

OVERVIEW

■ EZA activities on the Europe 2020 strategy



In the 2011 budgetary year EZA is carrying out a special project on the issue of how not just more jobs can be created but also better ones. In twelve seminars the project aims to come up with answers to the question of what influence workers' organisations can have on implementing the "Europe 2020" strategy and how they can strengthen the social dimension. *Page 2*

■ Seminar for young workers' representatives in Bonn



More than 60 participants from 12 European countries addressed the issue of "Integrating young workers in the European labour market in the face of the crisis". The results are the point of departure for the next Youth Conference this June. *Page 3*

■ New modular system on EZA education and training courses

The participants can select from six modules with different focuses. The courses are academically supervised and certified by universities. Two courses are being run in the 2011 budgetary year: in Madrid and in Cracow. *Page 3*

EDITORIAL



Dear Friends,

The ongoing financial crisis, but especially the dramatic events at the Fukushima nuclear reactor in Japan, whose end and consequences for mankind are still not foreseeable even after some weeks now, are shaking our belief in unlimited growth to the core. The recent electoral successes in two large German federal states have sent out a clear signal for the abandonment of nuclear power.

There is a close correlation between this signal and the question of what factors determine our lives, our happi-

ness. What does the "prosperity" we aspire to and want to maintain actually mean? Up until now economic growth has seemed to be the only yardstick for prosperity. That is economic growth with a massive flaw, for it is based almost without exception on cost calculations. It is reduced to material prosperity, is calculated solely on gross domestic product, and creates a huge imbalance in wealth, the pressure to perform and as a result mental illness such as depression and burn-out. People feel that the concept of prosperity has to be re-defined and a stronger connection with ethics, theology and a principle of social order must be restored. The term "atomos" is of Greek origin – coined in about 500 BC – and meant "indivisible". We need indivisible ideas of progress that must consider the human dimension.

*Yours,
Roswitha Gottbehüt
Secretary General*

New EZA Education and Training Programme "European Social Dialogue" from April Focus: the Europe 2020 Strategy

The key mainstream issue of EZA's Education and Training Programme 2011, which will involve a total of 62 projects being carried out between April 2011 and March 2012, is the Europe 2020 strategy, in particular the question of how workers' organisations can help implement it. Eleven seminars will address various aspects of this strategy. In tandem with the seminars EZA will be conducting a research project with HIVA and a final conference at the end of the budgetary year.

Other focuses include two co-ordinated projects on the issues of work-life balance and youth unemployment as well as training courses for company representatives of workers' interests.

Further aims of EZA's Education and

Training Programme are to tackle the question of how not only more jobs but also better jobs can be created, to seek ways out of the economic and employment crisis that is still ongoing, to strengthen the role of trade unions in shaping future jobs, and to promote information and consultation in the workplace.

With its Education and Training Programme EZA wishes to drum up support for the European social dialogue through suitable measures, and to this end is inviting multipliers from trade unions and workers' organisations from the EU and accession countries.

EZA's Education and Training Programme is available as of now. For more information go to www.eza.org. ■

Not Just More Jobs, But Also Better Jobs!



Plenary session at the Solidarność seminar in Gdansk on "Creating better jobs under the Europe 2020 Strategy"

75% of the population between the ages of 20 and 64 is to be in employment by 2020 – that is the prime target set by the European Union in its "Europe 2020" strategy.

A major concern of EZA and its network of Christian-social workers' organisations is that not only more jobs are created but also better ones. That is why as part of its "European Social Dialogue" 2011 education and training programme EZA is carrying out a special project on this issue. Involving 13 education and training centres from nine different European countries in a total of twelve seminars, the project's aim is to come up with answers to the question of what influence workers' organisations can have on implementing the "Europe 2020" strategy and how they can strengthen the social dimension.

The cycle of events began on the first weekend in March with a seminar held by the Solidarność trade union in Gdansk. 47 participants representing workers' organisations from six EU member states discussed why some of the employment targets of the Lisbon Strategy had been missed, and how the new "Europe 2020" strategy could be more successful in this area. An analysis of the national labour markets pointed up a few factors in common: the exclusion of the least qualified workers from the labour market, the mismatch between the content of training and the labour market's requirements, the oversupply of uni-

versity-educated employees. The participants said that what was needed more than most to solve the problems was a long-term training policy that covered the labour market's requirements and the role of lifelong learning. Although in recent years the policy had produced an increase in the number of jobs, it had also resulted in a decrease in the quality of the jobs. To learn from the mistakes of the Lisbon Strategy and to successfully achieve the targets of the "Europe 2020" strategy, the seminar-goers emphatically called for greater involvement of the social partners.

