

EUROPEAN DEBATE ON SHORTER WORKING TIMES

Minutes



20-21 October 2016

European Parliament, Brussels

Organised by

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ROSA LUXEMBURG STIFTUNG
BÜRO BRÜSSEL



Abstract

In the face of mass-unemployment and the resurgence of nationalist movements in Europe, the question of the fairer distribution of work becomes increasingly urgent. Growing demand for work is a consequence of various circumstances, from the digitalisation and automation of traditional jobs, to the large number of refugees who need to be integrated into the labour market.

The fairer distribution of work is also an opportunity for social progress, especially for gender equality, making possible shorter working hours for full time workers, mostly men, and longer working hours for part time workers, mostly women.

However, work time sharing policies are still taboo in Europe. The trend is rather towards increasing work time. Working time limits are often not respected in contracts. In Germany workers have accumulated 1.8 billion hours overtime! The European Working Time Directive is regularly under threat of cancellation. Stereotypes and propaganda on working time reduction generally dominate the public discussion, especially on the 35 hour week in France. There is a general tendency towards coercing employees to work overtime. This comes at a cost for human dignity, health, and social protection.

Fortunately, there are unions, researchers, policy makers, media, and NGOs throughout Europe, who consistently try to defend the relevance of fair work time-sharing. For this meeting we have tried to gather those advocates of the fair distribution of work through shorter working hours who believe we must become active ourselves and not wait for the market to drive the process of work time sharing.

The participants discussed concrete proposals for working time reduction, and the motives of partners and opponents they encounter in their home countries. A consensus emerged: at the moment, there is no possible "one fits it all solution" because working time reduction objectives are not identical for all European countries (40h, 38h, 35h, 32h, 30h etc..). An open target of 28 to 35 hours a week could, however, be supported by all participants. An informal network on the European level is welcomed to explore possible ways to implement and finance it. There are some proposals of Austrian, Belgian and French trade unions for 35 or 32, prospectively 30, hour week..

In order to make working time sharing more attractive, various aspects must be developed and emphasized (gender, training, family, climate, right to log off computers and telephones, etc...). Nevertheless, the fight against unemployment should remain the primary objective. A stronger voice should be given to the unemployed and precariously employed in policymaking. It is a challenge to create bona fide solidarity between workers and the unemployed. This will require a change of perspective for many: unemployment is a societal, not an individual problem.

Many workers fear that working time reduction may increase work intensity and lower their incomes. In the ideological context of austerity and obsession with competitiveness, working time reduction discussions should be associated with Occupational Safety and Health policies (OSH), increase of labour inspections, and more protective labour laws for both workers and employers.

Overall, this meeting revealed that most participants were not aware of the actors and the initiatives outside of their own countries. For most participants, a common statement would require time and lengthy internal discussions in their own organisations. We still need intermediate steps between networking and coordinated actions on the European scale.

Long term goals could include scandalising long full time, building a platform for policy development, establishing the 40 hour week as the new working hours limit in the EU. The experiments in Goteborg and in some private companies also demonstrate that local scale initiatives can and should be developed, in addition to European and national scale efforts. This meeting is the start of a long-term process, warmly welcomed by all participants.

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Participants

36 participants from 7 countries were present of the 50 registered. Invitation letters were sent to more than 100 active promoters of working time reduction across Europe, from March to August 2016. The formal registration procedure was strict as the meeting took place in the European Parliament. Registrations closed on September 8th 2016. The organisers regret that some interested parties could not join the meeting for reasons relative to the registration procedure. The list of registered participants can be found in the appendix and the list of the 36 present participants is as follows:

Name	Position	Organisation	Country
Eva Scherz	Business Advocacy	GPA	Austria
Mag. Susanne Haslinger	Law Department	PRO-GE	Austria
Wiebke Warneck	Legal Advisor	EGB/ETUC	Belgium
Aurore Joly	Communications officer	Young CSC	Belgium
Delephine Houba	National board	Roosevelt.be	Belgium
Ludovic Suttor-Sorel	National board	Roosevelt.be	Belgium
Muriel Wolfers	Syndicalist	CGT- Chômeurs	France
Régis Granarolo	Co-founder and president	MUNCI	France
Barbara Romagnan	Member of the Parliament	Parti Socialiste	France
David Feltz	Coordinator	Collectif Roosevelt	France
Jean-Marie Perbost	Economist and Journalist	Collectif Roosevelt	France
Walter Verhoeve	Local group Clermont-Ferrand	Collectif Roosevelt	France
Zalihata Mansoibou	Coordinator	MNCP	France
Jacqueline Balsan	President	MNCP	France
Jutta Schneider	Former Chairwoman Gillette Berlin	Attac / IG Metall	Germany
Christa Hourani	Works Council and VKL-pilot Daimler	left wing of the unions	Germany
Petra Ziegler	District Secretary Niedersachsen-Bremen	Ver.di	Germany
Sylvia Skrabs	Collective Bargaining Policy Department	Ver.di	Germany
Marie Pozimsky		Ver.di	Germany
Thomas Händel	Member of the European Parliament	GUE/NGL	Germany
Frank Puskarev	Parliament assistant to Thomas Händel	GUE/NGL	Germany
Prof. Dr. Alfred Kleinknecht	Professor of Economics of. Innovation	Delft. University of Technology.	Germany
Dr. Steffen Lehndorff	Research Fellow	IAQ	Germany
Margareta Steinrücke-Pavicic	Sociologist,	Attac AG Arbeitfairteilen	Germany
Michaela Amiri		Attac AG Arbeitfairteilen	Germany
Carol Sue Duerr		Attac AG Arbeitfairteilen	Germany
Stephan Krull		Attac / IG Metall	Germany
Hans-Georg Nelles	deputy chairman Fathers Expert Network Germany e.V.	Bundesforum Männer	Germany
Andreas Luttmer-Bensmann	President	KAB	Germany
Michael Klatt	Chairman Federal	KDA	Germany
Dr. Martin Schirdewan	Director	Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung	Germany
Dr. Thomas Gesterkamp	Journalist and author		Germany
Sam Groen	Advisor Working Times	FNV	Netherlands
Madeleine Ellis-Petersen	Assistant Researcher, Social Policy	NEF	UK
Alice Vernersson	SDN örgryte-härlanda, vice president	Vänsterpartiet Göteborg	Sweden
Daniel Bernmar	leader of the Left party on Gothenburg's City Council	Vänsterpartiet Göteborg	Sweden

A) Thursday 20.10.16

The session started at 16h and finished at 18h30. The aim of the session was to network, share, and discuss information.

1) Opening and presentation of the workshop agenda

Margareta Steinrücke-Pavicic, Sociologist, Attac Arbeitfairteilen:

- Margareta Steinrücke-Pavicic welcomed the present representatives of trade unions, social and political movements or parties and scientific institutions from 7 different European countries who participate in the fight for a shortening and fairer distribution of working hours.
- The organisers of this meeting are the working group ArbeitFairTeilen (fair sharing of work) from Attac Germany and the Collectif Roosevelt from France. Margareta Steinrücke-Pavicic warmly thanked the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation as well as Thomas Händel, Member of the European Parliament for GUE/NGL, and his bureau which made the meeting possible.
- In the face of mass-unemployment and the resurgence of nationalist movements in Europe, the question of a more fair sharing of work becomes increasingly urgent. Growing demand for work is a consequence of various circumstances, from the digitalisation and automation of traditional jobs, to the large number of refugees who need to be integrated into the labour market.
- Shorter working hours are also an opportunity for social progress, especially for gender equality. In other words fair work time sharing means shorter working hours for full time workers, mostly men, and longer working hours for part time workers, mostly women.
- While nations of the world should join forces to fight climate change, we are currently witnessing rivalry between the countries of Europe because of economics 'problem like unemployment. What happened with Greece has changed the course of the European construction.
- To address these multiple issues the redistribution the existing work is a key but also taboo policy for the European agenda.
- We therefore think it is crucial to exchange and coordinate our efforts in this fight on a European level, supplementary to the efforts everybody makes in their home country.

David Feltz, project officer, Collectif Roosevelt France:

- This debate on working time reduction is also essential in regards to the political context of the upcoming elections in 2017 in several European countries (France, Germany, and Netherland).
- In election campaigns stereotypes and propaganda on working time saturate the public discussion, especially on the 35 hour week in France. We repeatedly need to prove the relevance of fair work time-sharing.
- However, our priority is identify the most effective forms in implementing working time reduction, instead of focusing on demonstrating the relevance of the core ideas.
- Why do policy makers refuse an effective way to fight against unemployment, which increases business profitability and the wellbeing of employees and the society?
- To unlock opportunities we need collective intelligence and the aim is to give a voice to all participating organisations. All participants have the possibility to speak up.
- Participants are invited to reply to these 3 questions:
 1. What is your groups' concrete proposal for the reduction of working hours?
 2. Who do you encounter as opponents and what are their reasons?

3. Who are your partners on this topic? What should an alliance/platform/campaign do to make the debate move forward in your country and/or in Europe?

- The discussions will also fuel a scope statement, which will help to start 3 working groups after this meeting. At the end of the meeting, participants had been invited to discuss a common declaration that could be revised and signed after the meeting.
- This meeting is a start of a process that we strongly want to build together.

Dr. Martin Schirdewan, Director of Rosa Luxemburg Foundation (RLS) office in Brussels, Belgium,

Martin Schirdewan welcomed the participants and thanked Attac AG Arbeitfairteilen from Germany and Collectif Roosevelt from France for the initiative of bringing together many of those who are aware of the importance of shorter working times for a social Europe and willing to engage in this question. The question of shorter working hours has been recently the subject of struggles in Belgium and France, the so-called new labour law (Loi Travail). The expectable loss of jobs due to digitalisation and automation, the need to integrate refugees in the labour market and the rising request for gender equality in all working sectors, - raise the question of a fair and equal sharing of work. It will be crucial for all European countries, especially for European Youth. The Rosa Luxemburg Foundation Brussels is glad to support this initiative and wishes success to the conference.

