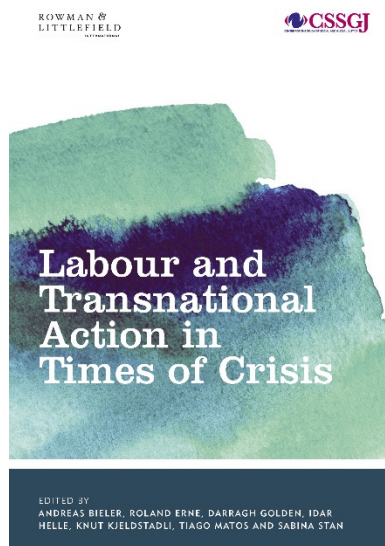# What Role Can Trade Union Education Play in Enhancing Transnational Labour Solidarity?

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What Role Can Trade Union Education Play in Enhancing Transnational Labour Solidarity?

Introduction

Trade union education is considered 'a key resource for the construction of trade unionism' (Bridgford and Stirling 2000: 5), or 'the key to trade union capacity building' (International Labour Organization 2007). As to Ulisses Garrido, current education director of the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI), labour education is 'education in the service of trade union action, socio-political in nature. It helps to build an identity' (ETUI 2013: iii).

Shelley (2007) and Spencer (2007) argue that trade union education can support union activism. Indeed, there is much empirical evidence where education played a vital role in forging successful cross-border solidarity action (e.g., Croucher 2004; Erne 2008; Novelli 2011).

A policy officer at the European Public Services Union pushes the purpose of labour education even further. For him, it is not only about activating trade union members and shaping their view towards certain values. It is also about activating society and shaping the view of citizens towards certain values (interview, 29 January 2014).

Despite the obvious importance of specialized education for workers' representatives, research on trade union education has remained sparse (Ball 2003; Miller and Stirling 1998; Stirling 2007), not only in Europe, but also worldwide (Croucher and Cotton 2009).

The purpose of this chapter is to address this gap. It proposes that educational activities can enhance transnational labour solidarity by creating five spaces: (1) space of encounter, (2) space of exchange, (3) space of insight, and (4) space of action. Together, they can form a further (5) space of development as a person as well as a group.

Arguably, educational activities may especially develop labour representatives' transnational personal, collective and social identity. Identity is crucial for sustaining solidarity action. Yet, the concept of identity has remained rather marginalised in the industrial relations discipline (Bridgman and McLaughlin 2013), in particular with a view to how actors actively construct identities (Greer and Hauptmeier 2012).

Methodology

All empirical material was compiled during a research period at the ETUI between September 2013 and February 2014.[1] In an effort to triangulate, data was collected from different perspectives both qualitatively and quantitatively.

Besides literature review, empirical material stems from a selected European Works Council (EWC) training event. It is a critical case, because the ETUI is unquestionably the continent's exemplary service provider in the area of cross-border labour education. In addition to nonparticipant observations during the educational activity, empirical evidence originates from interviews, surveys, and documents.

Informal face-to-face conversations were held with the EWC coordinator and three EWC members during the training days. Follow-up emails were sent to both the EWC coordinator and chair. Other relevant interviews were conducted with the ETUI education director, as well as two education officers who are responsible for EWC training. All conversations were face to face. Some were formal and semistructured; others less structured and more informal.

Data was retrieved through two nonrepresentative online surveys. The first questionnaire addressed the Beckers EWC members. Six of eight participants from France (three), the United Kingdom (one), Sweden (one), and Germany (one) replied. The five men and one woman were all unionised. The second was composed for the ETUI Education Day/Conference 2013 and was sent to seventy-six event participants. Of the forty-two respondents, all but one are representatives from thirty-one European Trade Union Confederation-affiliated national trade union confederations, in twenty-one European countries. Nearly two-thirds of them belong to union management, mostly in the role of head of education department. The survey results are hence likely biased in favour of a top-down view. A third of all respondents are active trainers. The sample comprised 40 per cent females and 60 per cent males.

