



Trade Union Responses to the Changing World of Work

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TRADE UNION RESPONSES TO THE CHANGING WORLD OF WORK

A REPORT FOR UNI GLOBAL UNION

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FOREWORD

In late 2016 I was invited to address an ILO conference on the future of work, it was in the run up to the announcement of the creation of the ILO Centenary Commission on the Future of Work, of which I am proud to be a member. After the opening keynote address, underlining the forces pulling us into the fourth industrial revolution, the panel discussion focussed on the consequences on people, jobs and the economy. Such a forum allows for an informed exchange and I laid out our concerns along with a call to action, observing that society is ill prepared for the consequences and not geared up to give people a helping hand to accompany them through the predicted digital disruption.

Then came a thunderclap, when one of the panellists, looking in my direction, declared with confidence and certainty that this revolution meant unions would go the way of the dodo, days numbered, that we were “legacy” organizations: au revoir, auf Wiedersehen, goodbye. Now it was not clear whether this assertion was driven by the thought that we were to enter a new age of robotic paradise where automatons did the work and people enjoyed the material and spiritual benefits of a work-free, leisure driven future or whether it was just a continuation of the union bashing mantra we have swallowed for a generation. I thought the latter and said so. Judging by the applause in the packed ILO Governing Body Room, so did the audience, which by the way included just a handful of union representatives. It was this “legacy” assertion which prompted us to conduct research on how unions were dealing with change.

This report illustrates the importance of the scope and reach of union work, both via the legacy provided to today’s world of work, as well as via its influence on the future world of work. The report’s mandate grew from our 2014 Uni Global Union Congress debates on “Including You in the Future World of Work”. There were observations during that period as to why we were spending so much time on this matter. Yet today there is hardly a global institution, university, think tank, employer body or union that is not engaged in dealing with the future of work. I like to think we were part of the push to put the future of work and its consequences into the mainstream of contemporary economic, social and labour market debate.

At UNI Global Union we have deepened our analysis and outlined new policy positions which have gained traction. From the monopoly-like paws of the FAANGs (Facebook, Amazon, Apple, Netflix, Google), to the value of big data, to surveillance and data protection, through to ethical guidelines on Artificial Intelligence, I think we have shaped policy thinking. The point being that union action is happening and gathering momentum.

This has been done while also focussing on our Breaking Through work, to organise and grow unions. Indeed, when we look at labour practices from Amazon to Uber, from repression, to Chaplin-style “modern times” work practices, to denial of responsibilities towards people, to periods of casualisation, it is clear that aggressive employer behaviour continues.

This report takes a look at how unions in their policy and action are adapting and helping their members

deal with the future world of work. This report can only skim the surface of what unions are doing on the ground to understand the digital revolution and how they are seeking to change its direction to ensure that no one is left behind, also a stated goal of the Declaration adopted by the Employment Ministers at the 2017 G20 summit.

There is a vitality to the union efforts which is drawing new generations to our movement and attracting the attention of governments who realise that neither they, nor employers, have all the answers.

We express our thanks to Dr Helen Blakey and Dr Steve Davies of Cardiff University who put this report together. They conducted a wealth of interviews to get to grips with the changing priorities of the unions surveyed. Their report is a summary of these interviews and a full report will be published after the Liverpool 2018 UNI Global Union Congress.

I think the spirit of our work on the future world of work is true to our union legacy, placing people at the centre of our concerns as others seek to deny them. For too many of the new economic actors, labour is a commodity, a data set to be monitored, manipulated and de-humanised. Our task is to make this digital age human-centred and this report illustrates how unions are “making it happen.”



Philip Jennings
 General Secretary UNI Global Union

INTRODUCTION

This report focuses on the strategic capacity of unions to both develop old, and build new, resources and capabilities in response to the rapidly changing world of work. While there are important variations across countries and regions, a number of global trends present challenges to trade unions.

The declining share of wealth allocated to workers through wages is a feature of advanced economies, driven by neoliberal reforms, global integration and rapid progress in technology¹. The ‘hollowing out’ of the labour market associated with job polarisation and the loss of secure, reasonably well-paid jobs and their replacement with low paid, low skill, insecure jobs, is leading to rising inequality². Patterns of change in employment and occupation composition differ widely across countries as technological advancement progresses unevenly³. Although, broadly speaking, developed countries increasingly specialise in high skilled work, while developing countries tend to attract lower wage and less skilled work, yet to be automated.

Employment relationships that diverge from standard forms of employment, for example, temporary employment, agency employment, bogus self-employment, and part time employment, are on the rise⁴. The growth of these non-standard forms of employment is evident in developed economies, while standard forms of employment remain elusive for many working within the informal economy in developing countries. This work is associated with lower wages, reduced social protection, income insecurity, and poorer working conditions, as well as challenges over rights to unionise and engage in collective bargaining.

Digitalisation is contributing to these trends and the pace and extent of technological change is rapid and far reaching. Technological change has boosted outsourcing, offshoring and the fragmentation of production processes locally, regionally and globally. The attraction to employers of outsourcing and offshoring is typically lower wages and labour standards, as companies seek to reduce costs and thereby the extent of their direct connection with their workers. Two further trends accelerated by digitalisation are the automation of work, which destroys or changes the nature of jobs; and the outsourcing of work via platforms of digital labour, which can circumvent employment law and regulation. Digitalisation is also facilitating the surveillance and control of the workplace and society more broadly. Further to this, the scale and the nature of the monetisation, marketisation and control of data are becoming increasingly apparent. The major changes in political economy that have taken place since the 1970s are implicated in the processes outlined above. Neo-liberal reforms emphasising the dominance of markets over politics, of trade liberalisation, de-regulation and financialisation, have become the accepted economic ‘common sense’ worldwide.

The debate around the implications of the introduction of technological advancements for the world of work in the contemporary era is reminiscent of those of the past, with its focus on the elimination and displacement of jobs, the reorganisation of work, and its impact on decent work. Many are in the business of predicting what the future world of work will look like in light of technological change, how workplaces and our working lives will evolve, how the organisation of work will change, and whether we will indeed work in great numbers. Yet, there is no definitive account of the future world of work. However it is possible to identify several areas of uncertainty⁵. The first concerns the labour replacing potential of new technologies: for some a jobless economy is a potential reality of the near future; for others, workers will simply need to adapt to working with and alongside technology

in new ways, as new jobs are created to replace the old⁶. The second is the extent or likelihood of the further exacerbation of the existing trend of job polarization. The third centres on the issue of how we manage any job destruction and displacement. While the fourth is concerned with how the gains afforded by technological change are distributed.

It remains the case that choices will be made, relating to the trends identified above, which will determine the organisation of work, the distribution of wealth, and social relations more broadly. It is in this context that we hear calls for the ethical governance of new technologies and a world of work aligned to values of social justice, not least from the labour movement. Trade unions need to be well placed to influence the world of work, and fight for the rights of people in the workplace and beyond. Changes in the composition and demography of the labour force – more diverse, disconnected and fragmented than in the past – present unions with formidable representation and organising challenges, particularly in the context of a hostile employer and policy environment.

While some unions are defending what were once thought of as permanent gains, established through a deeply entrenched social contract, others are breaking new ground, pushing for reform, recognition and rights in uncharted territory, either experimenting with new strategies, or re-visiting the old. The question of the purpose of trade unions lies at the heart of these struggles^{7,8}. Our understandings of this may change over time, forming and reforming in different contexts and in the face of different challenges: for instance, a trade union may act as both ‘sword of justice’ and ‘vested interest’⁹; notions of solidarities may be conceived more or less broadly.

Our analysis uses a series of case studies to examine the responses of trade unions to the changing world of work and specifically, the strategic capabilities and power resources that unions are able to deploy to enact change¹⁰. The case studies presented here demonstrate, in varying ways, the capability of trade unions to respond to the changing world of work. These efforts to build and harness power to defend and extend workers’ interests in the workplace and beyond, invariably involve experimentation of one form or another. While, we began by looking for ‘innovative’ approaches from unions, this term fails to capture the range of actions successfully deployed by affiliates around the world. Some of these cases show genuinely new approaches. However, often it is the application of traditional methods and ideas in a new or different context or transferred from one country to another or one sector to another that provides a breakthrough. Some of the approaches are exploratory, not yet fully realized. Others are now well established, with demonstrable impact. Essentially the case studies in this report show UNI affiliates developing practices to strengthen the position of workers at the workplace (whether that be physical or virtual, static or mobile) and beyond, increase worker power and to lay the ground work for sustainable gains through collective agreements and high levels of union membership.