2) Statement of the inviting MEP

Thomas Händel, Member of the European Parliament, Joint Group of the European United Left - Nordic Green Left:

Working time remains a hot social topic in Europe. Some key facts:

- Working time is increasing and working time limits are often not respected in contracts
- Workers are under pressure to finish work after working time
- Large numbers want to work longer (but also large numbers want to work less!)
- There is a tendency that governments cut down on labour inspections (example: Germany 50% cut down, leading to people working off the record)
- Productivity expectations have increased and are decisive for labour policy decisions.

The European directive on working time directive is under repetitive pressure

- 2009 European agreement to change the directive on working time did not pass
- 2010 – 2011 another attempt to change a directive on working time: the example of truck drivers: they should be able to work about 80 instead of 60 hours without loading. The Commission opened the debate but the directive did not change, because Thomas Händel and other parliamentarians of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs found cooperation partners to defend it.
- Since October 2016 the European Commission suggests changes to directive for a better work-life balance but above all to encourage flexibility measures in the labour market (though flexibility is not really relevant and often contrary to working time reduction)

Competitiveness and flexibility measures drive the policy agenda

- The implementation of the directive resulted in better working time conditions for employees in several member states. 16 member states see the directive as positive. However 11 member states claim it has negative effects (mostly for reasons of competitiveness)

- Some countries suggest implementing better instruments in 2 or 3 years time for overcoming unemployment. But others condemn any regulations that could create obstacles to companies.
- The European commission seem to be in favour of cancelling regulations rather than making changes to the current laws.

An urgent need to protect and reinforce European working time regulations

- More official discussions should take place about shorter working times and an initiative for the reduction of maximum working hours,
- More official discussions on the effects of working time on health (people are far too quiet about this issue). Occupational safety and health policies (OSH) should focus more on the protection of working time limits instead of flexibility for more competitiveness.
- Increase of labour inspections in the member states and more discussion about prosecution of labor laws

Conclusion

- There is a need for external pressure on Members of the European Parliament! This should come from Unions, scientists, NGOs, etc.
- MEPs need to be awakened; and not only on WTR (working time reduction), but also on OSH (occupational safety and health)

3) Keynote lecture

Dr. Steffen Lehndorff, Economist, Research Fellow at the Institut Arbeit und Qualifikation (Institute for Work, Skills and Qualification / IAQ), University of Duisburg/Essen, Germany

The presentation “Towards a European Working Time debate? Challenges and Starting Points” can be downloaded here: <http://bit.ly/2onmzkb>

General working-time reduction create employment

- Evidence from France: the implementation of the 35 hour week created or saved at least 350 000 new working places between 1997 and 2002.
- Full time against part time analysis on European countries : different tendencies of work sharing (examples: Germany 35 hours implemented in metal industry; Netherlands has a record of part-time workers)

Self managed flexibility (individual control) leads to longer working hours

- A study from ISO-Arbeitszeiterhebung (2004) found that 1/3 of all employees with self-managed flexible working-hours in Germany exceed their contractual weekly working time on average by at least 4 hours. 82% claim they can't finish in agreed working time; 36% claim they wouldn't be happy if work wasn't finished, 25% claim they like the job, 20% claim to be forced by superiors.
- Austria: Freizeitoption (a choice between pay and work time reduction)

Health at work, ageing workforce

- France/Belgium/Sweden: shorter hours for shift workers
- Germany: Demografie-TV (chemical ind.)
- Germany: local deals on swap working time reduction employment

Gender equity: developing a new moral model

- Gender gaps differ from country to country (example: France), also working times and working conditions
- Netherlands: what makes part-time attractive for men?
- Germany in the 60ies : “ On Saturday Papa belongs to me”

Life course approach: taking in account individual work life balance instead of flexibility for competitiveness

- Germany: Elterngeld, “local deals” (similar to the Göteborg experiment in Sweden) (public scheme)
- Belgium: Crédit temps (public scheme)
- Sweden: 4-day week in municipalities

Recommendations:

- Scandalise long full time
- Make short full time more attractive
- Establish the 40 hour week as new maximum working hours directive in the EU
- Improve the legal provisions on personnel requirements

Discussion

Barbara Romagnan, member of the French Parliament, Socialist Party

- Questions about the Gender time gap. France is not doing too badly but the situation is far to be fair for woman workers. Aren't these data too optimistic?

Muriel Wolfers, Syndicalist, CGT Chomeurs, France

- More and more work is unpaid or underpaid : example of the self-employed, “uber” and farmers
- Not all work is acknowledged : how could we handle this problem?

Christa Hourani, Works Council and VKL-pilot. Daimler headquarters in Stuttgart, left wing of the unions, Germany

- Women are more concerned with working time reduction, because of a stronger desire for “quality of life”

Thomas Gesterkamp, Journalist and author, Germany

- IG, Metall, the biggest union in Germany, is just talking about working time reduction but is not actively pursuing it

Régis Granarolo, Co-founder and president of MUNCI, France

- The priority is to address the objections to working time reduction

Dr. Steffen Lehndorff, (responding to questions)

- France and Germany two worlds apart; difficult to compare. Confusion because of yearly statistics; need to show weekly figures; issue to be taken up by unions
- Recently in France : working time reduction principle was savagely attacked by two mainstream economists (P. Cahuc and A. Zylberberg). They completely disregarded the 2014 parliamentary report written by Barbara Romagnan.
- IG Metal has negotiated for collective agreement, but some issues cannot be dealt with in collective agreement. It's true that they haven't continued to fight for working time reduction. But since 2016 they have a decision about it. And if IG Metall has come to a decision, they will certainly work on it. In 2017 they will start a realistic working time campaign oriented on the gender question and the question of how to get the power back for negotiations.

4) Panel 1 Trade unions and policy makers

Wiebke Warneck , EGB/ETUC (The European Trade Union Confederation has 89 organisations from 39 countries)

ETUC aims to reduce the 48h maximum work time reference and the opt-out-options in the European directive

- Opt-out : if a worker signs individually that he is willing to work more
- If the working time limit were lower, it would have an effect in the various countries, as we have seen in the opposite direction the effects of austerity measures; which have increased working hours.
- Encourage demand for a 32-35 hour working week. Discussions preferably at national level and through collective bargaining.
- Flexibility is acceptable when workers keep as much as possible their jobs and positions.
- How to arrange for wage compensation? Some people have to work in several jobs to generate sufficient income.

A battle against long working days, with focus on OSH (Occupational Safety and Health)

- Intensification of work because of overtime, robotisation, continuous telephone availability (= working time)
- Underemployment leads to inadequate income and living
- Flex workers are reachable at any time; protection needed

Multiple ways to reduce work time

- Give time for caregiver work (parents and others) and household responsibilities (especially for men)
- 3 days work week for 60+ aged (appropriate for this age)
- Give time for Life-Long Learning (job rotation on the Scandinavian model)

Recommendations:

- Right to log off computers and telephones
- New directive for labour inspection needed (Using the ILO reference)
- Security in part time jobs, how can sufficient income and an adequate pension be generated? Towards a minimum European working time ?

Aurore Joly, Communications officer, Young CSC, Belgium:

- The Youth union in Belgium cofounded a common platform with 21 Youth organisations against the “Peters’ Law”. The platform demands a collective working time reduction instead of variable working time.
- Availability of work for the youth : refuse to be the Burn-Out Generation, which has to deliver what the economy demands
- 25 000 young people each year are barred from unemployment compensation
- Temporary employment cannot be compensated by or confused with volunteer work; there is a real need for additional income
- Dangerous to divide north and south policies in Belgium (and in Europe).
- Need to consider new work arrangements and work sharing

Barbara Romagnan, member of the French Parliament, Socialist Party

What’s next for shorter working time policies ?

- As a responsible for the parliamentary Commission (2014) of inquiry about the social, economic, and financial impact of working time reduction in France, Mrs Romagnan proceeded to the audition of many actors of working time policies, such as chief human resources officer, CEO, sociologists, economists,

former chief of staff, etc. These studies have brought the Commission to the conclusion that shorter working hours policies have to be taken forward after some of its limits have been taken into account.

- Many experts think that reducing working hours should not be done anymore at the scale of the week but throughout life, thanks to sabbatical leaves dedicated to resumption of studies or raising children for instance.
- Regarding the timing for the continuation of such a policy, it appears that reducing full-time job is not only possible but also necessary in view of the estimated productivity gains for the coming years. As a matter of fact, letting the market drive the process of work time sharing – instead of organizing one by ourselves – will lead us to more and more unemployment, since we will need less and less working time to produce the same amount of wealth.

A strong opposition from the conservatives

- Contrary to what one may be bound to think, the opposition does not come that often from the companies themselves. Indeed, most of them are quite satisfied with the Aubry acts, because they benefited from the reduction of employer's social security contributions, and also because of the annualisation of working time that allowed them to increase the use of their equipment.
- Since 2002, the debate about reducing working times in France has been strongly polarized between right and left. This is all the more surprising given that before 1998, reducing working time had been a shared policy, and the Robien act of 1996 allowed some companies to reduce their working time up to 32 hours for a week, on the principle of voluntarism though.
- After 2002, all the studies about evaluating working time policies have been dropped in favour of an ideological debate on whether it was morally reasonable or not to let people have free time instead of work. Though the French national statistical institute INSEE established in 2004 that the Aubry acts created around 350.000 jobs between 1998 and 2002, these policies have been accused of being responsible for a supposedly lower productivity for French workers.

Partners and works

- Several French organizations and medias are trying to encourage debate around these questions : the Collectif Roosevelt, the newspaper Alternatives Economiques, (...) are regularly raising questions to get reduction working time policies out of its ideological deadlock. The parliamentary Commission of inquiry helped renewing discussions about one of the main measures of the late 1990s, but even the current Government does not claim this policy as its legacy.

5) Keynote lecture

Jean Marie Perbost, Economist and Journalist, Collectif Roosevelt:

Where is the so-called "full employment" in Germany or in the United Kingdom when a quarter of their workers are part-time?

- Is France a lazy country because of the 35 hour week? French medias and politicians repeatedly state that France is "the only country in the world that works 35 hours" and that "the French work less than others".
- Many want to cancel the 35 hours because unemployment rates are better in Germany and the UK (5% against 10% for France). For them working time reduction is the cause of high unemployment rates.
- However, this argument manipulate statistics to give biased conclusions. There are no countries Europe in full employment, if full employment continues to be seen as "all at 40 hours".
- In France, there are 18% part-time work. In Germany and UK, there are at least 25%! This amounts to 36% in Switzerland and 50% in the Netherlands.
- Countries have different ways to share existing work but working on average 30 hours is already a reality in most European countries with or without the implementation of a 35 hours week.
- Many people want to work more hours but are unable to find jobs with longer hours. This is invisible unemployment. And it's working time reduction, which is financed for by the people with low incomes.