Documents were gathered from the ETUI internal database for getting information on the process of organizing the EWC training.

Theoretical approach

Labour representatives may have the knowledge to collaborate with comrades beyond national borders. They may also have the skills to engage in transnational solidarity actions. Yet, in order to put theory into practice and act transnationally with powerful impact, workers, and their representatives, have to consider cross-border actions as a

meaningful priority. Hence, the appropriate attitude is at the heart of effective cross-national labour collaboration. Workers' representatives need to identify transnationally, both as a person and a representative body. Therefore, three kinds of identity shall build the theoretical frame for this chapter, namely personal, collective, and social identity.

Personal identity

Scholars appear divided about the definition of personal identity. According to Bratton et al. (2010: 116), it is 'the ongoing process of self-development through which we construct a unique sense of ourselves'. Polletta and Jasper (2001: 298) point similarly to 'the bundle of traits that we believe make us unique'. These traits is what Bratton et al. (2010) would however distinguish as 'personality'. All of them seem agreed with Pries (2013: 25) that personal identity is 'a complex interplay of perceiving, interpreting, negotiating and defining'. These deliberations aim to answer a question, which is not only fairly philosophical, but also very intimate and challenging for every human being: Who am I?

In short, personal identity is the definition of and connection to self. It creates meaning for our actions and beliefs (Melucci 1996). And yet, this concept has remained 'an underanalyzed level of the self' (Hitlin 2003: 118).

Defining ourselves involves the mind, heart, and soul, respectively, 'rational calculation', 'affective bonds', and 'intuitive capacity' (Melucci 1996: 66). Hitlin (2003) advocates correspondingly that commitments to certain values are core to personal identity formation. Thus, personal identity seems to originate from certain knowledge, attitudes, and roles which either nature has predetermined or we have chosen individually and collectively within our man-made economic-financial, political-institutional, and sociocultural structures: Identities are 'outcomes of external opportunity structures [and] internal self-awareness' (Pries 2013: 25).

One form of personal identity that appears particularly promising for fostering cross-border collaboration is *transnational personal identity*. According to Chaney (1979: 209, cited in Park 2007: 202), this means to have one's 'feet in two societies'. This definition appears quite limited, though. Today, having a transnational personal identity arguably means to have one's feet in *at least* two societies.

The logic behind transnational personal identity is therefore not 'either or' but 'as well as'. It means adding to the national identity an equally appreciated transnational dimension that can comprise again, one or more other national identities. It means to be culturally hybrid: a person who chooses to live 'with and within cultural difference' (Pries 2013: 334), who embraces the 'strength of combination' (Beck 2008: 226), who acknowledges what is general and specific, common and special, or what Pries (2013: 26) calls a combination of 'universalism and particularism'. In so being, workers'

representatives would overcome boundaries that are both external and internal to self, and make mental, emotional and spiritual, as well as physical, connections to people and places around the world.

Collective identity

Like personal identity, collective identity describes an ongoing human process to create meaning for ourselves and our actions (Holland, Fox, and Daro 2008; Knudsen, Whittall, and Huijgen 2007; Melucci 1996). Whereas for personal identity, meaning derives from characteristics and roles that make sense to us individually, meaning nurturing collective identity arises through feeling membership to a particular group. This group can either be real or imagined (Knudsen, Whittall, and Huijgen 2007; Polletta and Jasper 2001).

The group or 'we-feeling' (Gamson 1991; Kotthoff 2007) is the result of mutually reinforcing interplay of the group members' individual cognition, emotion, and active relationships (Melucci 1995). Of these three components, emotions and their role in shaping collective identity have hitherto remained underresearched (Polletta and Jasper 2001). Emotions are obviously underrepresented in collective action too: 'there is a lot of talking, but an inability to produce emotional connection, to *sense* the feeling of the other' (McDonald 2002: 121, emphasis in original).

