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CRISIS NO
STRENGTHENING TRADE UNIONS
FOCUS GROUP ATHENS 3.1012
GOLDEN CITY HOTEL

REPORT

Introduction.

The aim of the focus group was:

- to inform trade unionists on the aims and proceedings of the CRISIS NO project
- to exchange views and experiences between trade unionists in order to identify specific training needs and specify a detailed list of subjects that should be handled in the three training sessions. This list should be used by transnational partners for consultation in order to validate the training subjects proposed.

Proceedings

Twenty persons, including trainers, trade unionists all over Greece and lawyers participated in the focus group.

In the beginning there was a presentation of the project, its aims, its methodology and the activities preview.

Following that, a template with the list of the subjects of the three training sessions one in Spain, one in Italy and 1 in Greece with blank spaces available under the subject and sub-subjects of each training session as preview in the application, was distributed to all participants. The purpose for this was that each participant was invited to and had the opportunity to contribute in the further detailing of training needs.

The subject of the project is to strengthen trade unions to better face the impact of economic crisis. As far as pedagogical approach is concerned, the aim is that learning is based on real problems faced by trade unions due to crisis. Hence, discussion in the focus group took place by each participant presenting the situation and problems

actually faced by their trade union and actions taken by it up to now. Following each presentation, there was discussion on what could have been done or what should be done as well as on the possibilities offered by the established and the new labour Law.

Several cases were discussed from the employment point of view, the trade union point of view, the legal point of view and the society point of view.

Positive initiatives in a period of crisis were also discussed.

Following discussion and exchange of experiences, trade unionists gave back to OBES the template distributed in the beginning filled with their suggestions.

Both discussions and the filled templates have been used by trainers and the rapporteur in order to sum up conclusions on the training needs analysis and to convert them into subjects for training.

In the following there is the output of the focus group.

CRISIS NO

Strengthening trade unions in times of Crisis

TRAINING SUBJECTS

1. **Preparation and management of change and restructuring**

- Mergers, acquisitions, mass redundancies: the role of trade unions

Are mergers and acquisitions typical only in periods of economic crisis? Why mergers and acquisitions do happen?

What is the impact of mergers and acquisitions on employment?

What is the impact of mergers and acquisitions on the health of employees that preserve their job?

Which are the legislative frameworks regarding mergers and acquisitions for national and multinational companies?

What are the provisions for information and consultation as far as mergers and acquisitions are concerned?

What is the role of trade unions in case of mergers /acquisitions and what can they do?

Rights of the employees in case of mergers and acquisitions.

- The role of trade unions in the safety net, solidarity structures

Ways for creating a solidarity net

Co-ordination with local society

Case study

Trade unions of unemployed

- Improving the conditions for job creation

Change of trade union role in periods of economic crisis. Need for preserving production. Undertaking of initiatives. Support by specialized work groups.

2. Health and safety at the workplace

- Improving the quality of jobs and ensuring better working conditions

Sources of occupational hazards

Evaluation of risk, likelihood, severity

Examples of risks generated by jobs rotation, redundancies etc.

- Law. Creation of Health and Safety Councils. Relation between Health and Safety Councils and Trade Unions. Application of Laws.
- Work Inspectorate
- Involvement of trade unions in risk assessment and health and safety strategy

Occupational health and safety risk assessment guide

Case study

- Empowering trade unions to address work related stress, prevention and management techniques

Work-related stress and its cause

Symptoms and impact of work-related stress

Assessment of work-related stress risks

Management of work-related stress

The prevention of work stress

Role playing game

3. Adaptation of social dialogue to the conditions created by crisis

- New framework for collective bargaining

Greater need for more dynamic and rigorous labour movement, operating in conditions of reduced protection of the labour Law and arbitration.

Methods of increase of influence in decision making

Information and consultation

- Modernisation of the labour market, new forms of work

Job rotation

Job hiring

Case study

- Negotiations, collective agreements and social dialogue in times of crisis

Need to sign sector and company-based collective agreements

Case study of negotiations in companies that belong to a group

Role of the work Inspectorate