**Document for information to the Executive Committee on 26-27 November 2019**

**Agenda Item IX Building Trade Union Power**

**General progress report – November 2019**

**Issue/Context**

This document is about the actions taken by industriAll Europe to implement the priority Building Trade Union Power. Main activities were initiating cooperation projects on company level, developing a systematic approach on the priority and training and capacity building for different target groups. One of the main focus was the implementation of organising principles in the South-East European textile, clothing, leather and footwear sector. After the affiliates got support on mapping the sector in the region and training on systematic organising, the affiliates were able to recruit more than 6000 new members. Another, but more general focus was to raise awareness on the role of Building Trade Union Power for all policy fields and sectors in the manufacturing industry. IndustriAll Europe has started providing interested affiliates with support on developing and implementing organising concepts, strategic research and training. For the remaining period until the congress, industriAll Europe will work on publishing a manual for affiliates, collect and publish best practises on organising and work on concrete organising targets.

**Recommendation for decision**

The Executive Committee is invited to take note of this document.

**Building Trade Union Power (BTUP)**

**Progress report November 2019**

At the Congress of industriAll Europe in 2016, affiliates committed to placing ‘Building Trade Union Power’ (BTUP) as one of the top priorities on our European agenda. A BTUP Task Force was set up and a first Action Plan 2017-2018 adopted.

The main activities in 2016-2018 included the following:

* 2016-2017 in South-East Europe: project in cooperation with EFFAT on strengthening the capacity of trade unions to deal with industrial policy;
* September 2017 in Berlin: Transnational conference "United and Stronger Together: Transnational Worker Participation – Building Stronger Unions” with 150 participants from 20 countries;
* 2017-2018: participation in ETUC’s Pay Rise Campaign;
* November 2017: BTUP workshop on “Exchanging best practices on organising” with presence of major affiliates;
* 2016-2018 collective bargaining project: successful bargaining requires a strong organising base, a strategic approach, sustainable structure and mobilising skills;
* 2017-2018: transnational organising at the company level – preparation and collection of fact sheets on potential target companies in cooperation with the Company Policy Committee;
* January 2018: Workshop on “Company policy and European Works Councils as an instrument for organising and building trade union power”;
* 2018: cooperation and success in organising within companies: Safran (FR-CZ), Alfa Laval (SE-PL).
* 2018: Youth Working Group and White-Collar Working Group decided to include the BTUP priority in their respective work plans.

At the end of 2018, it was decided to set up a strategic organising unit and recruit a Strategic Organiser to coordinate BTUP work, develop organising strategies, assist affiliates in developing their approach and define organising targets, and provide training.

***TCLF industry organising and collective bargaining project in South-East Europe***

A sectoral pilot action has been industriAll Europe’s EU-funded project 2018-19 on “Strengthening industrial relations and improving wages in South-East European garment and footwear industries”, decided to carry it out in close cooperation with IndustriALL Global Union. A preliminary mapping found over 600,000 textile cluster workers in seven countries, with poor wages, low union density, few collective agreements, and major presence of global fashion brands.

In November 2018-March 2019 a series of national seminars were carried out. With the participation of national union leaders and 120 local union representatives, the seminars focused on training on organising and the use of GFAs to organise workers. Based on detailed mappings of factories and brands, the work to prepare concrete organising plans was launched. Separate sessions were dedicated to an exchange with industry/employer associations, key suppliers, brands, governments, universities and NGOs on how to ensure sustainability and growth of the industry with enough skilled workforce, sectoral collective agreements and functioning labour-management relations. The stakeholders received information on GFAs and on the principles of the ACT living wage initiative between leading brands and IndustriALL Global Union.

After the national seminars, participating unions prepared organising plans, defining target factories and regions, based on a detailed mapping of plant locations and brand presence in each country. Organising action was already stepped up at the start of the project in 2018.

