



Annual Review 2016



Who we are

The European Union of Christian Democratic Workers (EUCDW) is **the voice and official association of Christian Democratic workers in the EPP.**

Apart from being active within the structures of our mother party, the EPP, we are committed in a number of other European arenas, in particular the European Parliament.

Our main objective is to support the work carried out by our member organisations, maintain good contacts within the EPP family and provide ground for training, discussion and cooperation in order to prepare Christian Democratic workers' organisations to build tomorrow's Social Market Economy.

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The purpose of this activity report is to provide a brief overview of the timing and content of the various EUCDW meetings and to summarise the areas of action in which EUCDW has been working with the European People's Party and the European Parliament. EUCDW aspires to advocate Christian-social political ideas within these institutions, driven by the impetus given to the association on the XI. Congress in 2014.

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Welcome to the EUCDW

The European Union of Christian Democratic Workers (EUCDW) is the family of Christian Democratic workers' organisations, organisations whose roots run deep in the history of the European continent and which have pioneered the European project from its inception.

Tracing back its roots to the Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* by Pope Leo XIII 125 years ago, which guided Europe's Founding Fathers – Robert Schuman, Alcide De Gasperi, and Konrad Adenauer – EUCDW is committed to strengthening **the Social Market Economy which lies at the heart of the European Union**, successfully combining sustainable economic competitiveness with social justice.

Highlight this year was the event *The Way Forward for the European Social Market Economy* on 2nd May, with keynote speaker prof. John Hills (LSE), President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker and Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs Marianne Thyssen, which was attended by over 200 participants.



Presidium and Board Meetings

01

Presidium

Frankfurt, Germany

09 January 2016

The EUCDW Presidium convened for the first meeting of 2016 in Frankfurt, Germany, to adopt strategic lines for 2016 and adopt the programme and budget for 2016.

02

Board

Frankfurt, Germany

09 January 2016

The EUCDW Board convened for the first meeting of 2016 in Frankfurt, Germany, to adopt the Activity Report and Financial Report 2015, as well as the Programme and Budget for 2016.

03

Board

Lisbon, Portugal

03 June 2016

The EUCDW Board convened in Lisbon, Portugal for the second Board meeting of 2016. Discussions focused on the current economic and political situation in Portugal, the proposal of the European Commission for the revision of the rules on posted workers, and ongoing discussions on a position paper on fair and free trade.

Pedro Roque Oliveira, Secretary General of our Portuguese member organisation **Trabalhadores Sociais Democratas (TSD)** and former State Secretary for

Employment of Portugal opened the meeting with a report on economic and political developments in Portugal and in particular the importance of the 2012 Social Agreement between government and social partners for the successful implementation of economic reforms which brought the country back on a path towards sustainable economic growth.

Next, MEP **Sofia Ribeiro**, rapporteur for the European Parliament report on Employment and Social Aspects in the European Semester, pointed out the priorities of the EPP Group in the European Parliament for the European Semester, in particular investing in people, ensuring socially responsible reforms, boosting growth by relaunching investment, guaranteeing a better use of EU structural funds in support of economic, social and territorial cohesion and social inclusion, and stressed their importance to ensure that economic growth and social progress go hand-in-hand, both in Portugal and in the EU.



The Board also held an in-depth discussion on the European Commission's proposal for a revision of the posting of workers' directive, following an introduction by MEP **Jeroen Lenaers**, acting chairman of the Workers' Group in the EPP Group. He stressed the importance of the initiative to better tap the potential for labour mobility in the EU as one of the key strengths of the Single Market, stimulate posting opportunities and ensure fair and clear rules that guarantee equal pay for equal work at the same place for both local and posted workers in the EU. The Board decided to set out its priorities for the upcoming debate.

Fourth, the Board discussed a draft position paper on fair free trade agreements. A fruitful discussion took place during the meeting, with speakers stressing support for the objective to come to an agreement based on the negotiating mandate of the European Parliament and the Member States, which included a number of important conditions regarding the protection of high labour, social and environmental standards. Calls for maximum transparency in the negotiations and vigilance with regard to the ongoing negotiations on the reform towards a public investment court system were equally broadly supported. The Board closed with the official presentation of the new EUCDW website.

04

Board

Brussels, Belgium

16 November 2016

The Board convened in Brussels for the third Board meeting of the year. Discussions focused on the Future of the European Union, developments on trade policy and on European labour mobility.

We had the honour to welcome Mrs **Marie-Hélène Ska**, Secretary General of Belgian Christian trade union ACV-CSC, to the Board meeting as keynote speaker. Mrs Ska reported on the activities and European priorities of ACV-CSC and stressed

the crucial importance of civil society organisations, including trade unions, in mediating the relation citizens and politics.



Next, the meeting continued with a report by President **Elmar Brok** on recent developments regarding the future of Europe. The President stressed the feeling of insecurity, both in the area of the economy, the social situation and security and stressed the crucial need for positive politics and concrete results to be delivered by democratic forces in order to counter populism. He also called upon elected politicians to take up their responsibility in a framework of politics as vocation.