- For instance, employment statistics often do not consider part-time tendencies in subcontracted jobs (private employment agencies).

No European country is able to provide a 40-hour workweek for everybody

- In fact, it is not surprising that all European countries have about the same average working times. Regardless of their sectoral or cultural differences, they are all struck in the same way by a massive automation. Robots, machines, software, applications, algorithms (and tomorrow 3D printers, artificial intelligence, Stand-alone vehicles, blockchains ...). Technology transfers are occurring almost at the same time all around the world regardless of borders or economic models. It is therefore not surprising that the result is almost the same everywhere.
- The advance of technical progress is not a new phenomenon. Several successive technological waves shook the twentieth century. Except that at the time countries adapted their social contract to each new step taken in productivity.
- In the past, the political response to technical progress has been the six-day week, the five-day week., and paid holidays. Down to the weekly time of full time falls around everywhere around 40 hours. But this time, as the technological leap we face is unprecedented in nature, politicians have decided to look elsewhere and not to deal with it. Hence the current disaster on the employment will be even much worse in the future.

Technical progress is not an evil in itself. The usual duration of work is not adapted to the new technological situation.

- If you are told "Keep working as hard as before", while installing machines that do part of your job, everyone understands what will happen. There will soon be "too much staff."
- Yet nothing condemns us to live in a society where we should choose between unemployment and precarious mini-jobs.
- To recreate real jobs, it is urgent to move to the four-day week implemented by negotiated means and zero cost for workers, companies and the State. In particular, it can be achieved by activating money spent to compensate inactivity.
- However, this four day week has to be adapted in different countries. The preference for full time in France (or Finland) is settled by national collective agreements and differ from collective bargaining.

Discussion items

Régis Granarolo, Co-founder and president of MUNCI, France

- In the USA: high poverty rates is due to a high number of part-time jobs. The real unemployment rate should be of at least 23% because several million people are not taken into account.

Micha Amiri, Coordinator of Attac Working group Arbeitfairteilen, Germany

- We have to be aware, that the working class pays three times.
- First they pay the working time reduction by getting just a part time job without wage compensation.
- Secondly they pay by getting lower wage increases because the high unemployment (including all part time workers who want to work more) leads to competition for jobs.
- And thirdly they pay with lower pensions and other social security payments because less employment leads to less income in our social insurances.

Delephine Houba, National board, Roosevelt.be, Belgium:

- It is fantastic, that we come together today and we should develop an appeal to civil society. And we should work on this theme and stay active.

B) Friday 21.10.16

The session started at 9:00 and closed at 16:00. The first part of the day was dedicated to information exchange. The main objective of the afternoon was to explore the possibilities of making common or coordinated actions. Three groups have been formed in a "World Café" style to stimulate the brainstorming. The results of the group discussions shall feed 3 working groups to be run after the meeting.

1) Panel 2 trade unions

Eva Scherz, Business Advocacy, Gewerkschaft der Privatangestellten, (GPA, Union of private employees), Austria

In general, people want to work 30 hours but put emphasis on pay issues and less negotiation on working time.

- GPA has 280 000 members in all sectors. We negotiated 160 collective agreements involving time/salary balance, including in the industrial sector and in private healthcare.
- In the past years, most of agreements have been focusing on salary raise but the demand of free time is increasing. All studies asking workers show that 30 hours is the ideal working time for the majority.
- Most of new members are women.
- 50% of female workers have negotiated for shorter working hours and have received lower pay (which is not what we want!). We lack the power to support women in the working time reduction negotiations, where we need also to point out that women work overtime without pay and that men are mostly in a better bargaining position.

What will the future of work look like ?

- We need more growth in Care and trade.
- How to assist people in the allocation of free time ?

" Shorter working, easier living"

In 2015 GPA began a campaign for working time reduction. The slogan is " Shorter working, easier living" with the sun of the IG Metall Logo. In a Conference with more than 1000 members of work councils GPA decided on a campaign for:

- A general working time directive of 38,5 hours by law
- 35 hours a week with compensation of wages and personal, and in the long term 30 hours
- A regulation of overtime hours
- 6 weeks holiday
- 1 week for advanced training
- Further development of free time options

Mag. Susanne Haslinger, Law Department, PRO-GE (Union for Production), Austria

- PRO-GE represent industrial, craft and trade employees as well as small companies.
- Austrian working time is the second longest in Europe. Part-time is 49% for women. A stagnation of the volume of work is observed, similar to other countries. There is a precarious reduction in working time without compensation for wages. We have the highest unemployment level since 1950.

Therefore our strategy is:

- Reduction of working time per week and redistribution of work.

- More autonomy in working time (this is what workers demand).
- More individual flexibility where employers ask 12 hours a day. Need for assistance in problem solving at the company level.

Contracts for free time option:

- The free time option is included in the collective agreements of the metallurgy.
- Free time is given on an individual basis only in exchange for loss of part of salary. Usually accumulation of free time is allowed on a yearly basis or for full lifetime (this has become a remarkable discussion).
- Difficulty: This is only possible for workers with high wages. How to move towards a model change, to include lower paid workers? How to proceed with a collective working time reduction.
- Maybe some elements in the "Solidarity bonus". It is a financial support provided by the state to enterprises that reduce working hours with wage and job compensation.

Sylvia Skrabbs, Collective Bargaining Policy Department, Vereinte Dienstleistungs- gewerkschaft (Verdi, Tradeunion), Germany:

In 2015 ver.di adopted the slogan, "Short full-time employment as an opportunity for all - more time for me"

The objective is to achieve short fulltime (currently between 34 and 42 hours) around 30 hours in all ver.di-sectors (difficult to have an agreement with all sectors). Part time is often not an option. The strategy to get to a better average working time for all is twofold:

- Working time reduction of reduction of 14 availability days, with full compensation of wages for all full time workers in all sectors. Workers may decide, whether they take those two weeks in single hours, days or weeks. This would amount to 2 hours working time reduction.
- Part time workers have the possibility to increase their working time by 2 hours with pay (without working more, because they also get the 2 weeks as in 1.). Or they can work 2 hours less with the wages they got before.

Considerations :

- The workload should not be intensified.
- Collective agreements exist but are not ready yet for implementing this strategy. Measures taken should also be personalised from worker to worker.

Petra Ziegler, District Secretary Ver.di Niedersachsen-Bremen and delegate of Ver.di – Women, Germany

There is a clear wish from women for fair working time sharing. But there is a real risk of pay reduction.

The current model is not beneficial for society as a whole. The redistribution of all society work and wealth is necessary. Therefore, we need:

- working time reduction (30h) without loss of salary and with full compensation of personnel.
- acquisition of apprentices and temporary employees
- more time for education
- not automatically shorter working hours for part timers but possibility to get more hours
- guidance for training and apprenticeships and to enable workers to benefit from free time.
- to continue to fight against unilateral flexibility measures which are contrary to the working time reduction principles.
- a step by step plan is to spread the model. Small enterprises need special attention to avoid that workers are forced to accumulate small jobs.
- cooperation partners : the youth, the migrants and the unemployed, ...

Stephan Krull (for Uwe Fink, IG Metall), Attac AG Arbeitfairteilen, former chairman of the works council of VW-Wolfsburg, IG Metall, Germany

“My life, my time, rethink work”

IG Metall started a campaign in 2016 “My life, my time, rethink work” focusing on “work” (in the broadest sense) and not only working time reduction. The aim is also to balance work time and salaries. The campaign follows up a research which took place in 2013 with 500.000 workers (in east and west Germany) about work satisfaction. The following observations were made regarding working time:

- 66% want a 35 hours or less working week. (Reality : 70% work more than 35 hours, many even more than 40 hours)
- The question of working time involve all citizens and not just unions
- Workers want the right to build working time reduction in a lifelong plan and weekly.
- Adjustment of working time in east and west Germany. (East still has more working hours and lower wages)
- Gender issues, like the right to return from part time to full time jobs. And to consider all work, not just work for pay.
- Regulation of minimum manpower requirement
- Need for regulation
- The struggle for Time and Autonomy is also a struggle for the sovereignty over one’s own life. The IG Metall has created an education program about the history of working time reduction and political demands.

Margareta Steinrücke-Pavicic reports on the short note of Marc Goblet, secretary general of FGTB:

The FGTB proposes to reduce the working time of employees from 38 to 32 or 30 hours per week, without any loss of salary for workers, compensated by recruitment and financed by a system of reduction in social security contributions. This would result in Belgium in the creation of 100.000 jobs, especially for the youngest workers, and should be accompanied by a training of workers. To reach that situation, it is necessary to hold negotiations with representatives of businesses and of workers. The FGTB calls for a serious dialogue without taboos

Christa Hourani, Works Council and VKL-pilot, Daimler headquarters in Stuttgart, left wing of the unions, Germany

- The Gewerkschaftslinke, a network of left oriented unionists, is an initiative to build a network of left-oriented unions. In our opinion: Unions should not work in the interest of capitalists. We search alternative solutions to capitalism. A forum was set up with volunteers 17 years ago. We work in unions as well as in enterprise committees at the national level.
- In 2005 we decided to demand a 35 hours working week by law and 30 hours by union negotiations. See also www.labournet.de.
- We are not big, but our network is wide (especially for women). We have been building this network since 2004 (see www.netzwerk.info.de) and we applaud events like this one in Brussels.

Sam Groen, Advisor Working Times, Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging (FNV), Netherlands

Our campaign: Generations Agreement for 57 plus, for making space for the young.

- This means part time salary plus compensation: working 60%, earning 80% with pension at 100% and better health as a result. Also applied to staff FNV. First agreements have been put in place in the public sector and soon will be realized in private sector as well.

A fundamental discussion about working time reduction in view of robotisation in the world of work.

- Further division of labour and salary. In the Netherlands we’re at an average of 37,2 hours a week, 50% work part time and 30% of all jobs are precarious.
- Even at the level of the Social Economic Council (SER) no clear consensus about what may happen, though we realize that robotisation may cost many jobs, for which policy is needed in the next few years.