A comprehensive analysis of trade union power requires consideration of several key elements: the resources and capabilities of the union itself; the set of institutional arrangements in which the union finds itself; the various opportunity structures available to the union, including the economic, political, organisational realities; and the capacities of other actors within this configuration of relationships to act¹¹. Each forms part of the environment in which unions have to operate, but here it is particularly important to note the different types of resources and capabilities unions possess.

1 International Monetary Fund (April 2017), World Economic Outlook, “Chapter 3: Manufacturing Jobs: Implications for Productivity and Inequality”.
2 International Labour Office (2016) “Technical Brief No.7 What are the effects of job polarisation in skills distribution of young workers in developing countries”.
3 International Labour Office (2017) “The Future of Work Centenary Series, Issue 1, Technological Changes and the Future of Work”.
4 International Labour Office (2017) “The Future of Work Centenary Series, Issue 3, A Challenging Future for the Employment Relationship”.
5 International Labour Office (2017) “The Future of Work Centenary Series, Issue 1, Technological Changes and the Future of Work”.

6 Perhaps the most oft cited estimate of the potential magnitude of occupation destruction is that of Frey and Osborne (2013) who estimate 47% of total US employment for example is at risk in the next decade or two. Frey, C. B. and Osborne, M. A. (2013). ‘The future of employment: How susceptible are jobs to computerisation?’, Working Paper No. 7, Oxford University.
7 Kumar P and Murray G (2006) ‘Innovation in Canadian Unions: Patterns, Causes and Consequences.’ In: Kumar P and Schenk CR (eds) (2006) Paths to Union Renewal: Canadian Experiences. Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, pp. 79–102.
8 Hyman, R. and Gumbrell-McCormick, R. (2010) “Trade unions, politics and parties: is a new configuration possible?” Transfer 16(3) 315–331 2010.
9 Flanders, A. 1970. Management and unions. London, Faber.
10 Levesque, C. and Murray, G. (2010) “Understanding Union Power: resources and capabilities for renewing union capacity” Transfer, 16(3) 333–350.
11 Lévesque, C. and Murray, G. (2010) “Understanding Union Power: resources and capabilities for renewing union capacity” Transfer, 16(3) 333–350.

POWER RESOURCES AND STRATEGIC CAPABILITIES¹²

There are several different types of power resources and strategic capabilities available to unions, which are useful to consider in this context.

Examples of the different types of power resources include: the mechanisms within unions to promote unity of purpose and foster collective identity between workers; the narratives deployed to frame and legitimate workers' understandings of the union, its actions and its efficacy; the infrastructural resources accrued and distributed, including those related to worker engagement and organisation, and the use of new technologies; and the extent to which a union is linked to other local, national, and global actors including unions, community groups, and social movements.

Unions need more than just resources to thrive in the current context: leaders and activists also need the strategic capability to deploy them effectively in the context in which they find themselves. Examples of the different types of strategic capabilities include: the capacity to define and design proactive and independent strategies to dominate the agenda in the workplace and beyond; the ability to learn, adapt and innovate¹³ in response to new challenges and the opportunities available; the capability to act across different levels, boundaries and spaces, engage with issues beyond work and employment relations, and integrate bottom up and top down approaches¹⁴.

The report draws on these concepts to focus initially on the UK, before adopting a global perspective in relation to the following themes:

- Organising in the Digital Economy
- Using ICT tools and strategies
- Using Collective Bargaining to address digitalisation
- Building New Approaches

There are 25 case studies in all: 13 from Europe (including one from Eastern Europe); 3 from Asia; 3 from Latin America; 3 from North America; and 2 from Africa. Each of the case studies is based on interviews¹⁵ undertaken with those involved and the quotations in the case studies come from the interviewees, unless otherwise noted.

¹² Two Canadian industrial relations experts, Christian Lévesque and Gregor Murray, identify several different types of power resources and strategic capabilities that are available to trade unions: Lévesque, C. and Murray, G. (2010) "Understanding Union Power: resources and capabilities for renewing union capacity" *Transfer*, 16(3) 333–350.

¹³ Hyman R (2007) How can trade unions act strategically? *Transfer: European Review of Labour and Research* 13(2): 193–210.

¹⁴ Voss K and Sherman R (2000) 'Breaking the Iron Law of Oligarchy: Union Revitalisation in the American Labor Movement.' *American Journal of Sociology* 106(2): 303–349.

¹⁵ The authors would like to thank all those who generously shared their time and expertise with us and helped us to complete the research for this report. All errors are of course ours.

UK SECTION

The first series of case studies features five from the UK, partly in recognition of the location of the 2018 Congress but, more importantly, because the UK, together with the USA, has been the laboratory for neoliberal attacks on trade unions and trade union rights for almost 40 years. The common features of the changing world of work are well advanced in the UK, whether these are changes in sectoral employment patterns, changes in types of employment contract, or changes in the make-up of the labour force. Therefore the UK – and the response of a selection of UNI's UK affiliates – is a good place to begin a discussion on the challenges facing unions today.

Broadcasting, Entertainment, Communications and Theatre Union (BECTU)

The biggest challenge faced by BECTU is the growth in self-employment and contract work for its members – particularly associated with the decisions by the major national UK broadcasters (BBC and ITV) to move away from the direct employment model. Contract work has always been a feature of employment for many of BECTU's membership, particularly those working in feature films. Other concerns have been over the quality of training in the industry and the use of unpaid labour for those young people trying to begin their careers.

The union set out to revive collective bargaining in feature films by combining lobbying of employers with grassroots organisation – both online and offline and the threat of industrial action. By listening and responding to self-employed members BECTU is able to provide collective representation even when there is no collective agreement. BECTU established quality grading schemes for several occupational groups which have become essential to work in the industry. Members have advantageous terms in taking the training.

The union successfully focused on retaining and growing membership in those increasingly contracted out areas in broadcasting. It signed new agreements with the feature film employers and in TV drama (the latter of which effectively ends unpaid labour in that sector). It has used

its strength in particular occupational areas to be able to influence the 'rate cards' which set the pay levels. And finally with the increasing withdrawal of employers from training, the union is establishing itself as a recognised gateway to accreditation by either running, or being heavily involved with the running of, training and setting industry standards.

Unite

Unite has a highly developed strategic organising programme. Run by the National Organising and Leverage Department, the aim is to ensure that every workplace in which the union has a presence is 'a strike ready workplace', that is, the organisation is strong enough, the density is high enough, the stewards and reps are trained and confident enough, to organise and win a strike campaign should that be necessary.

Unite have come across some employers who have used a variety of methods to weaken or break the union's presence (including the sacking of local stewards). In response to this the union developed the concept and practice of leverage. If the balance of power is such that the union position is exceptionally weak and the employer is particularly hostile, then the Leverage Department can become involved to help move the employer. Once a decision is taken to use leverage this is likely to involve a team of up to 60 organisers focused on the campaign for an initial period of six to eight months. It is essential that the stewards at the particular workplace are closely involved in the decisions and the campaign. The team then focuses on all areas of the target company with detailed research work, public campaigning, alliance building and lobbying over a long period of time, so that the multifaceted approach taken with the target company is mirrored with suppliers, contractors, customers etc.

The union has run 10 leverage campaigns and had 10 victories. These have been around a range of different issues including the reinstatement of sacked stewards. The point of the leverage method is to increase the collective workplace power of the union, turning a position of weakness into a position of strength.

UK SECTION

GMB

GMB has organised taxi drivers for many years, so with the arrival of Uber it was perhaps inevitable that some GMB members would become Uber drivers and then look to their union for help with work-related issues. Uber and the growth in the number of home delivery drivers has created a new situation in the UK. The large companies involved in internet retail effectively created an army of owner-drivers as franchisees. A central issue for these workers is their legal status. In the UK there are different rights and benefits associated with status, that is, whether someone is defined as self-employed, a worker or an employee. Their mobility and the individualisation of their work make it very difficult for the union to identify and access potential members.

The union's campaign has involved: an information campaign on employment status aimed at potential members; a legal campaign (taking legal test cases); political and sector lobbying; social media campaign (aimed at online driver forums); organizing in the community (e.g. advice clinics near internet retail depots).

The union has recruited thousands of new members in the gig economy over the last year. And the successful court cases taken by the union against Uber and others has raised the profile of the GMB. The union is recognized as a legitimate actor by both government and industry representative bodies in national debates on the gig economy. The GMB is active in, and has been invited on to, a number of online forums created by drivers themselves. Some of those involved were already GMB members but most were not. They are regulated and administered by the drivers but it allows the union access to groups of workers that are difficult to contact because of their mobility.

Communications Workers Union (CWU)

The CWU is the main union in BT, the multinational telecommunications company and leading telecommunications brand in the UK. The company uses agency staff from Manpower, many of whom earn only the legal minimum rate. Most agency staff are employed on 'Pay Between Assignment' (PBA) contracts, which means they typically earn less than those employed directly by BT in the same job, as they are exempt from equal pay protection. They are also largely precluded from benefiting from family-friendly working practices and career development opportunities.

