

National Project Conference of Turkey: Organising and Social Dialogue

*15 – 16 June 2009
Ankara, Turkey*

Historic background

- The constitution and the democracy in Germany were founded after WW II
- Trade unions were before strong fighters for democracy and many of their officials were tortured and killed under the reign of the Nazi-regime
- Trade unions were trusted founders of the new democratic state in West Germany
- Trade unions also played an important role in the process of building up the damaged industry and its plants and machines
- Trade unions fought successfully against the dismantling of the industry by American, British and French authorities
- Industrial managers were afraid of loosing control of their companies, because of their support of the Nazis; this is important to know, because it leads in a special way to the development of co-determination in Western Germany

Trade Unionism in Germany

➤ Structure

- Einheitsgewerkschaften (unity unions)
- Industrial unions
- Umbrella organisation / DGB

➤ Constitutional rights of trade unions

- Freedom of Association (Grundgesetz; Constitution)

➤ Challenges

- branches move into other sectors / out-sourcing
- relationship to political parties
- reputation in public versus organisation rate

Structure of trade unions

➤ Einheitsgewerkschaft (unity union)

- historical development after 1945 to strengthen the labour movement
- means no unions with different political or religious links
- nevertheless trade unions are not apolitical!

Structure of trade unions

- **Trade unions in industrial and public sectors**
 - one factory – one union
 - all employees of one sector are organised by one union (white and blue collar workers!)
 - sector unions dealing with all matters of their members and their works councils
 - sector unions are responsible for negotiations of CBA, which are mostly on branch level.

- **Trade unions believe workers rights must be protected by law to get the same rights for all either they work in big or small companies**

Structure of trade unions

Function of the confederation: DGB

- responsible for all political matters and for the public pressure to government (national, regional and communal level)
- responsible for legal aid at court for all members of the trade unions
- arbitrator between two or more unions, if there is a conflict in case of the responsibility for a special plant, company or branch
- responsible for the negotiations of the CBA for contract and agency labour
- 8 member organisations
- roughly 7 millions employees are members of the unions which are affiliated to the DGB that is more than 90% of all trade union members



Constitutional rights of trade unions

- Freedom of Association (§ 9 *Grundgesetz*)
- Right to bargain (*TVG* – law based on the constitutional right of trade unions)
- Trade union officials are sitting in all boards of the social insurances
(Health insurance, Unemployed insurance, pension insurance fund and the professional associations)

Works council and shop stewards

- Works council is elected every 4 years from all employees (in plants with 5 or more employees)
- Members of works council are protected by law
- Each works council has the same rights
- Works council is not allowed to negotiate collective agreements (obligate to neutrality)
- If the works council has a good reputation, its trade union also has a good standing
- Shop stewards are the democratic basement of each union
- Shop stewards are not protected
- Shop stewards are responsible for CBA matters
- Shop stewards support the works council members, who are trade unionists

Organising

- Dual system of apprenticeship helps trade unions to organize young workers, when they have left school and begin their working life in factories and offices
- 70 % of these young workers is organised by us!
- There is no competition between different unions in one plant and works council members as well as shop stewards are allowed to ask workers to join the union on the workplace and inside the facility.
- A special Marketing department in the HQ works on the development of special materials or campaigns for organising

Organising II

- Leaflets , Brochures, Posters
- Special Gimmicks for trade union promoters as a gift
- Organising campaign after signing a new CBA on branch level
- Workshops: how to convince workers joining the union

The Social Dialogue in the chemical Industry

- Since the mid 80'ies the Social partnership was widen up and developed further
- It was a result of the trade union strategy on strong and responsible works councils
- Increase on economic and ecological Responsibility of works councils and their union
- Works council activities on plant level to protect and offer workplaces

Social partners agreements between IG BCE and BAVC:

- ✓ OSHE
- ✓ Vocational training
- ✓ Equal treatment of men and women
- ✓ Anti-drug policies
- ✓ European single market
- ✓ Family friendly HR policy
- ✓ Development of the German reunification
- ✓ Group work
- ✓ Location securing and employment promotion
- ✓ Environment protection – Responsible Care
- ✓ Shop stewards
- ✓ Training on the job

Institutions of the Social Partners

- **UCI** – Unterstützungsverein der Chemischen Industrie
First a foundation for additional payment for unemployed workers of the chemical industry, later training programme for young people „Start in den Beruf“ (1975)
- **GIBUCI** – Gesellschaft zur Information von Betriebsräten über Umweltschutz in der chemischen Industrie (1987)
Society for information of works councils about environmental protection in the chemical industry
- **Berufsbildungsräte** (1987)
Apprenticeship councils on branch level
- **WBS** – Weiterbildungsstiftung (1993)
Foundation of vocational training
- **Chemie Pensionsfonds AG** – erster Branchenpensionsfonds Deutschlands (2002)
Chemical Pension fund