By September 2019, unions reported the following numbers of new members organised in 2018-19:

* Albania: 2122 (Light Industry Workers-KSSH, SPILT-BSPSH)
* Bulgaria: 522 (FOSIL-CITUB, FLI-Podkrepa)
* Croatia: 259 (TOKG)
* North Macedonia: 458 (STKC)
* Romania: 200 (Uniconf, IndustriAll-BNS, Confpeltex)
* Serbia: 3016 (STKOS, IER Nezavisnost, ISS)

Unions also reported 35 new company-level CBAs. The only industry-level collective agreements exist in North Macedonia, where talks have been started to improve their coverage. Unions have launched discussions with employer associations on branch CBAs in Albania, Bulgaria and Croatia.

At the project conference on 12-13 November in Sofia, more than 70 national and local level union representatives, key brands and employer/industry associations took stock of progress and discussed the next steps in 2020 and beyond.

***Other actions in 2019***

The strategic organising unit held the following training on organising for our affiliates:

* January: for EWC members and coordinators together with the ETUI.
* March: in Hungary for Executive Committee members of the Chemical Workers Union VDSZ, together with IGBCE.
* September: for youth leaders in cooperation with ETUI on organising principles, initiatives and best practices to organise young workers.
* September: a seminar with AMCOR trade union in the Czech Republic
* October: for textile sector affiliates from Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia, in cooperation ACV-CSC METEA.
* October: for all affiliates in Bosnia-Herzegovina.
* October: for plant level unions of OS KOVO in the Czech Republic.

As a result of discussions at the Sector Committees in aerospace, automotive and pharmaceuticalsas well as target Groups youth and white-collar workers, all Committees understood the need to work more systematically on BTUP.

The strategic organising unit supported affiliates in a number of labour conflicts:

* In March, the Chemical Workers Union VDSZ of Hungary won an 18.5% wage increase after a strike of 1,700 workers at Hankook, with strong support from industriAll Europe, IndustriALL Global Union, and several affiliates from other countries. The union used the conflict to score a big increase in membership.
* In May, workers at the Electrolux plant affiliated to FS Solidaritatea Metal in Romania won considerable increases in wages and benefits after 10 weeks of strike. Their action was supported by industriAll and Swedish affiliates IF Metall and Unionen. The union also managed to increase their membership as a result of a successful struggle.
* Since June, industriAll Europe and IndustriALL Global Union have been supporting the Metal Workers Union VASAS in Hungary in their fight for recognition and reinstatement of a dismissed shop steward at Suzuki. Despite a union hostile behaviour, the Union managed to retain the members.
* In October, together with IndustriALL Global Union we supported Romanian affiliate industriAll-BNS to win union recognition at the Daimler daughter Star Transmission SRL Cugir, employing 1.200 workers. industriAll-BNS succeeded to recruit 715 workers despite high pressure of local management against the plant level union leaders.

***Next steps in 2020***

IndustriAll Europe has started providing interested affiliates with support on developing and implementing organising concepts, strategic research and training.

In February, we will publish a **training manual**. Based on a training concept developed by the strategic organising unit, it will focus on organising methodologies and techniques, best practices and achievements, and guidance to EWC members. The manual will be adaptable so affiliates may use it in their own training.

In March, industriAll Europe together with IG Metall, UNI Europa and ETUI, will organise a conference **United and Stronger Together 2.0 – Transnational strategies for Building Trade Union Power** in Berlin.

We are building a **platform** on our website to present best practices on organising from our affiliates, and to provide a constant flow of articles on ongoing organising campaigns and results.

At the sectoral level, our action on **TCLF industries in South-East Europe** will continue. In the course of the project, textile unions have already recruited thousands of new members. Training of local organisers will help to reinforce this positive trend. Several Western European unions are supporting organising efforts. Rebuilding sectoral collective bargaining in cooperation with employer associations and key brands has been launched. It will be supported by an application to the EU for a social dialogue project. Patience is however required, as creating a profound change will take years.

All in all, industriAll Europe will continue to mainstream BTUP and support developing organising strategies and active membership policies. The Congress in May will be a good occasion to direct the next steps on building trade union power.