To tackle this issue, the CWU has focused on leveraging its campaigns through political pressure both in the UK and in Brussels, along with industrial pressure in both BT and Manpower where the union is recognised for collective bargaining purposes. This has been a long term campaign over many years and involved lobbying several governments. The CWU has briefed Members of Parliament, organised lobbies and a petition and engaged in negotiations with both BT and Manpower about equalising the pay and conditions of agency staff with permanent staff.

In 2014, CWU successfully negotiated a conversion process to move agency staff to BT contracts and secure permanent jobs and there has been a big reduction in the numbers of agency staff employed as their jobs were converted into permanent posts. Another breakthrough came in January 2018 when the union won a 6.25% pay increase for agency workers who work with the emergency services, in recognition of an increase in workload and revenue, and the aim now is to extend this success to other types of agency workers. But the job is not yet complete and CWU has launched the 'Close the Gap' campaign to address those who remain as agency workers.

Usdaw¹⁶

With over 433,000 members, Usdaw is the UK's largest union operating solely in the private sector. Whilst most members work in retail, the union also has members in transport, distribution, food manufacturing and chemical trades. Such industries typically employ a highly transient workforce, with many part-time, shift workers dispersed across a wide geographical area, meaning that Usdaw has to recruit around 90,000 members per year just to stand still. Usdaw also has the challenge of recruiting members who work in mostly part-time roles, who work varying shift patterns and are increasingly spread out geographically, with the rise of convenience retailers. Following a period of decline, in the 1990s, the union adopted a new model of organising intent on redefining the union's role in the workplace, and encouraging members to engage with the union on a regular basis. Through initiatives such as lifelong learning and social justice campaigns relevant in and beyond the workplace, the union attempted to become more visible and its purpose was broadened. This includes digital inclusion initiatives and campaigns relating to violence against shop workers, awareness raising around social security rights and protection. The union's growth was led by workplace representatives, based on their experience that the person most likely to persuade you to join a union is someone that you know, who works alongside you and understands the issues that you face. Usdaw also developed an Academy programme to train representatives on recruitment and organising, and a 'stand-down' programme, whereby representatives take (paid) time out from their day job to focus on recruitment. Although progress has been made, with new agreements in B&M Bargains and Ocado, and high profile campaigns for recognition in companies such as Marks and Spencer, Lidl and Aldi, Usdaw is continuing to adapt to the changing nature of retail work in the UK. In 2017 Usdaw recruited its highest number of new members in 25 years.

¹⁶ Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers.

GLOBAL SECTION

Organising in the digital economy

Ver.di: Germany

The emergence of platform workers¹⁷ highlights the importance of establishing alternative union approaches. One of the challenges for trade unions is that this is a heterogeneous group: working in different sectors, often combining different employment status, and generating income from multiple sources. However, with 30,000 self-employed members Ver.di has a track record in this field, and this experience, alongside research¹⁸ with self-employed workers, led to the development of a number of approaches.

One approach is Mediafon (www.mediafon.net), a ver.di network offering expert advice and services to self-employed members. Mediafon supports members in disputes with clients, and provides advice on contractual, taxation and social security arrangements. The aim is to promote solidarity and reduce competition amongst workers¹⁹. Ver.di examines companies' use of external platforms, in order to influence decisions relating to this form of outsourcing. For example, when Deutsche Telekom announced plans to cooperate with the platform Mila, ver.di and the works councils exerted their influence and prevented this case of crowdsourcing. In terms of political lobbying, the union is calling for platforms and client companies to contribute to the costs of social security²⁰, regardless of workers' employment status; and legal reforms of the concepts of "employee" and "business operation".

Ver.di's experience demonstrates self-employed workers can be organised: it is possible for unions to exert pressure at the company level and make a difference. In this context it is important to raise awareness within the labour movement of the importance of: understanding different formations of outsourcing; identifying possible channels of influence and demanding an increased influence at the political level. For ver.di, unilateral initiatives by platforms, such as the existing code of conduct (www.crowdsourcing-code.de) are an important first step, but are not an alternative to collective agreements. Ver.di believes that collective bargaining is possible, particularly for 'employee-like' workers, who are economically dependent and socially vulnerable^{21,22}.

Unions NSW: Australia

This case considers the negotiations between the Australian platform Airtasker and Unions New South Wales (Unions NSW)²³. While Airtasker defines its workers as independent contractors, the platform can be workers' most significant or even sole source of income, i.e. dependent on the platform akin to paid employees²⁴: This activity is governed by commercial, rather than employment law and any related minimum wages and working conditions. Airtasker is a platform facilitating an unregulated online labour market, which undermines existing industry standards of work across a range of sectors in 'a race to the bottom'.

Unions NSW's Airtasker campaign aimed to improve the pay and conditions of the platform, as well as defend the interests of those union members who compete with those hired via the platform. The campaign comprised both public awareness raising activity and direct negotiation with the platform itself. In 2016 Unions NSW issued a public report on Airtasker²⁵, which disputed the

platform's assertion that its workers were independent contractors and outlined the implications of this for the rights and conditions of workers. After the release of the report, and a targeted social media campaign, negotiations between Airtasker and Unions NSW took place.

In 2017 a national agreement was reached to strengthen minimum standards and protections for those securing work through the platform. This includes measures to improve rates of pay, injury insurance, worker safety and dispute resolution^{26,27}. While Airtasker and the unions "still don't see eye to eye ...there was ...probably fewer barriers ...than we had perceived originally" and an agreement was negotiated. However, despite these improvements, Unions NSW believe platforms need to be governed by enforceable labour standards available to all workers. Interestingly, the campaign was driven by Unions NSW without mechanisms for engaging Airtasker workers: the campaign was successful in providing a space to consider the challenge of developing a union membership model in relation to platforms that offer services across a range of industries. Unions NSW's position as a peak body means it is well placed to work with Airtasker in particular, because the platform facilitates a broad range of different types of work, covered by a number of different unions.

Vida, Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (CGIL), Gewerkschaft Nahrung-Genuss-Gaststätten (NGG): Europe

Delivery Hero is an online food ordering platform reliant on a workforce of couriers, which is currently converting into a European Company or Societas Europaea (SE). European Union legislation means the company has an obligation to negotiate an agreement on the involvement of worker representatives within the group at the European level.

In 2017 a Special Negotiating Body²⁸ was established, formed of representatives from the countries where the group operates, including riders from Germany, Austria, and Sweden; trade union officials from Italy and Germany; and representatives of Delivery Hero management. The negotiations are ongoing and there are several critical points of dispute including: the composition of the Societas Europaea Works Council (SE-WC) itself; the election procedures determining the membership of the SE-WC; the availability, nature and circulation of information to SE-WC, including procedures for consultation and determining issues over which the SE-WC possesses rights of initiative; the basis for demands on the part of the company for confidentiality; the provision of training for members of the SE-WC; the number and format of the Council's meetings; the legislative protection of SE-WC members; and the procedures for selecting expert advisors.

While there are some notable exceptions, unions have found it difficult organising couriers. In the case of a transnational company operating in the European Union, like Delivery Hero, trade unions have the option of drawing on the legislative levers available. Working in cooperation at the European level and using the opportunity structures afforded by the European Union is one strategy that unions can adopt to improve pay and working conditions in this field.

17 Ver.di distinguishes crowd work from gig work: crowd work creates digital results and is not attached to a particular place; in contrast, gig work is attached to a place or places.

18 The research was carried out by Ver.di with Ludwig-Maximilians-University as part of the joint project "Challenge Cloud and Crowd", which is coordinated by the ISF Munich (<http://cloud-und-crowd.de/>). It is funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) in the program "Innovations for the Production, Services and Work of Tomorrow" funded and supervised by the Project Management Agency Karlsruhe (PTKA). The survey found that experiences of workers differ between platforms, however dissatisfaction with working conditions is comparatively high amongst all workers regardless of the tasks they undertake, due to high competition, low and unpaid rework.

19 Haake, G. (2017) "Trade unions, digitalisation and the self-employed – inclusion or exclusion?" *Transfer*, Vol. 23(1) 63–66.

20 Germany is one of the few European countries where the self-employed are generally not covered by statutory social security protection systems.

21 This is defined as those with more than half (one third in the media and cultural sector) of income generated through one client, for example the public broadcaster.

22 In Germany unions can negotiate contracts for self-employed who are defined as employee-like workers, which strengthens the market power of platform workers.

23 Unions New South Wales is the peak body for the state's trade unions, with affiliated unions and regional trade and labour councils as its members.

