to spread knowledge about Information and Consultation processes and sensitize decision makers about the relevance of European Work Councils. This first seminar was organized in a neutral place to facilitate unionists with permanent responsibility an isolated environment and was also used to raise awareness about the importance of better knowledge of existing TU models in Europe. Finally, during the seminar, we discussed and could implement priorities and international challenges arising from the recent celebration of the Congress of the ETUC, as well as the need to promote a strong "real unionized confluence" on the scope of ETUC and international federations.

2. A second seminar was organized from 8 to 10th February 2016, addressed in this case to a mix of participants with EWC reps but also multinational sectorial TU officers, mainly from the services sectors (banking, ICT, contact centers, insurance, hospitality and commerce). The intention of this mix was to develop a pilot seminar to raise awareness at the branch unions bringing together their TU officers with the expertise and perspective of representatives involved in the daily EWC work. This was expected to improve the capacity of assistance and support for existing EWCs, but also to create better framework conditions to create new EWCs. The importance of networking and the richness of the European trade Union culture (with very different models and visions) played also a central role in this second course.

3. A third seminar, which took place from 26 to 28th April 2016, developed a new approach to EWC training in what could be considered an innovative perspective. The first idea of the seminar was to bring together 3 EWC Select Committees that had experience in restructuring processes. The idea was to use the training to develop concrete proposals (a Decalogue, a protocol...) that could be presented in an open seminar to a higher number of EWC reps. Finally it was impossible to satisfy this first approach due to the logic agenda difficulties and commitments of SC reps, but we were able to bring the Alstom SC Committee and presidents and delegates of

important SCs (Boehringer Ingelheim, Nestle...). The first part of the training with this experts took 2 days and applied active training elements used normally by the European Trade Institute. During the 3d day the 25 experts that worked out the recommendations were presenting them in the framework of wider seminar to 80 EWC reps and TU officials. This last day was also used to promote knowledge and interest for TU models and experiences.

All three seminars have had the essential support of international EWC experts (from European Trade Union Federations, Consultancies, ETUI...). They all helped substantially to guarantee a maximum of quality for an innovative approach to training. It should be underlined that CCOO of Catalunya has been imparting in strength coordination with its Federations EWC training and that there was experience about this subject and also well prepared trainers. Nevertheless the opportunity to experiment and to be innovative with training has been very enriching for our Trade Union. ITEM has allowed us to experiment with new forms of organizing, structuring and developing training that will be used in upcoming opportunities and that will help us to renew the training methodology we have been used over the last years. The conclusions must necessarily be positive as the main objective has been largely achieved and there is an active in terms of knowledge and experience that is prepared to be used. Now the next step will be a positive implementation of this experience in further courses given by our confederation, but also in the different sectors that have been involved in the project.