Central to collective identity formation are the perceptions of unity, mutual recognition, and equilibrium (Melucci 1995) as well as sameness and congruence (Knudsen, Whittall, and Huijgen 2007). Group unity cannot, however, be extrinsically imposed, but must be intrinsically created (Hyman 1994). It must also be constantly maintained (Melucci 1995, 1996).

Corresponding to personal transnational identity, *transnational collective identity* appears inevitable if cross-national labour action is to arise (Knudsen, Whittall, and Huijgen 2007; Kohler 2006). But, collective identity can conflict with personal identity (Gamson 1991). To align both, collective action may help if it has a wider purpose than constructing collective identity, namely finding one's place in the world, as individual as much as part of a group (McDonald 2002).

McDonald therefore suggests moving from the conception of 'collective identity' to 'public experience of self'. This would require a paradigm shift from analyzing social movements and conflicts fairly instrumentally through a view on mobilizing mechanisms, to a more organic perspective on the group members' 'shared struggle for personal experience' (McDonald 2002: 125).

Social identity

Social identity is 'the perception of a "sameness" or "belongingness" to a human collective with common values, goals or experiences' (Bratton et al. 2010: 116). Put otherwise, social identity is the perceived connection of self to a certain group of people who we believe to have something in common with, without being a group member. We arrive at this kind of 'collective self' through comparisons and self-categorisation (Hogg and Ridgeway 2003). Social identity seems thus a particular area of personal identity, which hints at who we are as an individual at a given point in time, and might want to be as part of a group.

We can, and certainly usually have more than one group affiliation, that is called plural or 'multiple identities' (Bratton et al. 2010: 116; Deaux and Martin 2003: 105; Timming and Veersma 2007: 41). Consequently, social identity can be sourced from one or more collective identities, without being part of every respective group. For example, we may identify with a certain soccer team, trade union, or multinational company brand without playing, affiliating, or working for either of them.

Given this, collective identities may be found at multiple levels, such as local, national, supranational, and international. The reach of our sense of belonging can therefore fall rather short or long. Representatives whose social identity is not influenced by collective identities beyond national borders would arguably hamper transnational solidarity, because their perception of sameness does not reach far enough.

Perceiving an international community of labour is admittedly quite challenging, because only a small portion of this perception can stem from personal contacts or 'real attachment'. The vast remainder of it would have to originate from 'imagined attachment'. As Deaux and Martin (2003: 114) note, 'social identity can include great numbers of people whom one has never met or will never meet'. Thus, global as much as European labour, must predominantly be a 'community of the mind' (Chayko 2002, quoted in Park 2007) or an 'imagined community' (Anderson 2006; Polletta and Jasper 2001) instead of what might be introduced conversely as 'community of the body' or 'corporeal community'.

Special to communities of the mind is that they are enabled 'not by way of their travels and social activities, but through identity practices' (Park 2007: 207). These identity practices would aim at creating a '*sociomental* space' (Chayko 2002, cited in Park 2007: 207, emphasis in original). Arguably, this space would invite thoughts and memories into our minds, emotions into our hearts and images in front of our inner eye. From this state of being, we can create what Park (2007) calls 'cognitive' or 'interpersonal social bonds'.

Ultimately, social identity – whether real or imagined – is the basis for solidarity (Knudsen, Whittall, and Huijgen 2007).

European Works Council Training at the European Trade Union Institute: The Beckers Case

The following section investigates, through the example of an ETUI EWC training, the extent that trade union education, at the European level, facilitates representatives' transnational personal, collective and social identity.

The Beckers EWC training took place from 9 to 11 December 2013 in a hotel very close to the ETUI in Brussels.[2] The EWC had met seven months earlier in London for the very first time. The delegates were a selection of the total of fourteen EWC members from eight countries. The group of eight came from France (four), the United Kingdom (one), Sweden (one), Germany (one) and Poland (one). They met in order to:

- become familiar with the new legal standards for EWCs and compare them to the practice and the EWC agreement of Beckers;
- improve communication and cohesion among the members and deputies of the EWC;
- familiarize the participants with the differences and similarities between the systems of workers representation in the European Union in general and the Beckers subsidiaries in particular;
- be able to anticipate changes in the company, and to represent the workforces' interests; and
- develop a common view and understanding about the role and responsibilities of the EWC representatives.