24 Minter, K. (2017) Negotiating labour standards in the gig economy: Airtasker and Unions New South Wales Economic & Labour Relations Review Volume: 28 issue: 3, page(s): 438-454.25

25 Unions NSW (2016) Innovation or exploitation: busting the Airtasker myth. Available at: http://www.unionsnsw.org.au/busting_the_airtasker_myth_unions_nsw_report (accessed 7 February 2017).

26 Minter, K. (2017) Negotiating labour standards in the gig economy: Airtasker and Unions New South Wales Economic & Labour Relations Review Volume: 28 issue: 3, page(s): 438-454.

27 Patty A (2017) Airtasker and unions make landmark agreement to improve pay rates and conditions. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 May. Available at: <http://www.smh.com.au/business/workplace-relations/airtasker-and-unions-make-landmark-agreement-to-improve-pay-ratesand-conditions-20170427-gvtvpo.html> (accessed 7 February 2017).

28 The body responsible for negotiating the agreement for the setting up of a European Works Council.

GLOBAL SECTION

Unites: Nepal²⁹

In Nepal, growing numbers of young freelance workers undertake outsourced work for software companies, often working online from home carrying out work on a task basis for multiple employers. The Union of IT and IT Enabled Services Professionals Nepal (UNITES Nepal) has adopted the 'new generation networking' (NGN) approach to organising these workers, which targets IT graduates by going to the colleges as they are about to enter the labour market. NGN is an issue-based approach to organising, whereby the union provides on and off line fora for young workers to meet and discuss their work issues and possible remedies, for example, around social security protections, remuneration, contractual status, and job security. The forum also allows workers to access career related training, for example, the leadership and entrepreneurial skills that the labour market requires. This activity means the union has sound knowledge of the latest industry trends, both locally and globally, which has boosted the union's credibility amongst workers.

Interest among young people is rising and the union has recruited over 1100 members over three years. NGN provides an opportunity to consider how to collectively address issues, and these young workers enter the labour market with an appreciation of the benefits of union membership. In Nepal, sharing good practice is increasing between unions and this approach is being replicated by unions in Nepal within the financial and pharmaceutical sectors. Drawing on this work, UNITES Nepal is working with the state to develop a code of conduct for 'freelance' IT workers. The union will be campaigning for the registration of this type of worker, legal frameworks for controlling outsourcing to ensure fair pay and improved social security provisions.

Using ICT tools and strategies

United Food and Commercial Workers' Union (UFCW): Canada

UFCW Canada launched its WebCampus programme of online education and training in response to the demand for new skills in a rapidly changing economy. WebCampus is free of charge for UFCW's members and their families, and offers over 170 courses, covering a diverse range of topics including personal development, skills development, food and retail, labour studies, health and safety, and computers and technology. WebCampus also offers courses related to trade union activity in the workplace, as well as those on broader issues of social justice and activism. WebCampus is partnered with a number of institutions, which means students can accrue high school, college and university accreditation via the platform³⁰.

Over 100,000 members have taken advantage of the education and training opportunities available. For some, WebCampus provides a pathway for attaining new employment related skills and qualifications; others draw on WebCampus for personal fulfilment. In both cases, Webcampus builds solidarity amongst the membership, across generations. WebCampus provides a mechanism for both members and, often younger, non-members to experience and appreciate the benefits of union membership.

WebCampus also draws on technology to articulate a clear progressive message and in this respect the platform is a key engagement tool for the union: WebCampus 'goes a long way to helping 'develop workers... into union activists, it's very much... a ladder of engagement'. Relatedly, WebCampus plays a role in broadening people's conception of the union as relevant beyond the workplace. One way this is achieved is through the framing of social justice issues through a collective sense of grievance. This goes beyond narrating a problem, rather it provides workers with a remedy, a roadmap to enact change in the near and long term³¹.

Fellesforbundet: Norway

In 2016, Fellesforbundet launched the online training platform, "Veiviseren" or "The Wizard", which provides newly elected shop stewards with introductory training for their new role. The programme includes an overview of the role of the union, the representative, the importance of members, legal regulations in the workplace, and negotiating advice and guidance. For Fellesforbundet: 'the point is it's easy enough and accessible enough for everybody and it's based on... shop stewards explaining their experience'. 'The Wizard' is offered to shop stewards a few days after they have been elected. Each local branch appoints a local administrator of "The Wizard", who is responsible for registering new union representatives, retrieving information about who has completed the programme, as well as inviting existing representatives to access the course. After completing the "Wizard", the shop steward is offered more traditional courses, and encouraged to meet other representatives face to face.

The union apparatus initiated the development of the programme but the input of a reference group of existing shop stewards was critical. They suggested significant changes to the "The Wizard" during the piloting stage, for example, reducing the focus on technical knowledge and emphasizing the importance of roles, and a focus on membership. The delivery style was also amended to include the advice and guidance of experienced representatives. Since the 2016 launch of the programme 3800 people have registered as new representatives and 1200 have completed "The Wizard" and have been called upon by the local union branch to participate in other union activities. While not intended to replace face to face interaction the digital platform provides knowledge quickly and goes some way to overcoming the normal barriers to signing up for traditional offline training.

Handel og Kontor i Norge (HK)³²: Norway

In Norway, Sundays are protected as a holiday with strict regulations in retail opening hours. However the current government wishes to extend opening hours and in

recent years this issue has been the subject of intense debate. In 2013, HK and the employers' organisation Enterprise Federation of Norway (Virke) began lobbying together for their inclusion in the formulation of any legislation relating to Sunday opening and HK produced a series of reports identifying the consequences. In 2014 the government announced a consultation process for removing regulation, and in 2015, the government prepared legislation to allow Sunday opening hours.

Several independent campaigns were launched in opposition: environmental groups focused on emissions; employers on higher prices; unions on work-life balance; and religious organisations on the value of a different day of the week. HK created the Norwegian Sunday Alliance web site (www.sondagsalliansen.no) to inform voters of the issues, forcing politicians to reassess the question. The union also used geo-tagged social media³³ to influence debate on the Liberal Party's congress meeting in 2015 in Tromsø. While there are limitations associated with evaluating interventions of this type, following this campaign the party did not vote on the proposal, and legislation relating to this issue has not been tabled by the government. This approach to social media is relatively inexpensive, and can run for a limited period in conjunction with particular events. Moreover, it allows the union to make its own content, targeting very specific messages at specific groups, and is not reliant on the mainstream media to relay the union's position.

Using Collective Bargaining to address digitalisation

Ver.di: Germany

Some of the challenges faced by the unions in relation to digitalization are clearly not new. Fighting for protection against rationalization is a long standing battle and over time it is proving more challenging, particularly as companies have begun to restructure more frequently as digitalization occurs more rapidly. In response to the growth of digitalisation, and specifically its implications for job security, employability and working conditions,

29 Union of IT and IT Enabled Services Professionals, Nepal.

30 Partners include Brock University, Athabasca University, University of Manitoba, Conestoga, and the Canadian Mental Health Association.

31 http://www.ufcw.ca/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=30662&Itemid=2154&lang=en (accessed on 27.2.18).

32 Norwegian Union of Employees in Commerce and Offices

33 Geo-tagging is the addition of geographical identification data to various digital social media: it can be used as an engagement tool that helps create social media content that targets particular localities. In this case social media messages relating to the campaign were generated for the social media accounts of delegates at the Liberal Party's congress meeting in Tromsø.

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ver.di's strategy focuses on ensuring decent digital work. To this end, ver.di negotiated a number of collective agreements relating to digitalisation using the institutional frameworks available. These agreements include inter-linked provisions relating to: protection against rationalization; the qualifications and skills of workers; protections against excessive workload; and the implications of mobile working.

Ver.di began to negotiate these kind of agreements several years ago, in the banking and insurance sectors. These types of agreements, particularly around protections against the rationalisation of work and provisions for undertaking training and attaining qualifications, work together. Ver.di sees a clear link between digitalisation, rationalisation protection and improving workers' qualifications. They are bound up in the union's approach to digitalisation, which is focused on maximising the opportunities for workers and minimising the risks. Finally it is important to note that for ver.di collective agreements at national level are seen as important but insufficient: ver.di also works through works council structures in order to fight for workers' interests.

Fellesforbundet: Norway

In Norway, there is a basic agreement dating back to 1935 between the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO) and the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO), which includes a supplementary agreement from the 1970s around the planning, introduction and use of technology and computerised systems. The fundamental idea behind the agreement was that early involvement of workers, via worker representatives in introduction of technology would lead to improved investment decisions and implementation processes.

This agreement includes provisions that are relevant in the current context. For example there are stipulations relating to the governance of the storage and use of personal data. There is also a commitment to ensure that employers keep their workers informed and involved of possible technological developments before decisions are implemented. Provision is made for the election

of a dedicated 'computer' shop steward, and for shop stewards to acquaint themselves with issues relating to new technology in the workplace, and undertake the training necessary to take an active role. There is also provision for worker representatives to exert influence in the design, introduction, and use of new technology, with the capacity to consult external expertise in the field.