The Board then finalised the draft position paper on fair and free trade agreements and work was started on an EUCDW Position Paper on Fair Labour Mobility. The Board also discussed input to the public consultation by the European Commission on the proposal for an EU Pillar of Social Rights and started preparations for the EPP Congress in Malta on 29-30 March 2017.

Event *The Way Forward for the European Social Market Economy*

The European Union of Christian Democratic Workers (EUCDW) and the Belgian Christian workers' movement (beweging.net), with the support of the Robert Schuman Foundation, hosted an event on 'The Way Forward for the European Social Market Economy' on 2nd May 2016, on the occasion of **125 years Rerum Novarum**.



The papal Encyclical 'Rerum Novarum' (1891) guided Europe's Founding Fathers – Robert Schuman, Alcide De Gasperi and Konrad Adenauer – in creating a European model founded on the **Social Market Economy**. Rerum Novarum gave original answers to challenges such as increasing poverty, the deepening of social conflicts between employers and employees and the concentration of capital. The Encyclical

pleaded for establishing rights for workers such as the right to organise themselves and aimed to ensure principles such as the dignity of the human person, a decent wage, common goods, participation and solidarity.

Today, 125 years later, we are again facing huge societal challenges. Poverty increases, the gap between the rich and poor widens, growth does not produce jobs automatically, the ecological and climate challenges are immense. Being promoters of a qualitative growth and the social market economy, EUCDW continues to strive for a society where it is good to live and work for everyone. For this, we need to face and answer these challenges with all the instruments and leverage we have.



We had the honour to welcome over 150 participants from all over Europe to our European network event in the European Parliament on Monday 02 May 2016. The event was kicked off with a keynote speech by **Professor John Hills** (London School of Economics), author of the book 'Good Times, Bad Times: the Welfare Myth of Them and Us', who stressed the demonstrated redistributive effect of the welfare state over lifetimes and warned for the "Robin Hood" myth – the flawed perception

a clear division between those contributing and benefitting – which makes welfare systems vulnerable for changes in the wrong direction.

The event continued with a word of support by European Commission **President Jean-Claude Juncker**, who stressed that the model founded on the social doctrine of the Church, the Social Market Economy, as set out in Rerum Novarum by Pope Leo XIII 125 years ago, can be found in all European Treaties, representing a clear victory for Christian Democrats in the European Union. Today and back then, the main message is the same: this model is about placing men and women at work at the centre, and to build a bridge between social aspirations and the free market economy in order to successfully combine sustainable, economic competitiveness with social justice.



European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility **Marianne Thyssen** next stressed the initiatives taken by the European Commission to strengthen social fairness as a key principle to offer an opportunity to reconnect with the social market economy and put an end to the idea that the European Union

could not be a Social Union. Initiatives in which the European Union is taking the lead include the Juncker Investment Plan, the Youth Guarantee, the EU Accessibility Act, the strengthening of the rights of posted workers and the convergence of a European pillar of social rights.

In the concluding discussion, **Elmar Brok** (President of EUCDW), **Patrick Develtere** (President of beweging.net), **Ria Oomen-Ruijten** (President of the Robert Schuman Foundation and Treasurer of EUCDW), **Bartho Pronk** (President of the European Centre for Workers' Questions EZA) and **Marie-Hélène Ska** (Secretary General of the Belgian Christian trade union ACV-CSC) set out their priorities for the future of the European Social Market Economy: from decent wages and the provision of concrete answers to young people in relation to short term and flexible work contracts, to strong social rights combined with the intergenerational distribution of welfare, and a continuing, future-oriented collective organisation of workers in Europe.

Rerum Novarum was a game changer. Today, we need a similar shift of paradigm, based on equality, social dialogue, social innovation and a sustainable and healthy environmental policy. We invite every person to take up these challenges together.

EPP Workers' Group in the European Parliament

The EPP Workers' Group is a group of EPP MEPs who, in cooperation with EUCDW, promote Christian-social values and principles in the Group of the European People's Party and in the European Parliament.

On 06 July 2016, the EPP Workers' Group convened in Strasbourg to discuss Brexit and potential impacts on the fair free movement of workers as well as social security coordination in the European Union.

On 14 December 2016, the EPP Workers' Group convened in Strasbourg, France, to discuss the proposal for the revision of the Directive on posted workers.



Political Work

01

European People's Party

EUCDW actively contributed to the drafting process in the EPP Working Group 1 and EPP Working Group 2. In **EPP Working Group 1 on European Policy**, EUCDW contributed in particular to the EPP Congress Document *Securing the Future of Europe* to be presented at the EPP Congress in Malta on 29th-30th March 2017. The document was co-authored by Elmar Brok, President of EUCDW, and Herman Van Rompuy, Emeritus President of the European Council.