Six translators (two German, two Polish, two French) facilitated cross-border communication. The transnational trainer switched between German, French, English, and he spoke Swedish, like a native. Also the executive manager involved in the planning participated constructively from the first evening until the following afternoon in fluent English. Not all EWC members appreciated his participation, though some felt inhibited to talk freely. Eventually, the educational activity was a learning opportunity in many ways.

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[2] AB Wilh. Becker is the parent company of two international operations, namely Becker Industrial Coatings and ColArt, which are headquartered in Berlin (Germany) and London (United Kingdom), respectively. The two subsidiaries are called the Beckers Group and employ around three thousand employees worldwide in the chemical industry. Their European activity spans across the Benelux, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. AB Wilh. Becker is owned by the Swedish family business Lindéngruppen AB. The Beckers Group EWC agreement came into effect on 1 January 2013. Because of the novelty of both the agreement and the training event, the Beckers case can be considered a critical case.

Space of Encounter (Ort der Begegnung)

As a residential activity, the Beckers training was firstly an opportunity for the EWC members to meet each other as well as other people in person. As the Swedish delegate described 'I had possibility to […] meet the old and new nice people of course' (email, 12 December 2013). Since the EWC had met once before, the training provided space to meet some national colleagues, the EWC coordinator as well as the management representative again. New people were obviously the trainer, the translators, the information technology technician, and the author.

New for the participants was also the venue in Brussels. Thus, educational activities are also opportunities to meet people (again) in a different environment. Usually, this environment holds two different settings where one is more formal than the other. The training room is more formal, because here the participants are asked to perform tasks. Coffee/lunch breaks, dinner, and any other rather informal situations inside and outside the training room invite people to speak about more than work-related issues. In this way, EWC members may encounter known and previously unknown people, and gain insight into their behaviour as well as learn of different circumstances from several perspectives.

Space of Exchange (Ort des Austausches)

Thanks to the space of encounter, the EWC training offered opportunities for the Beckers delegates to communicate with each other and other people. The communication flow went in multiple ways. The participants received information rather passively by listening to and observing the trainer's PowerPoint presentations. Sometimes, both trainer and the group posed questions to each other. The trainer also encouraged the group to share information more actively amongst themselves. This included past theoretical knowledge and practical experiences, but also present opinions and future ideas.

The introductory session, for example, was an opportunity to present oneself and exchange facts regarding everybody's country, national industrial relations system, challenges at work, and personal hobbies. In so doing, the trainer created a basis for further formal, more work-related and more informal, personal communication. It was also an initial opportunity to recognise 'mutuality despite difference' (Hyman 2011) and acknowledge how 'united in diversity' the supranational labour representatives actually are.

Mutuality showed itself not only privately in some hobbies, but also professionally in their experience as local labour representatives. Sharing the challenges, which the EWC members had been facing with their local employers for approximately the last two years, seemed an especially welcomed opportunity to open up and release their

emotional pain. With the exception of the Swedish delegate, the author could see the desperation in their faces and hear the feelings of powerlessness and insecurity through their speech. Their anger concerned not only management and their often disrespectful and deceitful behaviour. In particular, the German delegate was also concerned about inefficiencies in the production process, as well as the damages these can cause to the health of both employees and nature.

Besides local challenges, local solutions were discussed. The German and the Swedish colleague, for instance, shared information on the production conditions in their respective subsidiary. Through exchanging knowledge on Swedish best practices and those German (which should not be copied), both delegates are now in a position to better evaluate their own situation. Moreover, the German comrade has now got a powerful argument to create upward change in production which can be seen a triple win-win, namely for employees, environment and business expenditure.

Space of Insight (Ort der Erkenntnis)
Exchanging information may result in hearing contents we already know and learn anew. Based on such data, the EWC activity invited participants to reflect on self, others, and the context.