There is an expectation that workers participate in discussions around the development and introduction of technology. The agreement also refers to the training and retraining needs of the workforce relating to the introduction of new technology, which it states should be clearly defined. The Basic Agreement is revised through negotiations every four years. It may be the case that trade unions can revisit provisions already in place, drawing on existing agreements to meet the challenges of the present day.

Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging³⁴ (FNV): Netherlands

FNV is focusing on how workers can harness the benefits and mitigate the risks of technological change. To this end, FNV negotiated a collective agreement, which includes provision for an examination of the potential consequences of automation for the cleaning sector, and create a process that is about the quality of life and work. FNV's position on automation is informed by three principles, namely: complementarity; co-creation; and co-ownership³⁵. The agreement includes a charter stipulating that employers and trade unions share a commitment to these principles as technology advances and automation is introduced into the sector.

Complementarity refers to the contention that we should focus on the kinds of automation that are desirable for workers, and discern which activities should be carried out by people. Co-creation is concerned the understanding that we should not just let automation happen, rather technology should be co-created by workers and employers to improve our working lives: arduous and monotonous work should be automated to make room for new kinds of activities. Finally co-ownership, concerns the ownership of the technology by

workers and employers that is developed and installed, which is the most contentious. At present, FNV is both canvassing workers to determine their concerns, and identifying the existence and potential development of robotic technologies relevant to the cleaning sector.

Again, potentially the regulatory frameworks of works councils within cleaning companies have useful existing provisions in this context, and specifically, stipulations that when decisions are made relating to technological change, the works council has the right to provide advice. While currently this provision is rarely used, and is not very well known, this may provide a further mechanism by which workers can exert influence.

Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail (CFDT), Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT), Force Ouvrière (FO)³⁶: France

In 2016, Orange France signed a collective agreement with three French trade unions, CFDT, CGT, and FO, which included measures related to the effects of digitalisation in the workplace: its aim is to pre-empt and mitigate the risks associated with digitalisation for workers.

The agreement includes assurances that 'no one is left behind' by digitalisation, and that workers will have time and training to acquire the necessary knowledge to become fully independent users of digital tools. Employees are being assessed in terms of the risks digitalisation poses to their employability, and their related training needs. Once this assessment phase is complete, the training programme itself will be designed and implemented. There are also provisions to guarantee the 'right to disconnect', with measures to promote the appropriate use of digital tools, and remedying inappropriate practice. Provisions for protecting the confidentiality of the personal data of workers are also included as the agreement emphasises the digital rights of workers (the right to privacy, erasure, rectification and of access for example).

Orange France has committed to presenting its digital policy to the central works council on an annual basis, which demonstrates the importance existing structures can play. A National Council on Digital Transformations will also be established to facilitate social dialogue, monitor productivity gains generated by digitalisation, and channel them towards improving working conditions.

The agreement currently covers 96,000 workers in France, however in time may include Orange's global workforce of 154,000. In the case of trans-national companies it may be possible to harness the advantage of a well-organised 'home' country, with collective bargaining structures, to spread good practice to international subsidiaries. The collaborative efforts of UNI Global Union with national affiliates will be important here.

UA ZENSEN³⁷: Japan

The working age population in Japan has shrunk in recent years and is projected to decrease significantly to from 66.35 million in 2012 to 44.18 million by 2060³⁸. Wages in the commerce industry have also fallen in recent years and productivity in the sector is relatively low. In this context UA ZENSEN anticipates that artificial intelligence will perform much of the routine and monotonous manual work, and typical examples of types of work likely to be automated include self-checkout cash registers, customer service robots, and utilizing artificial intelligence to improve ordering accuracy.

The response of UA ZENSEN to technological progress and specifically the advancement in artificial intelligence includes proactively proposing the use of artificial intelligence to resolve the issue of labour shortages and improve service value, during consultations with employers. Based on the estimate that Japan will continue to experience chronic labour shortages, the union affirms that investment in artificial intelligence would significantly contribute to the improvement of the working environment. With this in mind, UA ZENSEN has made efforts to establish a commerce research institute to: strengthen the knowledge network for enhancing

34 Federation of trade unions of the Netherlands.

35 Went, R. (2015) Mastering the Robot. The Future of Work in the Second Machine Age, Amsterdam; Amsterdam University Press.

36 CFDT, CGT and FO are the three main trade union centres in France.

37 Japanese Federation of Textile, Chemical, Food, Commercial, Service and General Workers' Unions (affiliated to JTUC-Rengo).

38 OECD - Working age population <https://data.oecd.org/pop/working-age-population.htm>.

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policy planning and research activities; to study policy realisation processes; and establish a think tank function.

This case reminds us of the importance of embedding our understandings of the implications of technological progress for the world of work in local contexts: UA ZENSEN is proposing the proactive utilization of artificial intelligence without fear in the Japanese context of a shrinking workforce.

Building New Approaches

Sindicatul IT Timișoara (SITT): Romania

In 2009, French multinational Alcatel-Lucent's outsourced part of its workforce in Timișoara in Romania to Wipro. The prospect of outsourcing prompted workers in Timișoara to organise, and Sindicatul IT Timișoara (SITT) was formed, as workers took direct action and embarked on negotiations for a collective agreement. With the guidance of the European Works Council, UNI Global Union and Cartel ALFA^{39,40}, a collective agreement was secured, which meant the EU's Acquired Rights Directive afforded the outsourced workers limited protection with their new employer. SITT then organised the outsourced workers in Wipro, which meant they retained their union membership. Subsequent changes in labour law in 2011 led to SITT organising workers beyond Timișoara⁴⁰, including Brasov and Bucharest. In 2014, Alcatel Lucent outsourced workers to Accenture in Timișoara, and SITT secured largely the same working conditions for these workers, and organised new members from the existing workforce in Accenture. In 2015 SITT worked with UNI Global Union to develop an organising strategy focused on bargaining at a sectoral level. In 2017 Atos Romania, was organised by SITT. Currently SITT is working with universities and NGOs, on the creation of minimum standards for IT workers both in multinational companies and start-ups, as part of the union's longer term strategy of sector level negotiations.

SITT represents more than 3,000 workers, within Nokia (formerly Alcatel Lucent), Accenture, Wipro and Atos, with union density of over 65% in each company. In contrast to trends in the composition of union membership⁴¹, SITT organised atypical workers, young workers vulnerable to outsourcing. The union's organising strategy is traditional, an issue based approach run through an organising committee, in a non-traditional context. The case suggests more favourable negotiating conditions emerge when outsourcing arises in a company with a 'home' country with a tradition of unionisation⁴². It also demonstrates unions can draw on established bargaining structures and supra national regulatory frameworks, to deal with new challenges in new contexts. SITT adopted a multi-scalar approach with the input of existing institutions.

This is a geographical, rather than employer based, approach: a response to a form of fragmentation, whereby workers from multiple companies, located in the same workplace or locality, can join the same union. This mobile membership, which travels with the worker from one employer to the next, is an interesting development, in part because it affirms the importance of interactions between members and leaders in close geographical proximity to each other.

Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Empresa Teleperformance de la República Dominicana (SITRATEL): Dominican Republic

Teleperformance is the largest provider of call centre services, with more than 217,000 employees in 65 countries around the world. Despite its significance as a global employer, Teleperformance largely operates 'under the radar' as a relatively unknown entity to the general public. Organising workers in the global contact sector is challenging, due to the dynamics of a competitive tendering process where client companies seek to lower costs and increase profit margins. However, In the Dominican Republic, instigated by FEDOTRAZONAS⁴³,

and with the support of UNI Global Union, a new union, SITRATEL⁴⁴ was established in 2016. Initially, Teleperformance proved to be a hostile environment for union organising: union leaders were subject to legal action to lift protections against firing them; and the company attempted to remove the workers' right to organise by de-registering the union in the courts.

The campaign for union recognition lobbied Teleperformance's clients, encouraging them to take responsibility for their supply chain and allow workers to organise. The union presence within some of the client companies, and in Teleperformance around the world, was drawn on as a source of leverage. The UNI Teleperformance Alliance of unions was activated, for example, a collective, open letter was sent to the CEO of Teleperformance, calling for respect for human and labour rights, including the right to join a union; a delegation of American workers from a client visited the Dominican Republic to investigate working conditions, and meet with local trade unionists (this resulted in a letter of protest to the client and Teleperformance management).