Régis Granarolo, Co-founder and president of MUNCI, France :

5 Million jobs threatened in France by internet deals in various sectors (“uberisation”)

- False image of the ICT sector (Information and communication technology): it is not a promising sector.
- Many job seekers in this sector, including those with experience
- Difficult inclusion of the young qualified (Régis Granarolo contribution in ICT sector is to operate in accordance with the law on “Economie Sociale et Solidaire” (ESS)
- Salary under pressure from productivity challenge (tendency towards higher work pressure for less salary, crowd working)
- Conclusion: need to endeavour towards work for all and to raise our profile as social Europe (especially now that Britain has pulled out).

Muriel Wolfers, Syndicalist, CGT-chomeurs (unemployed workers), France

We want a balance between those who work too much and those who don't work at all. A need to share.

- We represent the unemployed members of CGT since 1968. We have 5000 members.
- Those who do not work deserve normal access to social needs and services (transport, dignity, family). A new social security branch (the 5th) should be created
- The public services should therefore be functional and employ more people to be able to deliver these services to millions of unemployed or precariously employed.
- The current fight in France is for a better compensation is difficult. Many obstacles are thrown by the main employers' union (MEDEF), certain unions (CFDT) and even some departments in our own CGT.
- The challenge is also to recognise many forms of non-paid work as formal work. And which work in our times deserves wages and which not.
- For a success in the question of working time reduction, we have to involve the unemployed and precariously employed.
- We also have to discuss the relation between wages and the costs for a secure existence (housing costs). And finally restore capacities for labor inspection and occupational medicine.

2) Panel 3 NGO's

Jaqueline Balsan, President of Mouvement National des Chômeurs et Précaires (MNCP), France

Unemployed together with workers for a decent salary, lifelong learning and a working time reduction towards 30 hours in the interest of the unemployed.

- We hear a lot of the word “work” but many unemployed people no longer know what it is.
- However, all unemployed people are a potential workers. Fighting together with workers is essential.
- Founded in 1986, the National Movement of unemployed and precariously employed federates today numbers forty associations named "precarious houses of unemployed and solidary citizens " spread over French territories.
- The objective of these associations is to work alongside with the unemployed and precariously employed and not for them.
- The federation develops local ideas into propositions for collective expression and representation in all the places that decide their fate. This allows the visibility of the associations in their role of main stakeholders of social cohesion. It organizes the actions of the unemployed and precariously employed to access and defend their rights and dignity.
- We disagree with “emploi aidé” (state subsidised approach) and such which is indeed reduced working time but at an unacceptable pay level. On the contrary, what needs to be done is a right for lifelong training, and a mechanism that allows the maintenance of an equal income when unemployed.

- We are interested in networking on national level (for example we are making a book in 2017 together with 25 organisations to fight against stereotypes on unemployed and precariously employed) and also on the European level.

Hans Nelles (Forum for Men)

Together with the women`s forum we wrote an appeal for the 1.May to fight for wage equality and the 30 hours week.

- Inspired by the women`s forum (60 years), we founded a forum/network for different men`s organisations (religious, unions, Fathers, and more) 6 years ago.
- Men are always supposed to be at work. How to redefine social norms ?
- We work on issues which are important for young men and fathers as health, violence, break-up and responsibilities. Also a lobby at policy level.
- It includes the redefinition of work, such as domestic work. 30 to 32, eventually 35 working hours is important for young fathers, if not for all.

Andreas Luttmer-Bensmann, President of Katholische Arbeitnehmer Bewegung (KAB , catholic workers movement), Germany

Working time reduction is a first tool to reach the “active society”.

- KAB is a social, catholic organisation, which does not make any working negotiations, but thinks about the theoretical circumstances, how paid work should be organised, so that it contributes to a good life. (including non-paid work)
- 1997 first decisions for working time reduction. 2005 Decision for a 30 hours week in the sense of an active society, which means respect for all work, the unpaid and paid. The goal is a society, in which everybody has enough wages to live and everybody enough time for all work which should be done and more health for all. Therefore solidarity is necessary with the unemployed.
- Progressive working time reduction should be compensated equitably with full compensation of wages and personnel, and possibly with a “universal basic income”.
- Law and collective agreements should put a ceiling at 40 hours working week.
- Work on Sundays should be collectively prohibited (seconded by Mr Klatt).

Michael Klatt, Chairman Federal of Kirchlicher Dienst in der Arbeitswelt (KDA, service of the protestant church to people at their work place), Germany

More than one billion overtime hours, 40 % not paid

- There is the unfortunate tendency towards forced labour. This is a big danger at the cost of dignity, health and social protection.
- Reduced Working Times needs to be applied: this is in the interest of all (and therefore all families).
- Regional Conference (Hanover) held on “To whom does time belong”.
- Work-life balance needed (conflict of interests between requests from employer on one hand and the employees on the other).
- We request a Social Europe. I suggest a corridor of 28 hours for parents to 35 hours for other employees.
- We have a discussion on this item on the regional level but still no decision on the national level in our organisation.

Madeleine Ellis-Petersen, Assistant Researcher, Social Policy, New Economics Foundation (NEF), United Kingdom

Action Research: In Britain the average working time including unemployed and part timers is 21 hours.

- Free time should benefit collective work and reduce the carbon footprint.
- We need time for nonpaid society work and we have to overcome the enormous gender pay and time gap.
- BREXIT showed that there is not enough time for democratic participation, which is necessary for a good democracy.
- We have inspiring examples in Great Britain. For employers can manage reduction of working time, it would need some regulations by law .
- Also education/qualification for the employees would be necessary.

4) Panel 4 Policy Makers

Daniel Bernmar, leader of the Left party on Gothenburg's City Council, Vänsterpartiet Göteborg, Sweden

A 2-years experiment (by a public employer) and a kick start project on working time reduction in an average elderly care home. Objectives :

- Improve work environment (rather than productivity and efficiency)
- Improve health of workers
- Improve part time jobs situation : do more hours and getting to shorter full time jobs
- Public effects (savings)

Observations:

- Happier and healthier staff: 80% more social activities (with the elderly)
- 14 additional care workers employed on top of 60, because of working time reduction from 7,45 - 8 to 6 hours/day). Compared with zero case (no intervention at all).
- Motivation to stay on the job
- Sick time reduced
- Payrise
- Influence on public opinion; we stirred the media and the debate. A lot of attention from our city council leading to the fact that we can set the agenda for working time reduction.
- Not so many unemployed in Goteborg, so limited interest from unemployed across the country
- Other projects often show little evidence but this one did.
- We raised 20 million Euro funds to keep experimenting Working time reduction projects.

Conclusion:

We only started with 60 out of 50,000 employees and created 14 jobs. Effect on other city councils: a real innovation model. Our unions were not interested in the working time reducing debate, but they're definitely interested in innovative models for employment opportunities. Now unions also changed their opinion to working time reduction.

5) Group 1: Outreach/strategy

The initiative to meet in Brussel is welcomed by all participants.

- All participants want to report about this meeting in their organisations, also about the declaration.
- The interaction of positive experiments and experiences, which could be initiated by our network is important for all.

What to do with the common declaration?

- For most participants, a definitive adoption of the declaration would need time and many internal discussions.
- Moreover, some participants are representatives of their organisation, some are not.
- For some, the target group of the declaration is the “officials” of their organisation, for others more the members/colleagues.
- The forthcoming Election campaign in France would be a good opportunity for some to place and use the declaration.

Strategy for the next years- what do we want to achieve?

- A common goal is to build a network and plan further meetings
- The collected knowledge and the experiences have to be a common ground.
- Some want to position their (or others) organisations/institutions, others do not want to wait on their positioning.
- We still need intermediate steps and fields of action between the networking and action “at home” (in the countries). Even more steps before planning a European scale coordinated action.
- Build a common argumentation against opponents
- A common slogan would be important, to propagate this goal across Europe.

Discussions for later

- The goal “Work for all”: need to connect “Work for Money” with “value and dignity”. It’s about a “better life for all”

6) Group 2: Proposals for working time/how to implement them

Who should initiate the proposals: state, unions or companies?

- Lack of leverage on state policies in all countries
- Unions can initiate concrete proposal or promote the general idea (different roles)
- Companies can be pioneers on working time reduction (like it happened in Sweden, Germany, Austria)

How to finance working time reduction?

- Different models for different situations
- Public funding for share compensation (ex : health)
- Public encouragement (scheduling trouble)
- Bonus/malus. Scandalise long work time
- Cost of unemployment in Germany : 54 billion €
- Taxes on inherited wealth, shareholders, profits

How to apply working time reduction?

- Generation Deal in Nederland’s > 60% working time,(25%-30% gap in income > less illness

How to convince workers?

- Fear of increasing work intensity by shift work (health, social work)
- Compensation of wages
- Working time reports

- Work culture for Compensation of wages

How to convince companies?

- Better work conditions = more productivity

General questions

- Will productivity still go up ?

7) Group 3: Internal communication/building the network

Do we want to build a network and how?

- Yes we want! Consensus.
- Formal versus informal structure ... Let's keep the informal status for the time being
- On long term we would need to finance a small job and other things. Now in the Beginning we try without.
- As financial resources would require an official structure better to keep the structure rather informal – as it is this time – This has many advantages and would also allow certain partners to continue to participate and contribute as person (and not as an institution).

Identity building

- Not on a common proposal : - complicated for unions at European level because working time reduction objectives have not the same ambition (38h 35h 30h, etc..)
- Need for visibility; a platform and homepage is required; editorial responsibility should be shared; do we need to agree on one image or one binding theme? Do we need a common name?
- Next year more organisations out of more countries should be invited (but difficult to bring in east european countries)

What are the expectations of the participating structures?

- building a platform for policy development
- We need to know and learn more; also need to share best practices;
- What about a European Observatory on working time innovation? Göteborg could be a good facilitator. Would be a good and concrete proposal to the Göteborg municipality council.
- Summer school in two years time (proposed by Petra; all logistics and finance need to be clarified in the run of 2017)
- Next meeting in 2017 (venue FGTB allowing more than 120 participants)

How can we communicate?