Reflections had already started during the educational activity. In a conversation with the author, the German delegate realized at the second evening that 'in London, I was a stranger. Here [in Brussels] I am already a bit better' (translation by the author). Initially put up as a reserve member, he came to feel more comfortable among his colleagues, since he was meeting some of them for the second time. The EWC chair concluded at the end of the session in plenary that 'training gives you confidence – and confidence drives things'. A French Select Committee member suggested after the final lunch that the EWC has become more of a team.

Reflections continued beyond the training days too. The German delegate believes that 'the more we meet, the better we will get to know each other' (quoted from the survey, translation by the author). At the same time, he found the training too short. Another French select committee member realized that the training had provided her with plenty of information that will enable her to better fulfil her supranational duties. The Swedish and a third French delegate agreed similarly that they had gained better knowledge of their task as EWC. Remarkably, while the former stresses his individual representative role, like the aforementioned French select committee member, the latter refers to 'notre' (our) EWC as a group.

Thus, thanks to the deliberations which the EWC training encouraged, assumedly all course participants arrived at new insights. These illuminations can concern the individual representative as much as the collectives they are committed to.

Space of Action (Ort des Handelns)

The increased confidence which the EWC chair noted earlier is very likely interconnected with the fourth function of labour educational activities, namely to provide opportunities to act in a safe environment with immediate feedback from an expert. In order to act, the participants were confronted by the trainer with case studies, which either mirror or are taken from the real world. Their solutions were then discussed in plenary. Such exercises are supposed to prepare the participants for similar upcoming situations so that suitable common approaches, strategies, communication, behaviour, and so on can be identified.

In an effort to make the two days a participatory learning experience, the trainer used group, pair and individual tasks to activate the participants. In pairs, the participants analyzed the Beckers EWC agreement in view of key elements of the recast directive. The aim was to find out strengths and weaknesses of their own EWC agreement in comparison to another anonymous (but real) one. Since the Beckers EWC is a newly established representation body, the trainer asked the participants furthermore to debate, in two groups of four (French speakers/others), what the purpose of their EWC is, and what internal rules the members should give themselves in order to become an effective transnational representation body. Particularly enlightening was an exercise on intercultural communication where also the management representative plus, exceptionally, the author took part in. The results of the three groups showed, on the one hand, that the perception of right and wrong human behaviour may diverge considerably. On the other, individual opinions may deviate from the collectively negotiated outcome.

Space of Development (Ort der Entwicklung)

How participant-centred the learning experience becomes is, however, not only dependent on the trainers' facilitation abilities. It depends also on how the participants engage with the learning opportunities provided. This being said, EWC training can eventually open up a space of further development. Whether the course participants indeed tap into this space and use it to advance their knowledge, attitudes, and skills is left to their discretion.

The participants' statements indicate that they have probably all gained in terms of knowledge and attitude. Besides confidence, the EWC chair developed especially 'knowledge of [European Union] trade union structures' (quoted from the survey). One French select committee member emphasized likewise that her confidence and trust in herself has improved. Another French colleague benefited from knowledge on different mentalities in other countries and understanding of diverse human reactions to certain problems. He realized, and very much appreciated, that misunderstandings may occur

if one does not consider that what is normal in one country, may not be normal in another.

Whether the participants' skills have developed is difficult to evaluate, since we do not know how successfully in the future they will apply what they have learned. Nevertheless, remembering the exchange of local policies and practices, the EWC delegates might have developed their skill in finding cross-border commonalities and differences between their subsidiaries. By contrast, the EWC chair expresses feeling still somewhat lost in defining transnational issues which EWCs can influence. He has, furthermore, remained unsure about the legal power and procedures EWCs could utilize to challenge company decisions through the courts, because the recast directive appears too imprecise to be of any help in these matters (email, 5 February 2014; survey).

Obviously, the chair's newly gained confidence does not go as far as to allow him to create his own definition of transnational issues. In a multinational company, basically every issue is transnational, as the other ETUI EWC trainer argues (interview, 20 February 2014).