In 2018 Teleperformance, SITRATEL and FEDOTRAZONAS, signed an agreement for union recognition, which ensures: neutrality with regards to rights to freedom of association; paid time-off for union representatives to discuss union membership with workers; and time during inductions of new workers to explain benefits of union membership. In the context of global value chains, and the related decrease in the coverage of collective bargaining, organising along the chain is increasingly important. Efforts are invariably hampered by the fact that outsourcing is typical in countries where there is no sector level collective bargaining. SIRATEL is a new union emerging in an increasingly fragmented economy. In this context, it may be that successful unions are new unions, with new leaders, ready to adopt new strategies.

Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU): USA

In the US, it is not uncommon for retail workers in the fast fashion industry to be subject to poor working conditions, including 'just-in-time' scheduling, the growth of part-time hours, and the payment of relatively low wages, meaning that one characteristic of fast fashion workplaces is the high turnover of staff. This poses a challenge for unions seeking to recruit, organise and mobilise workers. To combat the low union density and poor conditions in retail, RWDSU created a worker centre called the Retail Action Project (RAP)⁴⁵, which any retail worker may join for mutual aid and support. In 2014, a group of RAP members who worked at Zara launched the #ChangeZara campaign, which drew on two key sources of leverage: the Global Framework Agreement with Inditex, Zara's parent company; and a grassroots strategy supported by RAP.

The UNI Global Union global framework agreement, which committed Inditex to allowing freedom of association, including access, neutrality and card check in Zara's workplaces, was a key component of the RWDSU's strategy. It was the existence of the agreement and the failure of social dialogue to secure adherence to it that prompted the RAP's campaign on the ground. RAP's approach is to engage with retail workers, listen to their issues and support them to fight for improvements. RAP canvassed and recruited Zara workers regarding their concerns for a number of years prior to the campaign, and were well aware of some of the issues that workers faced. Increasing numbers of Zara workers joined RAP and participated in their leadership training programme. These workers learnt how to identify workplace issues and how to organise their co-workers to take action as they demonstrated by exercising their right to concerted activity under federal law to form workplace activist committees. The workers also began to petition their employer and hold public rallies, to draw attention to the differences in working conditions between U.S.

39 The National Trade Union Confederation of Romania.

40 While 97% of the Wipro and Alcatel Lucent workers in Timișoara were unionised, the number of non-unionised workers elsewhere meant the increased threshold for union recognition, of 50 per cent plus one membership, was not met.

41 Heery E. (2009) Trade unions and contingent labour: scale and method, Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society, 2 (3), 429-442.

42 Trif, A. and Stoiciu, V (2017) "Turning crisis into opportunity: innovation within the Romanian trade union movement", pp.161-178, in Bernaciak, M. and Kahancová, M. (Eds) "Innovative Union Practices in Central-Eastern Europe", Brussels, European Trade Union Institute.

43 A federation that initially represented unions in the textile industry. Over time, and as the textile industry moved overseas, FEDOTRAZONAS has focused on the new industries coming to the Dominican Republic including contact centres.

44 Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Empresa Teleperformance de a República Dominicana or the Union of Teleperformance Workers in the Dominican Republic.

45 RAP has been working with retail workers in Manhattan since it was founded in 2005. RAP supports low-wage New York City retail workers to improve their pay, terms and conditions.

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retail workers and their European counterparts who are unionized. Workers also called into question practices at the store level that were incompatible with the company's global culture and stated business philosophy.

In 2014, Zara agreed to increase the number of full-time positions, end on-call shifts, and increase wages, as well as to recognise RWDSU. Over one thousand workers in eight Zara stores are now unionised. The global framework agreement, and its related stipulations of access, neutrality and card check, was a lever in this process of unionisation, but only half of the story: the other half was ensuring that workers actually joined the union. The development of an effective worker engagement strategy by RWDSU and RWDSU Local 1102 was therefore key in this context. It was a different campaign to those typically run in the U.S: this effort required a refined outreach approach that would work in the context of the company's commitment to neutrality and the limited time allotted for worker engagement. While the Change Zara campaign is an example of a 'brand pressure' campaign, the case points to the importance of a multipronged approach to unionisation, which takes advantage of the institutional opportunities available, without neglecting the engagement and organisation of workers on the ground, which can be strategically harnessed.

Federation Nationale des Travailleurs de Postes et des Telecommunication (FNTPC) : Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) the United Nations has a long standing project to develop the postal infrastructure, and specifically create postcodes. To take this work forward the United Nations worked with the Universal Postal Union, the Pan African Postal Union, the FNTPC⁴⁶, and the DRC postal service, SCPT.

The campaign, called "Adressage et Code Postal", began when the union organised the postal workers to map the locations in need of a postal address. Through this process 120 les quartiers perferiques, or outlying districts, were identified as needing post codes. The

union then worked to raise awareness of the importance of the postal infrastructure and the benefits of having an address amongst the general public, service providers and government officials. The FNTPC worked hard in the face of logistical challenges, to access the often isolated areas, and register citizens in these communities. Partnerships were formed with relevant government ministries, and the unions also built relationships with service providers working in sectors that would benefit from a post code system. The postal code system was devised and implemented by this partnership between citizens, service providers, the state and the union. Once postal addresses were identified and allocated by the postal workers, the Universal Postal Union validated the system.

This work is ongoing, but to date of the 26 regions in the DRC, six have a system of post codes. The campaign demonstrates the union's power to enact social change. By engaging in this campaign, the union improved its standing in the country and developed important contacts in both civil society and the state.

Service Employees International Union (SEIU): USA

The airline industry in the United States increasingly out-sources or sub-contracts much of its support activity, which has typically led to a deterioration in pay and working conditions. While organizing these workers poses a challenge, in 2015, the Fight for \$15 spread to O'Hare airport where the SEIU adopted a dual approach: an industrial strategy with a presence at the airport, elevating the message of the workers; and a political strategy, targeting representatives on Chicago's City Council.

SEIU began by deploying organisers to engage workers and support emerging leaders to undertake one-day strikes and acts of civil disobedience, which mitigated the risks of reprisal for participating workers^{47,48}. This activity was designed to attract media interest and public support. A public relations strategy, featuring workers and community allies, crafted a narrative to emphasise the

hardship of airport workers, and the benefits of higher wages for the wider public; and to exert brand pressure on the airlines. The campaign also built political alliances, lobbying elected representatives for an ordinance⁴⁹ to improve the quality of work at O'Hare airport. The union connected workers with their elected representatives, harnessing the support of some and pressurising others to support the campaign. An ordinance was passed, which guarantees labour peace in return for a neutral process whereby the union is recognised and can bargain; provision for training workers; and a wage increase, with a cost of living increase in place each year.

There are twelve SEIU airport campaigns across the US. The aim is to secure negotiations with the airline industry. By the end of 2018 it is estimated by SEIU that 5000 workers will have a union, a contract with a living wage, and healthcare. The Fight for \$15 campaign is significant: the campaign targets multiple sectors, employers, workplaces and cities. Ten million workers are on track to earn \$15 an hour, and nineteen million workers have secured a raise since 2012⁵⁰. However success is largely confined to politically 'friendly' places, drawing on local legal frameworks, established outside national labour relations legislation. Even in relatively friendly jurisdictions, the most difficult phase is the subsequent fight for the first collective agreement. Moreover, the trend in declining union density persists⁵¹, and the route to unionisation is not always clear. One path may be emerging from New York City, where fast food workers can make pay roll contributions to a non-profit organisation, which can play an organising and representative role and may lead to unionisation.

A number of lessons are valuable: focusing on the power in the value chain (in this case the airlines, rather than the actual employers of the workers, the cleaning and security companies); challenging conventional understandings of the primary purpose of direct action and civil disobedience i.e. to engender public support, without significant disruption to everyday life of the workplace; engaging local political institutions; using of national resources and expertise to support local action; shifting the debate around decent work in the US by

harnessing workers' symbolic power, and framing protest with a strong social justice narrative and forging new relationships with related social movements, including Black Lives Matter.

Syndicat National des Travailleurs des Postes et Télécommunications (SNPTP): Senegal

The decline in traditional post and the associated fragmentation of the industry, means that organising down the value chain is an important focus for unions. In 2014, UNI Global approached SNPTP⁵², with a proposal to organise DHL workers in Senegal. The strategy had two key components: an agreement with the employer at the global level; and a grassroots campaign.

UNI Global began work with its affiliate in 2014, when they provided additional resources for organising. The grassroots campaign consisted of a series of engagement events, intent on building trust, allaying fear of reprisals, and helping people appreciate the benefits of joining a union. Organisers raised workers' awareness of their rights in the workplace, while also working closely with management. In 2016, UNI Global and the International Transport Workers Federation secured a protocol with DHL, committing the company to ongoing social dialogue. Global level campaigning can facilitate the recognition of trade unions and the grassroots organisation of workers. The agreement included provision for: dispute resolution; supply chain responsibility; and the right of workers to a collective voice at work without fear of retaliation. In 2017, DHL workers in Senegal met with UNI Africa, and DHL workers in Cote d'Ivoire, to plan their organising campaigns for Works Council elections, by studying successful campaigns in similar contexts⁵³.