- Internet platform (kindly offered by Regis; should provide an easy access)
- Informing the local groups and other backstopping partners by each of us (expanding the email list)
- Appointment of one or two fixed contact person as focal point (Micha, David)

How can we work together?

- Important that the group will try to differentiate between big and small scale experiences as these clearly exist already within the group; all should appreciate different goals and learn from different constructions (Susanne).

8) Conclusion and presentation of a common declaration

Overview (individual and working group contributions) by Stephan Krull , Attac AG Arbeitfairteilen, former chairman of the works council of VW-Wolfsburg, IG Metall, Germany

- Effects of robotisation are not sufficiently mainstream. Need to fight that it becomes a priority.
- First time encounter with very diverse representation, held even at the premises of the EP.
- Minutes of the meeting are important and need to be shared (should be a credible document).
- 100 years ago, the 40 hours workweek was implemented in Germany; right time to move to 30 hours.

Muriel Wolfers, Syndicalist, CGT-chomeurs (unemployed workers), France

- The current situation is a theft of time. Work intensification policies are not only problematic in terms of wages, but also result in out-of-work suffering.
- At the same time, when we are unemployed it is absurd what we are obliged to do in order of not losing compensation money. The movie “Me, Daniel Blake” shows how it feels like on a daily basis.

Jean Marie Perbost, Economist and Journalist, Collectif Roosevelt

- Let’s talk about “sharing working time” instead of “Working Time Reduction” in all of our documents.
- Doubts about doing small steps in sharing work. Look at figures (France): going from 40 to 39 hours had no effect on employment, but going from 39 to 35 hours created 350.000 jobs.

Andreas Luttmer-Bensmann, President of Katholische Arbeitnehmer Bewegung (KAB , catholic workers movement), Germany

- We have to progress on a more positive storytelling of working time reduction (unemployment and automation are quite dramatic approaches). What would it mean to me? What would we win?

Eva Scherz, Business Advocacy, Gewerkschaft der Privatangestellten, (GPA, Union of the private employees), Austria

- Once working part time, many don’t want to get back to full time. Look at what happens to the free Friday’s or the “Kurzarbeit” (shortwork financed by state and employees) in 2009/10 with 90% of the wage.

Mag. Susanne Haslinger, Law Department, PRO-GE (Union for Production), Austria

- Middle-income groups should also appear in our work, reflections and cooperation.

Christa Hourani, Works Council and VKL-pilot, Daimler headquarters in Stuttgart, left wing of the unions, Germany

- Workers need to have a better insight on the consequences of robotisation.

Daniel Bernmar, leader of the Left party on Gothenburg's City Council, Vänsterpartiet Göteborg, Sweden

- We need to rephrase the racism argument in the declaration. Supported by Zalihata stating: migrants are in principle not coming for the benefits and neither for stealing jobs.
- Decentralization of public services provides opportunities at the local level.
- Many unions do not like to talk about collective working time reduction but prefer to talk about lifecourse work organisation.

Michael Klatt, Chairman Federal of Kirchlicher Dienst in der Arbeitswelt (KDA) (evangelic service of churches to people at their workplace), Germany

- Let's fix deadlines; this is a great beginning with a final say by CR and ATTAC.

9) Closing

Final statement Dr. Martin Schirdewan, Director of RosaLuxemburgFoundation (RLS), Belgium, Brussel

- This international network is a good way to go forward: there cannot be a one fits it all solution.
- The 3 days workweek is feasible; it is not a fantasy (Great Britain is an example with on average 21 working hours a week).
- Optimistic for future cooperation.

C) Appendix

- Photos
- Registered participants list
- Common Declaration
- Short reports
- Budget

1) Photos




























2) Registered participants list

Name	Position	Organisation	Logo	Country	Category
Eva Scherz	Business Advocacy	Gewerkschaft der Privatangestellten, (GPA)		Austria	Union
Mag. Susanne Haslinger	Law Department	PRO-GE		Austria	Union
Jan Van der Poorten	Syndicalist, Audi Brussels	Fédération Générale du Travail de Belgique (FGTB)		Belgium	Union
Marc Goblet	Secretary General	Fédération Générale du Travail de Belgique (FGTB)		Belgium	Union
Benoît Gérits	Deputy General Secretary	IndustriAll		Belgium	Union
Aurore Joly	Communications officer	Young CSC		Belgium	Union
Ludovic Voet	National responsible	Young CSC		Belgium	Union
Mohammed Oussedik	National Board	CGT		France	Union
Muriel Wolfers	Syndicalist	CGT- Chômeurs		France	Union
Régis Granarolo	Co-founder and president	MUNCI		France	Union
Jutta Schneider	Former Chairwoman Gillette Berlin	Attac / IG Metall		Germany	Union
Christa Hourani	Works Council and VKL-pilot. Daimler headquarters in Stuttgart	left wing of the unions		Germany	Union
Petra Ziegler	District Secretary Niedersachsen-Bremen	Vereinte Dienstleistungsgewerkschaft (Verdi)		Germany	Union

Sylvia Skrabs	Collective Bargaining Policy Department	Vereinte Dienstleistungs- gewerkschaft (Verdi)		Germany	Union
Marie Pozimsky		Vereinte Dienstleistungs- gewerkschaft (Verdi)		Germany	Union
Sam Groen	Advisor Working Times	Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging (FNV)		Netherlands	Union
Evelyn Regner	Member of the European Parliament	Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats		Austria	Policy Maker
Philippe Lamberts	Member of the European Parliament	Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance		Belgium	Policy Maker
Laurette Onkelinx	Vice-president	Parti Socialiste		Belgium	Policy Maker
Pierre Larrouturou	Co-president	Nouvelle Donne		France	Policy Maker
Patrick Le Hyaric	Member of the European Parliament	Confederal Group of the European United Left - Nordic Green Left		France	Policy Maker
Barbara Romagnan	Member of the Parliament	Parti Socialiste		France	Policy Maker
Thomas Händel	Member of the European Parliament	Confederal Group of the European United Left - Nordic Green Left		Germany	Policy Maker
Frank Puskarev	Assistant to the Parliament, office of Thomas Händel	European Parliament		Germany	Policy Maker
Alice Vernersson	SDN örgryte-härlanda, vice president	Vänsterpartiet Göteborg		Sweden	Policy Maker
Daniel Bernmar	leader of the Left party on Gothenburg's City Council	Vänsterpartiet Göteborg		Sweden	Policy Maker
Dr. Bernard Conter	Political scientist	Associate researcher at Institut Wallon de l'Evaluation, de la Prospective et de la Statistique (IWEPS)		Belgium	Researcher

Prof. Dr. Alfred Kleinknecht	Economist	Professor of Economics of Innovation (emeritus), Delft. University of Technology.		Germany	Researcher
Dr. Steffen Lehndorff	Economist	Research Fellow at the Institut Arbeit und Qualifikation (IAQ), University of Duisburg/Esse		Germany	Researcher
Prof. Dr. Beate Zimpelmann	Political scientist	Head of Degree Programme MA in European and World Politics, University of Bremen		Germany	Researcher
Delephine Houba	National board	Roosevelt.be		Belgium	NGO
Ludovic Suttor-Sorel	National board	Roosevelt.be		Belgium	NGO
David Feltz	Coordinator	Collectif Roosevelt		France	NGO
Jean-Marie Perbost	Economist and Journalist	Collectif Roosevelt		France	NGO
Walter Verhoeve	Local group Clermont-Ferrand	Collectif Roosevelt		France	NGO
Zalihata Mansoibou	Coordinator	Mouvement National des Chômeurs et Précaires (MNCP)		France	NGO
Jacqueline Balsan	President	Mouvement National des Chômeurs et Précaires (MNCP)		France	NGO
Aurore Lalucq	Co-director	Veblen Institute		France	NGO
Margareta Steinrücke-Pavicic	Sociologist, Attac Arbeitfairteilen (Region Bremen)	Attac		Germany	NGO
Michaela Amiri	Arbeitfairteilen (Region München + Oberbayern)	Attac		Germany	NGO

Carol Sue Duerr	Arbeitsfairteilen (Region München + Oberbayern)	Attac		<i>Germany</i>	<i>NGO</i>
Stephan Krull	Arbeitsfairteilen (Region Hannover)	Attac / IG Metall		<i>Germany</i>	<i>NGO</i>
Hans-Georg Nelles	deputy chairman Fathers Expert Network Germany e.V.	Bundesforum Männer		<i>Germany</i>	<i>NGO</i>
Andreas Luttmers-Bensmann	President	Katholische Arbeitnehmer Bewegung (KAB)		<i>Germany</i>	<i>NGO</i>
Michael Klatt	Chairman Federal	Kirchlicher Dienst in der Arbeitswelt (KDA)		<i>Germany</i>	<i>NGO</i>
Dr. Roland Kulke	Project Manager	Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung RLS		<i>Germany</i>	<i>NGO</i>
Dr. Martin Schirdewan	Director	Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung RLS		<i>Germany</i>	<i>NGO</i>
Louise Gautier	Office Manager	Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung RLS		<i>Germany</i>	<i>NGO</i>
Madeleine Ellis-Petersen	Assistant Researcher, Social Policy	New Economics Foundation (NEF)		<i>United Kingdom</i>	<i>NGO</i>
Guillaume Duval	Editor in chief	Alternatives Economiques		<i>France</i>	<i>Media</i>
Dr. Thomas Gesterkamp	Journalist and author			<i>Germany</i>	<i>Media</i>

3) Common Declaration

The common declaration and was signed by :

Organisations	Personalities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ArbeitFairTeilen, ATTAC (Germany)• Initiative zur Vernetzung der Gewerkschaftslinken" (Germany)• Collectif Roosevelt (France)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evelyn REGNER, MEP (Austria)•

Declaration on Reducing Working Time in Europe

Today, on the 21st of October 2016, we – policy makers, scientists, representatives of trade unions, religious associations and non-governmental organizations, from seven European countries (Great Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Austria, Germany and Sweden)- have met in Brussels to consider the question of reducing working hours in Europe.