Despite one or other personal deficiency left, ultimately, every participant appears to have gained something from the training. Through everyone's individual development, the EWC members have evidently grown as a group too. Besides increased confidence, they have arrived at 'a more integrated approach to common issues' (EWC chair, quoted from the survey). We may also recall the previously mentioned perception that the representative body has become more of a team. Thus, the course participants have apparently developed, in addition to transnational personal identity, some transnational collective identity or feeling of cross-border cohesion.

These newly built personal and collective identities not only seem to feel good. Also, they seem to have released intrinsic motivation and uplifted spirits: 'I am pretty happy with everything during my stay in Brussels', the Swedish delegate wrote one day after the training (email, 12 December 2013). He also commented on the conversations he had with the author during breaks and appreciated that 'through our discussion, I got some of your energy, enthusiasm and positivism, on that way I will be able to fight on'. Also the German colleague sounds more energetic. He took on board the author's suggestion to go to language classes since he is unable to communicate in the EWC's official language: 'I will improve my English, which will make easier the interaction with each other' (survey, translation by the author).

Quality and Usefulness of European Trade Union Institute European Works Council Training

The obviously overall positive education experience is reflected in the survey respondents' usefulness and quality ratings. Despite having missed some more legal training, the members of the EWC found the occasion very useful. On a scale of 1 (very) to 4 (not at all), all surveyed colleagues gave best usefulness ratings. The German delegate expressed correspondingly that 'the training has given me very much' (quoted from the survey, translation by the author). However, what exactly these personal benefits are, he leaves open to interpretation.

Not as unanimous is the participants' opinion on the quality of their training. Probably because they perceived the two days as being too short, the German and a French delegate gave only second best marking on a scale between 1 (absolutely delighted) and 5 (very unsatisfied). A French select committee member considers the quality of her learning experience to have been 'very excellent' (email, 5 February 2014). The British, Swedish, and the other French colleagues obviously agree with their comrade and gave best quality evaluations too.

The picture slightly changes, however, when taking separate emails into account. Three weeks after the survey participation, the British EWC chair and one French member respectively downgraded their best quality ratings by one. They did so for different reasons, though. The British chair explains his choice by referring to his perceived lack of information on legal power resources. The French colleague contends that 'excellent' renders improvement impossible, and there would always be room for improvement. Unfortunately, he offers no suggestions on how to make this improvement (emails, 5 February 2014).

Not only does this issue indicate that different ways of thinking can lead to the same result, it also points to certain limits of survey data to reflect the truth. The difference between survey results and follow-up emails prove moreover that perceptions may change over time. How accurate are then the results of the ETUI evaluation questionnaires which course participants are asked to fill in after every activity?

When comparing the evaluations of the Beckers training event against the general opinions on EWC training expressed in the ETUI conference survey, we see that the results are not straightforward. On the same abovementioned scales, a delegate from the General Confederation of Labour in Italy and Comisiones Obreras in Spain found their learning experience very useful. An official from the French Confédération Française des Travailleurs Chrétiens evaluated his EWC training as being useful. The Hungarian colleague from the Democratic Confederation of Free Trade Unions did not comment on the usefulness, yet conveyed his extreme dissatisfaction regarding the course quality. The Comisiones Obreras official sounded also unsatisfied in this respect.

Contrarily, both the Italian and French delegates were obviously fairly happy with the quality of their EWC training and gave the second best rating.

Given the quite common opinion about the usefulness of ETUI EWC training, it appears that the contents are considerably useful. Since the perception of quality is divided, the didactics seem to suit some but may displease others. In other words, what ETUI Officers and their affiliated EWC trainers deliver appear comparably more appropriate than how they do it.

Conclusion

This chapter proposes that trade union education can play a pivotal role in enhancing transnational labour solidarity by providing five development spaces. In fact, any educational activity – whether inside or outside the labour movement – is arguably an opportunity to meet other people (space of encounter); to exchange experiences and ideas (space of exchange); to reflect on self, others, and context (space of insight); and to act in a safe environment with the immediate feedback of a trainer or otherwise expert (space of action). Together, these four spaces can eventually facilitate further development both individually and collectively (space of development).