This is a case of UNI Global's Breaking Through strategy, producing results. In 2017 SNPTP took 80% of the workplace delegate seats on the DHL works council, which led to new benefits for workers, including healthcare insurance, overtime pay and meal vouchers, and the union foresees a collective bargaining relationship in the future. The union has gained valuable experience

46 The postal workers' union in the DRC.

47 In the US, if workers take 'economic' strikes for higher wages, employers are entitled by law to replace strikers with permanent replacements. In the case of unfair labor practice strikes against a company for preventing workers from organising, workers are protected against permanent replacement.

48 Ashby, S. (2017) Assessing the Fight for Fifteen Movement from Chicago Labor Studies Journal 2017, Vol. 42(4) 366–386.

49 Legislation passed by the City Council. US municipal authorities have considerable power over employment-related issues within their jurisdiction.

50 Ashby, S. (2017) Assessing the Fight for Fifteen Movement from Chicago Labor Studies Journal 2017, Vol. 42(4) 366–386.

51 Ashby, S. (2017) Assessing the Fight for Fifteen Movement from Chicago Labor Studies Journal 2017, Vol. 42(4) 366–386.

52 The Senegalese postal union affiliate.

53 <http://www.uniglobalunion.org/news/dhl-unions-plan-election-success-west-africa> (accessed on 8.5.17)

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of working in the private sector, and is beginning to target other operators. Success stems from the combination of pressure at a global level and on the ground.

Asociación de Bancarios del Uruguay, Sindicato de Trabajadores del Sistema Financiero (AEBU)⁵⁴: Uruguay

In recent years in Uruguay, international banks have established or acquired credit retailing companies, which form part of their economic group, but operate as separate entities in local labour markets. While organising these workers of the non-banking financial system is a strategic step for AEBU, the union faced a number of challenges: firstly, workers are isolated from each other in different localities; secondly, workers live under the threat of the anti-union practices of enterprises; finally, the forms of employment in the sector are transforming as new technologies are introduced.

The Youth Commission of AEBU, with the support of UNI America Finanzas, initially took to social media to engage the predominantly young workforce, before visiting workplaces across Uruguay, whereby the union distributed information on UNI Global, AEBU, PIT-CNT⁵⁵ and AEBU's Youth Committee. Workers were invited to meetings to find out more about the union, and discuss its vision for the future, including how to improve the organizing campaign by including the everyday perspectives of young workers. This work culminated in AEBU's national Youth Committee meeting in Durazno, which was held as part of UNI America Finanzas unionisation and affiliation campaign. This forum brought together 70 young finance workers from all over the country. Initially, discussion focused on the disruptive impact of the introduction of new technology in the workplace, a key concern for these workers, before turning to organising in this context.

The campaign integrated new workers and developed young activists within the union, preparing them to organise and mobilise: around 1500 workers have joined the union since this work began, which provided the leverage to negotiate collective bargaining agreements, including provision for wage and working conditions improvements. This work will be replicated by AEBU with the support of PIT- CNT and UNI Global in the remaining financial companies. The antecedent to this work is the

framework for organizing established by UNI America Finanzas: organising the financial sector is important for workers not only in Uruguay, but also in the region. Indeed, in 2017, AEBU has been able to support similar campaigns in Peru for example, and there is emerging evidence of a stronger network of transnational ties between trade unions developing with the support of UNI Global.

Federación de Asociaciones de Trabajadores de la Sanidad Argentina⁵⁶ (FATSA): Argentina

For more than 20 years, FATSA has worked with universities to design and implement a national vocational training programme to train and re-train nurses, and other healthcare technicians and assistants across Argentina. Provision for the training programme, including its financing, was negotiated with employers in the framework of the various national collective agreements covering the different sectors of the health service.

When recent evaluations of this programme identified a need for better health services in Argentina's indigenous communities, the union responded by organizing a bespoke scholarship programme for indigenous, school leavers at its training institutes. The scholarship covers tuition and living costs, including transport and accommodation and healthcare insurance. Once trained, the young people understand they have an obligation to return to their original communities: this is not a contractual commitment per se, rather the students have made a moral commitment to work in their communities for a period of time. The government of the province has also committed to providing these young people with formal employment within the health system in their original communities.

This is an example of how collective bargaining and social dialogue can respond effectively to entrenched social issues. The union is the largest provider of education in the healthcare system in Argentina: to date, training more than 30,000 healthcare workers across the country. FATSA's recent work with indigenous populations, demonstrates that the approach can be adjusted to address specific needs: at present ninety students from twelve communities are being trained.

54 The Uruguayan union for banking and finance workers

55 Plenario Intersindical de Trabajadores – Convención Nacional de Trabajadores (PIT- CNT) is the national trade union centre in Uruguay.

56 The Federation of Health Workers of Argentina.

CONCLUSIONS

We began this research project by asking how unions are responding to changes in the world of work. This includes trade unions' responses to changes in the composition of the economy, often as part of a broader programme of neoliberal reform and technological advancements.

There is a great variation in the nature of the challenges faced by unions around the world, (as demonstrated by UA ZENSEN's standpoint on artificial intelligence in the particular Japanese context of a shrinking workforce). Strengthening the capacity of unions around the world to respond to changes in the world of work is a key focus for UNI, which offers an invaluable forum for affiliates to discuss and share sound practice from around the world.

Essentially all of the unions we looked at were grappling with the issue of establishing effective representation – whether this is in terms of building on past success, and growing an existing union in new ways, or building new unions to tackle contemporary challenges. By effective representation we mean the capability of the workers, through their union, to counter (at least to a certain degree) the inherently asymmetrical power relationship within the workplace. All of the unions involved recognise the need to augment current workplace power in order to enhance future workplace power. The case studies reflect a spectrum of trade union activity, from forms of social movement and community based unionism, with no immediate 'pay off' in terms of securing collective bargaining coverage or membership fees for unions, to activity which has secured collective bargaining agreements and transformative increases in membership. Some have developed new approaches within established organisations as in the case of Unite in the UK and its highly effective leverage campaigning. Those working in uncharted territory and creating new unions include SITT in Romania and SITRATTEL in the Dominican Republic.

Of course, there are different political opportunity structures in different places and in different industries and sectors. And this is reflected in the case studies we've looked at. Unions are taking advantage of institutional opportunities at various levels: for example Vida (Austria), CGIL (Italy) and NGG (Germany) are working at European level with Delivery Hero; as are SITT in Romania with the French transnational company, Alcatel Lucent; others are working in a focused way at a sub-national level, for example, the SEIU (USA) in Chicago. In the case of trans-national companies it may be possible to harness the advantage of a well-organised 'home' country, with collective bargaining structures, to spread good practice to international subsidiaries. The collaborative efforts of UNI Global Union with national affiliates will be important here. In the UK, PCS have also shown the importance of leveraging advantage through local institutional opportunity structures, securing important victories for civil servants working with the Welsh and Scottish administrations of the UK through the establishment of tripartite bodies.

A number of unions have been able to draw on global agreements signed by UNI Global to advance their position at a national level, for example, SNPTP in Senegal and RWDSU in the USA. This work demonstrates that the value of global framework agreements lies in their enforcement, and here the broader lesson of the necessity of developing approaches, which are both 'bottom up' and 'top down' is clear⁵⁷. Crucially, this is often the work of the small but critical number of activists, working together in different spaces and at different scales⁵⁸. Often this work of organising down the value chain of companies is underpinned by two key arguments: enhancing the security of existing members by preserving conditions in traditional posts; and building the sustainability of the union by organising new kinds of workers. In this case of DHL, this work isn't limited to Senegal. DHL organising campaigns are also taking place in Cote d'Ivoire, Malaysia, Indonesia, Nepal, Thailand, Columbia, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Malawi, and Vietnam.

57 Voss, K and Sherman, R (2000) 'Breaking the Iron Law of Oligarchy: Union Revitalization in the American Labor Movement'. *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 106, No. 2, pp.303-349

58 Kelly, J (1998) *Rethinking Industrial Relations: Mobilization, Collectivism and Long Waves*. London: Routledge

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Many of the unions in our study operate on a multi scalar basis, frequently drawing on power resources at a local, national and international level within their own union and the wider labour movement, as well as building coalitions of influence and protest⁵⁹ closer to home through community alliances of various types. They have used institutional power resources of the state – local, national and supra-national – in order to move towards effective representation. The distribution of infrastructural resources is also clearly significant. The work of Unite, RWDSU and SEIU for example, demonstrate the benefits of adequately resourcing research and legal teams in leverage campaigns. On a smaller scale the activity of Unites in Nepal, and specifically their knowledge of the latest industry trends, both locally and globally, has boosted the union's credibility amongst workers.