We have come to the conclusion that, in view of the necessity

- to provide workplaces for 30 million and more people in the EU, who have involuntarily become jobless,
- to provide options for combining work and family that will lead to more gender equality,
- to find ways, considering climate change and overuse of resources, to achieve prosperity and a good life independent of economic growth, and to build a more sustainable economy,
- to answer people`s fear of social decline with solidary alternatives instead of racist demands,
- to find inter generation solutions (a combination of better entry options for the youth with smoother exit options for the elderly)
- to allocate to workers a larger and therefore a fairshare of profits and advantages of the “robotisation”
the reduction of working hours
in our various countries and in the long run in Europe,
with full compensation of wages,
and full compensation of personnel

is today one of the most urgent measures to take in order to make Europe more just, more social and more sustainable.

Therefore we encourage all societal groups, working people, unemployed people, institutions and policy makers to discuss this project in their groups and to promote it with the best of their possibilities.

Deklaration zur Reduzierung der Arbeitszeit in Europa

Heute, am 21.10.2017 sind wir – Politiker_innen, Wissenschaftler_innen und Vertreter_innen aus Gewerkschaften, kirchlichen Gruppen und Nichtregierungsorganisationen aus sieben Ländern Europas (Großbritannien, Frankreich, Belgien, Niederlande, Österreich, Deutschland, Schweden) - in Brüssel zusammen gekommen, um über eine Reduzierung der Arbeitszeit in Europa zu sprechen.

Wir sind zu dem Schluss gekommen, dass angesichts der Notwendigkeit,

- für über 30 Millionen Menschen in der EU, die unfreiwillig erwerbslos sind, Arbeitsplätze zu schaffen,

4) Short reports

Contribution of Comité National des Travailleurs Privés d'Emploi et Précaires CNTPEP-CGT

Montreuil, the 2d of october 2016

The CNTPE-CGT considers that sense and quality of work will come back if labour is equally parted between those who work too much and those who do not work enough, that is to say by the implementation of the claim " work less, work for all. "

The base of CNTPEP-CGT demands is the satisfaction of social needs, what we call "our 10 rights" : right to dignity, transportation, work, housing, health, culture, education, family and energy. The unemployed committees are therefore legitimate to join any trade union struggle that aims to maintain sufficient staff in public services, hospitals, public transport, public housing offices, etc ... so that these rights do apply.

The CNTPEP-CGT decided at its last Congress, to revive the practice of "hiring offices": a joint union work between a company union and a Committee of unemployed, to analyze the overall number of posts needed to overcome capitalist disorganization or work intensification, and to organize a social movement both inside and outside the company to have unemployed hired, ideally union members.

The CNTPEP-CGT claims since its creation that unemployment benefits becomes the 5th branch of Social Security, as a good unemployment benefits is the only way to effectively fight against the intensification of work. The CNTPEP-CGT works closely on this matter with the CGT Spectacle, the Interim Trade Union (USI-CGT) and french associations of unemployed. For exemple during the social struggles during the renegotiations of the UNEDIC convention for better unemployed compensation.

In doing so, the CGT-CNTPEP confronts the different actors who undermine social protection, the MEDEF, the reformist trade unions and the government, who exclude increasingly precarious from compensation and access to public services. This summer, the repression against organized precarious was strong.

The CGT-CNTPEP also meets internal restraint : the "workerist" unionists trend that consider unemployment compensation as a privilege and not as compensation for breach of the right to work as set out in Article 6 of the ICESCR. Yet it is urgent to organize precarious workers and allow them to rejoin the wage earners, as they are increasingly driven to false independent status (self-entrepreneurs) or to informal work. This is why the CNTPEP-CGT claims that every territorial organization of the CGT should have its own Committee of unemployed and precarious.

For effective reduction of working time, we think it would be helpful if the platform worked on the following issues:

- Claim for a maximum binding ratio between wages and housing costs (eg people who need to take two jobs to pay their rent) and make studies on the relative weight of housing in the household budget.
- Study the ratio between working amplitude and monthly income of precarious workers and their life- budget (the "left to live").
- Claiming that every type of effective labour is paid as actual working and subject to social security contributions (services civiques, "volunteers" recruited, black labour, unpaid rehearsals, self-entrepreneurship ...).
- Restoring all means of control on undeclared work of services (Labour Inspection, URSSAF, CRAMIF, ...), which were dismantled by successive governments.

Contribution by Marc Goblet, Secretary General of FGTB

We propose to reduce the working time of employees from 38 to 32 or 30 hours per week, without any loss of salary for workers, compensated by recruitment. It is not intended that businesses should bear the cost of this measure, because we can consider a system of reduction in social security contributions. And starting out from the real situation for businesses and workers, particularly concerning work organisation, the length of careers or the arduous nature of certain professions. This measure offers a series of advantages: it enables older employees to stay at work for longer, while reducing their working hours, such as working one or two days less. For the company, it is an opportunity to keep these workers for longer, so that they can pass on their know-how and skills to younger workers. And raise the employment rate of workers between 59 and 65 years of age, while guaranteeing that they will keep their income and have the guarantee of a decent pension.

This involves zero cost for the business, a budget of 2 billion, to be recouped from reductions in the existing social security contributions (of the order of 14 billion), which would result, according to our calculations, in the creation of 100,000 jobs. Jobs which could, for example, be occupied by the youngest workers. Moreover, it is important to train workers, financed partly by businesses and partly in collaboration with schools and the regions. A reduction in working time could contribute to creating a less unstructured society and restoring confidence to young people and workers who have lost their jobs. It is through collective reduction of working time that we can fight unemployment and create sustainable, high-quality jobs. To reach that situation, it is necessary to hold negotiations with representatives of businesses and of workers. We call for a serious dialogue without taboos. For the FEB to answer by telling us 'it's ideological' is not a substantive response

Some figures about the labour market in the Netherlands

- The average full time working week in collective agreements is 37,2 hours/week. This is a stable figure for several years. This is overtime not included. Including extra time the average working week is 39,6 hours/week (for full timers)
- The actual working week for employees is 30 hours/week 50% of the 7 mln employees works in part time jobs From the 7 mln employees 1,8 mln have a flexible job.
- Besides that there are 1 mln free-lance workers . The discussion is about the amount of them having that status more or less unvoluntarily
- Together 2,8 mln workers are flexible workers , that is 33% of the labour market The unemployment rate at the moment is 6,2%

The FNV has 2 proposals for the reduction of working hours.

1) Generations agreement .

This is a short term proposal for the collective bargainings in the next few years.

The idea is that older workers (57+) reduce their working hours to make place for younger workers (35-). This will reduce unemployment for younger workers.

The older worker will be able to reach his retirement age more fit en healthy and motivated. His income cut as a result of his working part time is partly supplemented, and his pension premium is payed by the employer. And he can use a part of his pension to add to his income.

The employer is able to solve some problems he has as a result of the 'babyboom-generation'. They will not leave at once, but in fases, he can get a better balance in his staff, and he can keep workers in irregular jobs fitter and healthier.

Examples are 60-80-100 (working 60%, 80% income, 100% pension premium) and 'triojobs': 66,7%-85%-100%, with 3 older workers filling up 2 jobs '.

A first step is the collective agreement for the Municipality Officials, where it's brought to practise. Our goal is to reach Generations agreements in 20% of the collective agreements in the next few years.

The agreements will be payed by the difference in income between the older and the younger, reduction of sick leave, and several special items for older workers in the existing collective agreements. We have asked the government to attribute a bit to the costs.

Employers are divided about the idea; some of them are very much against the idea because of the presumed costs; others see that it has advantages for them.

2) Start a more fundamental discussion about the division of work, shorter working hours and income because of fundamental changes in the organisation of work as a result of robotisation.

In the SER, a tri-partite Social Economic Advisory board for the government, this year there was a study on the prospected effects of robotisation and the network economy in the coming years. It made clear that:

- there will certainly be large effects on large parts of the labour organization, for instance in the port of Rotterdam, in warehouses, banks, transport sector etc. Jobs will change or disappear completely, other jobs will be created, the dichotomy in the labour force will grow etc.
- there will be large effect on the basis of social security and tax income of the state
- there is uncertainty about the effect on the total number of jobs in the future. Some researchers say that the present 'revolt' is not different from earlier revolts in the organization of labour, and will create more jobs in the end. Others say that this time it's fundamentally different
- employers and employees are both uncertain, but both choose a different strategy. Employers want and more flexibility to be more innovative, where the unions agree on the growing need for education but want a fundamental discussion about the division of work, shorter working hours and income and the basis of taxes and social security in the next year to be prepared for major changes in the organization of labour.

There was no agreement in the SER on the recommendations for the government, only on a working and study program together.

The FNV will start his own strategic discussion for the next four year's program And the government? Well, there will be elections next year.....

GPA-djp initiatives on working time reduction

CAMPAIGN: "Shorter work – easier life!"

GPA-djp campaign week: Reduce working time and ensure controls! (June 2015) Kick-off was a conference with more than 1,000 works councils and many company visits and discussions and campaigns in the public space afterwards.

We demand:

General reduction of the legal working time to 38,5 hours.

Reduction of the normal working time to 35 hours. Initially, this reduction should be implemented in collective tariffs. The reduction must take place with full compensation of wages and salaries.

Reduction of the actual weekly and daily working time.

Six weeks of annual leave for more employees

One week of training leave for all!

The erosion of working hours has to be stopped. Performed working hours must not expire.

Limitation of all-in employment contracts to actual executive positions.

Further development of the „Freizeitoption“ (option to leisure time) in collective tariffs. **Further information (in German):**
http://www.gpa-djp.at/cms/A03/A03_999_Suche.a/1342557371923/suche/kuerzer-arbeiten-leichter-leben

GPA-djp POLICY PROGRAMME

Resolution at the GPA-djp Federal Congress in November Further information (in German):

http://www.gpa-djp.at/cms/A03/A03_3.1.1.m/ueber-uns/vorstellung-der-organisation/bundesforum-2015

http://www.gpa-djp.at/cms/A03/A03_3.1.1.m.a/1342560204625/ueber-uns/vorstellung-der-organisation/bundesforum-2015/arbeitszeitverkuerzung-brauchen-ein-neues-arbeitszeit-leitbild

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING 2016:

Demands for working time reduction in the list of demands for every collective tariff (e.g. 6th week of annual leave, 35-hours-week, right to family time, right to sabbatical...)

Demand for a 35-hours-week at full pay in the education sector and the private health and social sector.

Export of the “Freizeitoption” (option to leisure time) to other sectors (e.g. entire metal sector...)