In **EPP Working Group 2 on Economic and Social Policy**, EUCDW participated in drafting the position papers *More Social Europe for a Productive and Prosperous Continent*, *Global Europe – Supportive, Respectful and Fair*, and *Inspiring More Innovation in Europe*, adopted at the EPP Political Assembly. EUCDW called, among others, for better support for social dialogue as key to balance competitiveness with fairness, labour mobility within a climate of fair competition and respect for workers' rights, legislation guaranteeing equal treatment, fair wage conditions and a level playing field between posting and local companies, and to combat unfair trade practices, such as dumping and subsidisation by foreign producers and governments, and tax evasion, because they cause serious harm to EU industry and workers.

In his capacity as responsible for international relations of the EPP, EUCDW president Elmar Brok took part in all **Summits of EPP Heads of State and Government**, as well as in the **EPP Political Assemblies**.

02













































European Parliament

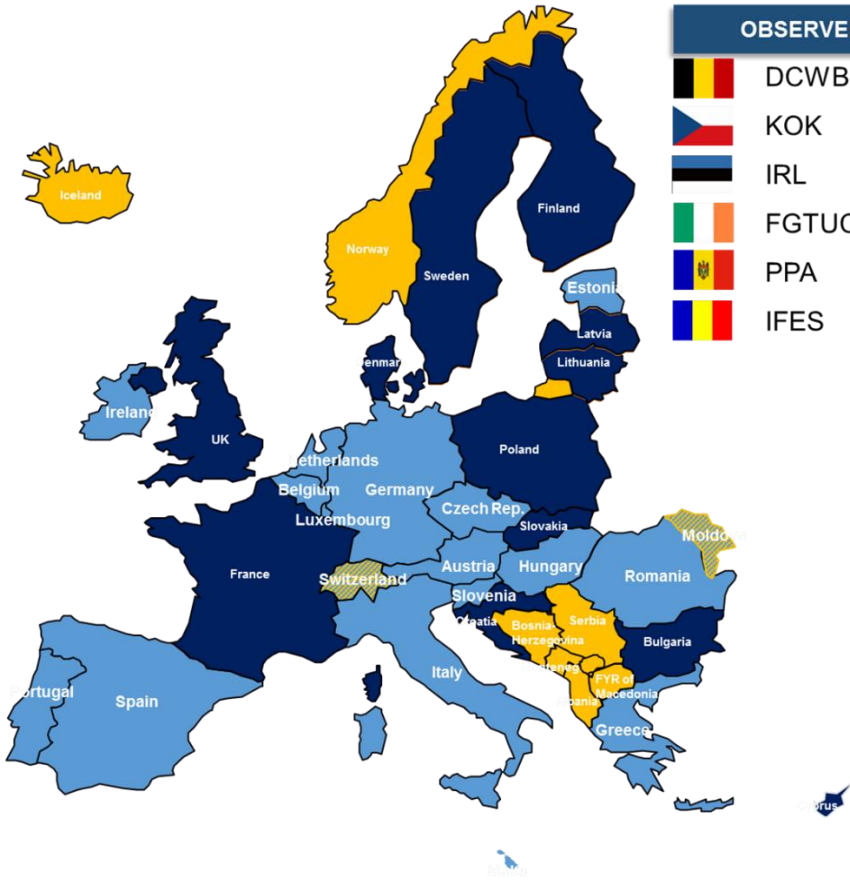
EUCDW has continued cooperation with the EPP Group Members of the European Parliament, in particular the members of the EPP Workers' Group active in the committee on Employment and Social Affairs, Internal Market and Consumer Protection and Environment, Public Health and Food Safety. This cooperation allows EUCDW to build important synergies between EUCDW, the EPP Group in the European Parliament and the European Commission.

EUCDW put significant efforts in the follow-up of parliamentary reports on tackling *Social Dumping in the EU*, which was adopted by the European Parliament on 14th of September 2016, the proposal on single member private limited liability company, or *Societas Unius Personae (SUP)*, which is currently on-hold, the report on the *revision of the Posting of Workers' Directive* on the facilitation of the free movement of workers and the strengthening of their rights, the report on a *European Pillar of Social Rights*, adopted on 19th January 2017, the report on *creating labour market conditions favourable to the work-life balance*, adopted on 13th September 2016, a number of cases of *Mobilisation of the European Global Adjustment Fund* providing support to workers losing their jobs as a result of structural changes and the effects of globalisation and the need for a *European reindustrialisation policy*, adopted by the European Parliament on 5th October 2016, as well as the *European Border and Coast Guard*, adopted on 6th July 2016 and the report on *refugees: social inclusion and integration in the labour market*, adopted on 5th July 2016.

Member Organisations

Our association brings together **24 member organisations** from 18 European countries, including Christian Democratic trade unions, Christian Social movements and workers' associations in political parties.

FULL MEMBERS		OBSERVERS	
	ÖAAB 		DCWB 
	FCG 		KOK 
	Beweging.nel 		IRL 
	UCS 		FGTUC
	CDA 		PPA
	CSA 		IFES
	DAKE 		
	CEAT 		
	UTDCC 		
	MOSZ 		
	MCL 		
	SVPA 		
	LCGB 		
	SHPN 		
	EUCDW NL		
	FTDC 		
	TSD 		
	ZD N.Si 		



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