Unions also have a crucial role in creating a culture of worker solidarity⁶⁰, and a collective identity, which is also implicated in wider coalition building beyond the immediate workforce. It is clear that how unions frame an issue or event is incredibly important. SEIU's work at O'Hare airport points to how it is possible to harness the symbolic power of precarious workers, with low structural and associational power⁶¹. Similarly in the Dominican Republic, in coalition with other actors, the union was able to craft a narrative around human rights abuses to good effect. Many of the trade unionists we spoke with discussed in detail the care with which issues were communicated both amongst workers, but also with employers, and the press.

Unions are still effectively pursuing collective bargaining as means to establish fair wages and working conditions. This includes both bringing back areas into collective bargaining agreements as in the UK feature film industry in the case of BECTU and opening up new areas relating to digitalization and automation such as the cases from in Germany (ver.di), the Netherlands (FNV) and France (CFDT, CGT, FO) demonstrate. Other unions have expanded long established agreements and updated

them in order to encompass some of the changes taking place in the world of work, as is the case in Germany and Norway where ver.di and Fellesforbundet respectively have modified existing agreements to take account of digitalisation. This approach to automation, focusing on harnessing the benefits and mitigating the risks, is an important challenge to the dominant narrative framing the wider debate. The notion that workers can and should influence the way in which the workplace is automated, as well as reap the benefits of co-owning the technologies is a marked divergence from much of the conventional wisdom. Agreements go some way towards mitigating the risks of digitalisation, and equipping workers for the future world of work. Most notably there is an intention to guard against rationalisation with a commitment to training and re-training the workforce. This means the workers – to a certain extent at least – have some control over change rather than just being subject to it.

Where traditional methods and routes to collective agreements are no longer as effective as they were in the past, many unions have explored and experimented with other options. One that is being discussed in the USA is to move away from enterprise or company-based bargaining towards some form of sectoral bargaining. This came out of the Fight for \$15 campaign, where unions found it possible to call on the legislative powers at state (rather than national level) to implement a form of sectoral wage setting. There is a long way to go with this and the possibilities of such an approach are limited by the different institutional opportunities that exist in different parts of the USA, depending on the local political balance of power, but it may be a way to access a form of sectoral bargaining in certain states in sectors such as fast foods that would be unimaginable at present at a national or company-wide level.

The SEIU and the RWDSU in the USA recognised that in some circumstances, there is not necessarily an immediate pay off for the union in terms of membership, dues paid or collective agreements. However, the broad community and political campaigning with workers

in Chicago is preparing the ground for future union organisation. An interesting potential pathway to the union is emerging in New York through the possible establishment of a workers' association, which while not a legally recognised union with a collective agreement, would bring workers together and would be funded by payroll deductions carried out by the employer. An option taken by the RWDSU was to create the Retail Action Project as a body focused on educating workers, and bringing them together as a forerunner to their introduction to the union itself.

Affiliates have adapted old methods of grading accreditation to the modern era in order to control the labour market in the interest of workers, as we see in the case of BECTU in the UK; or established themselves as an essential vehicle for new skills and qualifications for workers to meet the changing demands of the modern economy (such as UFCW in Canada and FATSA, in Argentina). This work is also valuable in terms of demonstrating unions' capacity to benefit society beyond the workplace. Perhaps the most striking example of this can be found in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where the FNTPC has expanded its activity to help to develop the nation's postal infrastructure. Not only does this strengthen the service that the members work in but it also allows the union to demonstrate a leadership role in civil society, campaigning for benefits beyond its own membership. We found that success often involves broadening the focus of the union beyond the workplace - a strategy of 'field enlargement'⁶².

Indeed many of these cases illustrate what can be described as 'a broadening of union purpose'⁶³ that includes workplace issues but also recognises the need to go beyond the workplace and to act for a broader constituency (working people more generally) than just the membership in order to achieve success on the workplace issues. The British industrial relations expert, Flanders long ago identified trade unions as having the twin traits of both a vested interest and a sword of justice, and many unions have recognised that in order

to succeed as a 'vested interest' (in other words, make gains for the members) they often have to adopt a wider objective of fighting for a fairer, more just society (that is, acting as 'a sword of justice'⁶⁴). FNTPC's work in the DRC building the postal infrastructure for the future is a sound example of this type of intervention. A further example can be found in the UK, where Usdaw's 'freedom from fear' and 'no room for racism' campaigns are well established.

Harnessing new technologies, including social media, has become a vital element of trade union activity, particularly in reaching those working in the digital economy, as we see in the work of GMB in the UK, and Unites in Nepal. There is also evidence of further experimentation with new technologies and unions are extending their repertoires of action in this area: Fellesforbundet in Norway have geared up their internal training and education programmes through online platforms to match the demands faced by the union; HK in Norway are using increasingly sophisticated technological applications in their campaign work such as geo-tagging. In the UK, Usdaw also makes good use of digital platforms, securing a significant increase in the number of members who join online (nearly 10,000 people a year in recent times) and deploying 'digital champions' to promote digital inclusion in the workplace.

With the changes in both the economy and the profile of the workforce, unions have made specific efforts to target and reach out to new kinds of workers. Well organized unions in major companies are still able to make gains or to reclaim previous positions lost in the past, such as the way the CWU (UK) has succeeded in reducing the numbers of precarious agency workers in telecoms giant BT by persuading the company to convert them into permanent staff. AEBU, in Uruguay, have organized large numbers of young people working in the finance sector, using the traditional methods of listening, learning and organising. The same can be said of SITT in Romania, and their work with newly outsourced IT workers. SITT organised atypical workers: relatively young IT workers

59 Frege, C M, Heery, E and Turner, L (2004) 'The New Solidarity? Coalition Building in Five Countries', in CM Frege and J Kelly (eds) *Varieties of Unionism: Strategies for Union Revitalisation in a Global Economy*, pp. 137-58. Oxford: Oxford University Press

60 Fantasia, R (1988) *Cultures of Solidarity: Consciousness, Action, and Contemporary American Workers*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

61 Associational power refers to power derived from workers' collective organisation (usually their trade union) and structural power refers to power derived from workers' position in the economy or the value chain. Wright, E O (2015) *Understanding Class*, London: Verso.

62 Wever, K S (1998) 'International Labor Revitalization: Enlarging the Playing Field', *Industrial Relations*, Vol. 37, No. 3, pp. 388-407.

63 Heery, E and Adler, L (2003) 'Organizing the Unorganized' in Frege, C and Kelly, J (2003) *Varieties of Unionism: Strategies for Union Revitalization in a Globalizing Economy*. Oxford: OUP

64 Flanders, A (1970) *Management and Unions: the theory and reform of Industrial Relations*. London: Faber and Faber.

CONCLUSIONS

vulnerable to outsourcing. This is in contrast to the general trends in the composition of union membership⁶⁵. The union's organising style can be described as traditional, an issue based approach run through an organising committee, in a non-traditional context. By listening and responding to the needs and demands of workers in the growing self-employed sector of the economy, unions like ver.di in Germany have been able to change the way they operate, offer new forms of support to such workers and recruit them into membership.

A further interesting approach is that of territorially driven strategies. SITT is taking a largely geographical, as opposed to employer based, approach to organising. This is a response to a particular type of fragmentation, whereby workers from a number of companies, located in the same workplace, or locality, can join the same union. It is a form of mobile union membership, which travels with the worker from one employer to the next. This is an interesting development (and unusual in Romania) not least because it affirms the importance of face to face interactions between members and leaders in close geographical proximity to each other. These place based approaches have the potential to be replicated elsewhere in different contexts. In the UK, PCS have demonstrated the capacity to harness strong local traditions of union activity in what were once industrial heartlands in cities like Glasgow and Durham where they have successfully organised in the context of privatisation of public services⁶⁶.

These cases are different examples of unions building effective representation and attempting to move the imbalance of power in the workplace in favour of the workers. One of the key lessons of all of this activity is a recognition by unions that while much else is different, one constant at local, national and global level is that although business gains strength through competition, workers benefit from organisational cohesion and co-operation. The study shows the role of union agency in transforming difficult situations into opportunities for union growth and bargaining gains. We found that through the use of combined and complementary strategies, unions have been able to draw upon, strengthen and create new sources of power to find direct and indirect routes to sustainable gains.

65 Heery E. (2009) Trade unions and contingent labour: scale and method, Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society, 2 (3), 429-442.

66 The National Savings & Investments (NS&I) was outsourced in 1999 to Siemens IT, who were later acquired by the French multi-national Atos.







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