Further information (In German):

http://www.gpa-djp.at/cms/A03/A03_2a/kollektivvertrag

Short Report IG Metall, compiled from the records of the Working time campaign (S.K.)

The colleague responsible from the executive board of the IG Metall, Uwe Fink, could not attend the Workshop due to urgent negotiations in the steel industry. He wishes good progress for our meeting.

IGM started a Working Time Campaign this summer with the title, My life – my time: new considerations about work

Starting point is a survey of employees, which identified, for instance: Desired working time: 70% want to work 35 or significantly less hours

Actual working time: 70% work well over 35 hours, 25% work even over 40 hours per week Working time politics is

A task for public policy as well as for wage and management policy

This policy must be expressed in labor laws and in collective bargaining results

Individual choices must be extended and entitlements and rights secured

Health, justice and security must be equally guaranteed

IGM is in favor of adjusting working time to changing life circumstances, short fulltime when needed

Command over one's own working time/ self-determination

Connection of working time with performance- and personnel policy

More participation of works council member and workers in decision-making

Cooperative division of work between men and women, with wage compensation

Right to return to one's fulltime job after a part time phase

The struggle about working time and autonomy is the struggle for self-determination Time perspective 3 years: collective bargaining 2018

Working Time Debate in Austria / PRO-GE

Status Quo:

Austria is one of the European countries with the longest working hours (for full time employees). At the same time, there is a very high degree of part time workers (women: almost 50%, men doubled within the last 15 years) + highest unemployment rate since the 1950s (still low in the European ranking)

Suggested measures have two goals:

- 1) General reduction of working time and redistribution of work
- 2) Creating more autonomy for workers (main desire articulated by the workers)

Employers' ideas of course have different goals:

- 1) More flexibility, in Austria this means longer working hours (discussion about 12h a day!)
- 2) Less costs (no more overtime surcharge)
- 3) "Autonomy on company level" = elimination of the collective agreements regarding working time

Recent Projects of the Unions (both innovative and pragmatic):

New models in collective agreements (industry sectors):

- (1) **"Freizeitoption" ("leisure time option")**: choice of the individual between higher wage or more leisure time

i.e. wage increase by 2% → instead the working time can be reduced by those 2% (38,5h = 0,77h/week = 40 hours/year) → time can be consumed as a reduction of weekly working hours (hardly used) as well as en bloc (it's also possible to add up the free time of several years)

disadvantages:

- only possible in high wage sectors → how to transfer that to other sectors or a general debate?
- Wage agreements (%) differ from year to year, that might make it quite confusing within one company after a while

- (2) **"Zeitkontenmodell" ("time-account model")**: combines employer driven flexibility with workers' autonomy (new with 07/2016, no experience yet)

Flexibility within a 45h-week (instead of 38,5): overtime 1:1 within certain limits, surcharge only if certain limits are exceeded. However, hours that are not compensated within a fixed time frame, can be autonomously consumed as time off.

Initiatives on company level (esp. industry in Upper Austria):

- (3) Reduction of working time in shift work (5 shift, 35h/week) with partial compensation of wage loss (public funding via so called **"Solidaritätsprämienmodell" ("solidarity-reward model")**, if additional staff is hired)

Goal: extension of the state funding, since the model offers both: working time reduction and creation of new jobs

Positions and steps of the women in ver.di towards SHORT FULL-TIME WORK FOR ALL

The women in ver.di demand a noticeable reduction in working hours, without wage sacrifices and with staffing levels raised to compensate, to achieve:

- fair redistribution of the volume of working hours between men and women
- maintenance of employment
- creation of new jobs
- hiring of successful apprentices
- reduction of health strains, creation of good jobs appropriate for aged and ageing employees
- support for continual training and lifelong learning
- enabling of volunteer work and actively contributing to society
- recuperation, leisure and time to enjoy – time for myself!

The recent ver.di federal congress in 2015 decided on a proposal of the women in ver.di according to which ver.di commits itself at different levels to the goal of SHORT FULL-TIME WORK

a) at the level of collective agreements

- advocating working-time models which approach the scale of full-time work and provide employees with
- time sovereignty to match their life phases
- working towards the “short full-time work” by reducing so-called full-time work in the medium term
- urging all bargaining commissions to discuss and stipulate strategic steps towards specific demands for reductions in working hours (the aim being to initiate proactive measures in all collective bargaining areas within three years)
- for part-time workers, an automatic reduction of working time has to be ruled out at the level of collective agreements; they have to be offered an increase matching the reduction of full-time work
- further developing concepts for the organization of working time according to life phases

b) at a discursive level within ver.di and with socio-political actors

- the topic of the reduction of working hours should be placed in the media in a member-focused manner, with current political debates serving as starting points
- good examples from company-level & collective agreements should be published too
- argumentation aids and informative material specific to the target groups should be created and made available centrally
- an action week dedicated to "Fair sharing of work" (in companies, in offices and in public)

Resistance comes from

- employees forced to work part-time and who can scarcely, or sometimes not at all, secure their existence by their work during their working lives and certainly not at pension age
- employers and pro-employer political figures, and also employees who benefit from the system or feel they do (or have adopted the view that it is their own fault if they are not high earners)

Allies within ver.di: in particular the following cross-industry groups of persons in ver.di: young people, jobless people, migrants and **allies outside ver.di:** women in DGB (German Trade Union Federation), local and cross- regional schemes relating to working time reduction and redistribution of all socially necessary work (including

Berlin, September 2016

„Short full-time employment as an opportunity for all“

During the Federal Congress of the United Services Union (ver.di) in 2015 the delegates decided to advance the topic of working time reductions under the guiding principle „Short full-time with neither pay nor staffing-levels reduction“.

Because of different collective working hours standards in the various branches of economy which are represented by ver.di, uniform weekly working time would not be an appropriate goal. Furthermore, ver.di represents sectors which are characterized by a very high proportion of part-time employees.

To reach the main aim of “Short full-time employment as an opportunity for all”, ver.di's Department for Collective Bargaining Policy developed a concept in order to make a first step towards this goal, to ignite the discussion in the organisation and to show feasible approaches.

The basis of this concept is that full-time employees are entitled to benefits such as 14 availability days (“Verfügungstage”), which are paid exemption days. The employees can determine themselves how these days are used. They notify the employer at the end of the year whether they want to use these availability days in the following year as hours, days or weeks of leisure or collect them in a time account. The resulting volume of unassigned work should be covered by additional staff, thus allowing the work to be distributed more justly.

Part-time employees should have the same amount of availability days (calculated on the basis of full-time employees) as full-time employees. Their payment would be increased proportionally. The difference in working time to full-time employees is reduced. In addition they should be able to increase their working time to escape unintentional part-time employment. Through this they would be able to absorb part of the volume of work which is not covered due to shortening the working time of full-time employees.

It is a long way to implement this concept in collective agreements. The topic of shortening working time still only plays a subordinate role in companies. The interest of the employees in shorter working hours and time prosperity has to be reawakened.

However the chances of this happening are good: demographic challenges, lifelong learning, increasing health risks due to high workloads and the compatibility of work, family and private life have moved the topic of time back into the public focus. The political parties are discussing flexible working hours (albeit at the expense of the employees), the government and employers want to realign working hours protection laws, however aimed at increasing flexibility. Here ver.di has a different concept to counter this.

The discussion of shortening working hours has to be advanced actively in companies. Where the concept has already been presented, it has been very well received. However this is not enough. It has to become a movement in order for it to become successfully established by collective bargaining.

Networking beyond the boundaries of our organisation is equally important in order to make the shortening of working hours an important element of the labour market policies and the development of Good Work. For this it is also essential to make it part of public and political discussion and counterbalance the dominant positions of major commercial economic forces, in order to gain influence on public opinion and to show alternatives.

Short report –ArbeitFairTeilen, Attac-Germany

What is your group's concrete proposal for the reduction of working times?

Attac Germany proposes introducing the 30 hours normal working week for Europe with full compensation of wages and personnel. In the Autumn of 2013 Attac Germany confirmed this proposal as one of Attac's list of demands, alongside demands for a financial transaction tax, the regulation of financial markets, closing of tax havens, etc.

Mass unemployment, especially of our youth make it imperative to redistribute the existing work load (paid work) among all those able and wanting to work. Fair distribution of work through shorter working hours is the obvious way to abolish mass unemployment. Shorter working hours will have many other good results: better health, more tax revenue, more power for the unions, time for family, friends, hobbies, sport, nature, sharing and repairing, social and political engagement.

We propose the implementation of the 30 hour work week with full compensation of wages (at least for lower and middle income groups) and personnel within perhaps 5 years. It could be financed by the productivity growth the greatly reduced costs of unemployment and the return of the profit quota to levels of the 1990's (which will also have the good effect of taking money off the speculative financial markets). But we need trade unions who are dedicated to fight for this goal.

Who are the opponents?

First of all the profit-oriented employers and their associations, but also the neoliberal mainstream in economic science, in politics and in the mass media. The Growth paradigm, which pretends we can solve the unemployment problem through growth. Even parts of the trade unions are not free from the influence of neoliberal and growth thinking. And many of the workers themselves, who fear their wages could be lowered through reduced working hours (therefore the necessity of full wage compensation) and who fear that reduced working hours will cause increased stress. (Therefore our insistence on full compensation of personnel)

Who are your partners?

Of course the most important partners are the trade unions because they would be the most important actors in the struggle for shorter working hours. So we are happy that they are increasingly coming out in favor of working time reduction (especially the women's and youth sections) and our cooperative efforts are increasing.

Other partners are workers' groups in the churches, the New Economy group, the forum of the unemployed, women's groups, men's groups, ecology groups, Collectif Roosevelt, some scientists, sociopolitical institutes, the "social" wings of the political parties and sometimes even enterprises and institutions, for instance, of the health system who recognize the importance of shorter working times for the motivation and health of the

Contribution by Collectif Roosevelt France

Founded in 2012 by Stéphane Hessel, Edgar Morin, Susan George, Cynthia Fleury, Pierre Larroustourou, Patrick Viveret and many others, Collectif Roosevelt was inspired by the approach of US President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who in 1933 took prompt measures to take the United States out of the deadly economic and social spiral.