The chapter argues furthermore that transnational labour solidarity requires educational activities that develop, besides knowledge and skills, appropriate attitudes. Crucial for creating attitudes is identity, as it provides meaning for actions. Therefore, the concepts of personal, collective, and social identity are highlighted.

The critical case study of ETUI EWC training shows that labour educational activities can develop both personal and collective transnational identity. They do so by opening up four fields of education, namely ideology, cognition, emotion and function. These fields mirror the four basic human elements, which are soul, mind, heart, and body.

On the functional field, the participants can shape their personal and collective identity by developing most of all their skills in communicating and networking. They may form their identities through individual and collective travelling, team-playing, problem-solving, and identifying transnational issues and win-win solutions.

Improving the skill to respond appropriately and in unison to typical situations such as 'whipsawing' games (Greer and Hauptmeier 2008), closure in combination with relocation and wage freeze, profit-sharing schemes, trade union recognition, the use of experts, and so on addresses participants' collective identity. Likewise for exercises which sketch out a more favourable EWC agreement and create rules for effective transnational collaboration.

Regarding emotions, educational activities can be a place to grow high-energy feelings like encouragement and enthusiasm, intrinsic motivation, respect, and happiness. It can also be a place to release low energies coming from emotional pain

such as disrespect, disappointment, dissatisfaction, and discomfort. Both personal and collective identity may be strengthened through increased confidence, coherence, and trust regarding self and the group. Furthermore, the feeling of improved integration of group members and commonness in approaching tasks can be beneficial for collective identity.

In terms of cognition, participants may gain a better understanding of their role as individual transnational labour representative, as well as the role of the (national) representative body and movement they are a member of. Both personal and collective identity are shaped, on the one hand, by the trainer through explaining topics like the European legal framework for employee information and consultation (Directive 2002/14 EC), especially the conditions and competences stipulated. On the other hand, the participants may arrive at a better understanding of their transnational roles by outlining to themselves the conditions and competences regarding information and consultation in their local companies. Eventually, participants can learn how to learn and reflect about self, others, and their environment.

Improvements in ideology can result personally in an uplifted spirit, determination to fight and increased energy levels. Both personally and collectively, educational activities can create and revitalize purpose and meaning for the representative self and body. Collective identity may moreover be formed through establishing and renewing intragroup norms.

Labour educational activities can develop social identity along the same four educational fields as human elements too. Functionally, the participants' skill to identify cross-border commonalities and differences between their local subsidiaries is sharpened through exercises on cross-cultural communication and social mapping of the company. This involves presenting knowledge on various national legal and cultural policies and practices among Europe concerning employees' representation as well as those affecting the plants at hand. Thus, the participants are encouraged emotionally to cultivate empathy, tolerance, and respect for workers from other countries. They are also inspired ideologically through imagining company colleagues on the European continent. These imaginations can certainly act as a source for purpose, meaning and other normative orientation.

Social identity building has arguably fallen too short in terms of reach, though. The EWC training touched upon the European Trade Union Confederation member organizations as well as the ETUI, albeit marginally. EWC delegates might however want to additionally connect functionally, emotionally, cognitively, and ideologically with other transnational labour representatives and their workers. These may include other EWCs, World Works Councils, European Company Representative Bodies, Special

Negotiation Bodies, Interregional Trade Union Councils, as well as the European Economic and Social Committee, to name but a few.

In facilitating such wider connections within the movement, educational activities would enhance labour solidarity not only beyond national borders within a certain multinational company, but also between labour in other companies and countries. This was essential especially, yet not exclusively, along transnational supply chains. On top of that, social identity development should arguably reach out beyond the labour movement to other movements, social interest groups, companies' consumers, (trans)national citizens, and, ultimately, all living beings of this world.

Whether ETUI training extends the reach of workers' representatives' social identity and deepens their personal and collective identity in other activities and educational stages needs further investigation.

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