The seminar series on the "Europe 2020" strategy is backed up scientifically by a research paper from HIVA, the Onderzoeksinstituut voor Arbeid en Samenleving of the Catholic University of Leuven. The first two chapters of the research paper will comprise a macroeconomic forecast on how labour markets in the EU will develop by 2020, and a comparison of the employment policies of the member states that are relatively close to the target of 75% with those member states that are currently well short of the target. Starting from the premise that in a number of European states people that work more than four hours a week are counted as employed, the question to look into is how more jobs can also mean better jobs, at the same time examining whether people can make a living out of their work. The conclusion of the

research paper is to be criteria for decent work and concrete approaches to shaping working conditions that are of general application across the EU, based in part on examples of best practice for more and better work from the EZA network. Working on the project from the HIVA side are its former director Hubert Cossey and Tom Vandenbrande, and from EZA Norbert Klein and Matthias Homey, as well as Michael Schwarz on a freelance basis.

The results of the seminars and the research paper will be presented and summarised at a conference organised by Cartel Alfa/F.N. CORESI in February 2012.

EZA plans to continue its special project on the "Europe 2020" strategy in the next two years, with the topics scheduled being reducing the number of people threatened by poverty by 20 million by 2020 and achieving the 20-20-20 climate protection and energy targets by 2020. ■

Seminar for Young Workers' Representatives in Bonn

Integrating young workers in the European labour market in the face of the crisis" was the theme of a seminar for young workers' representatives from the EZA network held in Bonn, Germany, from 27 to 30 January 2011, organised by EZA in conjunction with the Centro de Formação e Tempos Livres (CFTL) and the EZA Platform for Young Workers (PYW). In terms of content the seminar followed on from the Youth Conference 2009 and its aim was to draw up practical conclusions.

The participants, more than 60 from 12 European countries, debated various aspects of the issues "Young workers in Europe" and "Youth unemployment" in two panel discussions. The focus of the seminar was group work on the subjects of vocational training and qualifications for young workers, integrating young, disadvantaged migrants as workers in the Mediterranean region and young workers' participation in trade unions and in the labour market. In addition there was an exchange of experience between the seminar-goers and young migrants from the Cologne/Bonn region.



"Integrating young workers in the European labour market in the face of the crisis" was the topic of the CFTL seminar in Bonn

In their conclusions the participants called for better education and training, greater promotion of ongoing professional training, and a standardised qualification system on a European level. They highlighted the following problems as being fundamental: high unemployment among young people, inadequate information in the transition from school to training, a high rate of temporary contracts with little social security and low pay, a lot of (unpaid) overtime, the dis-

crepancy between training and the labour market's requirements, and the problem of integrating poorly trained young people in the labour market. A critical look was also taken at the high migration rate among young workers.

These results are to be the point of departure for the Youth Conference taking place in Königswinter in June 2011.

Ricardo Martins, PYW co-ordinator ■

New modular system for EZA education and training courses for the leaders of trade unions and workers' organisations

In view of the fact that the prevailing environment for company representatives of workers' interests is a tough one, and workers' participation in the current political and economic climate is not regarded as a priority, since 2006 EZA has been running education and training courses for leaders of trade unions and workers' organisations. These courses are an important means of strengthening company representatives of workers' interests and enabling them to do their work effectively.

In concrete terms the aims of the courses are to develop skills, give examples of best practice that have a positive and lasting effect in the workplace, and stimulate processes of awareness towards socio-political acceptance.

Starting off with the course run by FIDESTRA (Associação para a Formação, Investigação e Desenvolvimento Social dos Trabalhadores, Portugal) in the 2009

budgetary year in Porto, the first course to be certified by a university institute, EZA has endeavoured to co-ordinate several partners and give the courses academic supervision. The partners on board – FIDESTRA, FLC (Fondazione Luigi Clerici, Italy), USO (Unión Sindical Obrera, Spain) and EDS-FNS (Europejski Dom Spotkań - Fundacja Nowy Staw, Poland) have come up with a modular course system comprising six modules with differing focuses. An online course is a compulsory module, and three more modules have to be selected from the other five. Each module is certified by a university, which awards points under a co-ordinated system. The course finishes with a written paper.

Two education and training courses are being run in the 2011 budgetary year. The first, focusing on ethics in social dialogue, is being organised by EDS-FNS in Cracow; the second, focusing on social dialogue, by USO in Madrid. ■

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