Collectif Roosevelt is an association with about 1,000 members, it is a place of popular education, debate and grassroots movements. 30 local groups have formed to welcome citizens who do not wish to face alone a situation that is getting worse. Working time reduction is one of the main proposals of the Collective Roosevelt. In the previous years we focused our work on bank and finance regulation, climate change, and ecological transition.

To relaunch the debate on working time reduction, Collectif Roosevelt is launching a campaign. This debate is essential in the political context of the upcoming elections in France, since stereotypes and propaganda on working time saturate the public debate. Journalists often do not verify their information, think tanks and politicians from the right –and, on occasion, even from the left- spread false information, orthodox economists repeatedly attack and deny the efficacy of the 35-hour workweek.

However, we believe that the priority is to identify the most effective forms in implementing working time reduction, instead of focusing on demonstrating the relevance of the core ideas. Our main argument is: working time reduction works. Why refuse an effective way to fight against unemployment, which increases business profitability and the wellbeing of employees and the society?

The debate should involve various scenarios. Reaching an agreement on a particular modality will require a lot of time and effort, since supporters of working time reduction themselves often try to promote mostly their own proposals. If we were to seek the broadest possible movement of collective reduction, we would need to experiment with the many possibilities of individualized reductions (voluntary and temporary), responding to various professional and personal needs at different times.

The ultimate goal of our campaign is to propose a pilot law drafted with our partners for the second half of 2017. Our secondary objectives are:

- Fight against misinformation on working time and unemployment
- Influence the election debate in 2017
- Create a French and European network to promote working time reduction

To achieve each objective several projects will be implemented, including the organization of up to twenty events around France, the distribution of our book "Stop unemployment and social regression" and the launch, later this year, of a petition addressed to the French Economic and Social Committee (CESE) to encourage them to study, discuss, and develop various scenarios of working time reduction.

The organization of this Forum is an integral part of this campaign because it is essential to connect and unite the key stakeholders that want to promote working time reduction in France and Europe. Creating such networks by 2017 would be a significant step forward in the fight for working time reduction. Nevertheless, we believe that networking is necessary but not sufficient. A minimum of coordinated actions across Europe will be required in the coming years. We therefore propose to the participants of this forum to reach out, together, to The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) in 2017-2018.

Presentation of the Roosevelt Collective .BE

The Roosevelt Collective .BE is the sister of the French Collective of the same name. The French Collective was launched by several personalities such as Pierre Larroutourou, Stéphane Hessel, Edgar Morin, Dominique Meda, Michel Rocard, Cynthia Fleury, etc.

The Belgian Collective was launched a few years ago (2012). It is based on local groups of activists, who gather through the national board. Their actions are supported by a group of experts, who can help when it comes to technical aspects.

It has organized special activities around elections in Belgium (“I vote therefore I am”), bank separation, tax heaven and reduction of working hours. The most famous activity are the “Café Roosevelt” (debate in a bar). The Collective works with other actors from the civil society according to the issue.

Concrete proposition regarding reduction of working hours – How and when

The Collective proposes 15 measures to put an end to the crisis. One of these measures is about the negotiation of an other share of working hours and incomes.

Opponents and their arguments

Most opponents say it would be a threat to our competitiveness, that it costs a lot for little results, that this measure is impossible to implement, etc.

Partners on the issue and conditions to set up an alliance/platform/campaign in Belgium or Europe

The Roosevelt Collective .BE can find many allies among civil society associations, trade unions, citizens, etc.

We are already working on setting up an alliance in Belgium (the whole country which means French and Flemish parts). We managed to collect support of the 2 biggest national trade unions. The next step is to consolidate it to create a power balance.

We can participate to a European alliance/platform/campaign. As this measure mainly depends on the national level and regarding our limited resources, we prefer not to commit to more than exchange of information on a regular basis at the European level.

Short report of the trade union Left by Christa Hourani

I am a participant of the conference on shorter working time in Brussels on October 20th to 21st, 2016. The participants were asked to write about their activities and ideas for realizing their working time goals. Here are the activities of the trade union Left:

We will accompany and support the topic of shorter working time in the Initiative for Networking the Trade Union Left through our Email distributor, Labournet (online platform) and our local foren (for instance with events and conferences) Our active members will bring attention to the topic in the union groups in which they are active

(union councils, meetings of delegates, committees).

A broad public campaign, will be necessary to bring this topic back into the discussions and demands of civil society.

At the last nationwide conference of IG Metall-Women in 2015, almost all of the participants voted for the proposal of the Stuttgart Women's Committee for the 30 hour week with maximum compensation of wages and personnel. We will make use of this good outcome to introduce the topic in IG Metall and call for its realization.

We will also make use of the campaign, "My life – my time" and the next round of wage negotiations of IGM to focus on the topic of shorter working hours. I am myself a member of the women's committees of the DGB and IGM in Stuttgart and active at the state level of Baden-Württemberg, and I will advocate shorter working hours at those levels.

Contribution by the Katholische Arbeitnehmer-Bewegung (KAB)

What is your/your groups' concrete proposal for the reduction of working hours? How do you want to realize it? What time frame is realistic? Today? In the long term?

Die Katholische Arbeitnehmer-Bewegung in Deutschland setzt sich bereits seit vielen Jahren für eine deutliche Reduzierung der Erwerbsarbeitszeit ein. Wir fordern eine wöchentliche Arbeitszeit von 30 Stunden, die schrittweise eingeführt werden soll. Zunächst wäre es wichtig, die Arbeitszeit auf die durchschnittliche Tarifarbeitszeit zu verringern. Anschließend sollten die Tarifparteien in regelmäßigen Abständen eine geringere Tarifarbeitszeit vereinbaren, die für allgemeinverbindlich erklärt wird. Um die aktuellen Ungerechtigkeiten in der Erwerbsarbeitsverteilung und die krankmachenden Folgen der überlangen Arbeitszeiten durch Überstunden zu überwinden sollte eine Umsetzung der 30-Stunden-Woche in fünf bis zehn Jahren erfolgen.

The Catholic Workers movement in Germany fights for many years already for a significant reduction of employment-times. We demand for a working week of 30 hours, to be introduced gradually. First, it would be important to reduce the working hours on the average rate of collective working hours (german: Tarifarbeitszeit). Then the unions and the employers (german: Tarifparteien) should periodically a lower rate of working hours, who must be declared as generally binding and universally for all workers. To the current inequities in work distribution and the ill effects of excessive working hours to overcome, should be reached implementation of the 30-hour week in five to ten years.

Who do you encounter as opponents and what are their reasons?

Im Prinzip sind vor allem zwei Gegnergruppen relevant. Die erste Gruppe sind die an Gewinnmaximierung und Effizienz orientierten Unternehmen. Im kurzfristigen Blick auf Quartalsbilanzen und Shareholder-Interessen wird die Folge einer ungerechten Arbeitszeitverteilung in Kauf genommen. Die zweite Gruppe sind die Beschäftigten selbst. Hoher individueller Druck wegen möglicher Arbeitsplatzverluste und eine nicht minder große Bereitschaft für die Einkommensverbesserung auch Mehrarbeit zu leisten, wird eine sinnvolle Diskussion um Arbeitszeit verhindert. Nur angemessene Einkommen und eine Unternehmenspolitik, die auch die Mitarbeiter*innen im Blick hat können hier positive Entwicklungen erfolgen.

In principle, two main groups are relevant. The first group is oriented to profit maximization and efficiency companies. These companies are aligned with short-term view of quarterly balance sheets and shareholder interests and they accept the results of an unjust distribution of working hours. The workers are a second group. Individual high pressure because of possible job losses and the great willingness for income improvement are barriers for a meaningful discussion about the reduction of worker hours. Only adequate income and a corporate policy of companies will cause to positive developments. The companies must have their employees in focus - in order to achieve a positive development.

Who are your partners on this topic? What should an alliance/platform/campaign do to make the debate move forward in your country and/or in Europe?

Partner sind vor allem die Gewerkschaften. Mit ihnen zusammen ist ein öffentlicher Dialog über Arbeitszeit möglich.

Partners are mainly the unions. With them, a public dialogue on working time is possible.

Statement „European Debate on shorter working hours by Michael Klatt, president of KDA

Germany 21.10.2016

The issue of a modern policy concerning working hours is part of the agenda for a social Europe. The specific question of a social Europe is mentioned in the Lisbon Treaty, the role of the EU in this is, however, limited due to the basic responsibility of the membership-states in social affairs.

It is all the more important to raise and discuss the social question as a common European task over and over again. If not, the “Economic-Union” will continue to lose its substance and coherence.

The “Kirchliche Dienst in der Arbeitswelt (KDA – the service of churches to people at their workplace) together with cooperation-partners held a conference on working hours at the end of May this year in Hanover, Germany. The heading was: “Who does time belong to? – More time for ourselves!”

Some success concerning regulations in working hours had been achieved in the past. These achievements, however, will not suffice for the changes that have recently taken place. In Germany, for example, there has been a sharp increase in part time jobs. On average every employee works 50 hours overtime per year, that is far more than one billion hours per year all together. Exhaustion and (psychological) illnesses have increased due to the work load and the growing density in work- processes. Variable working hours are taking over from the traditional pattern of equally portioned working hours.

The results of the conference were as follows – they are at the same time a requirement for the discussion on the European level:

Work has to be more strongly defined according to families’ needs.

This implies a potential target-conflict: Stability, calmness and foreseeability is characteristic of the “system family”. Working processes and economic success, however, demand high flexibility and constant reactions to the market.

A more just and more satisfactory distribution of working hours would be possible if e.g. working hours were oriented more to somebody’s phase of life.

“Long part-time hours” - between 20 and 28 hours - and “short fulltime hours” - between 28 and 35 hours - would probably suit many employees.

This also means: The demand for a great shortening of working hours for everybody would in the meantime fail both the request of many employees and the situation of companies facing global competition.

Employers, works-councils/trade unions and politics are likewise responsible for family-friendly regulations of working hours. Employees, managers and leadership-personnel have got to get rid of the “compulsion” to (each individually) optimise their rhythm of working hours.

This, to a great extent, is all the more true with regards to the digital “working 4.0”. Ideally this digital working coincides with the request of employees concerning more flexible and more family-friendly working hours exempt of fixed work-places or fixed working hours. On the other hand there is the danger of dissolving the boundaries of working hours. Regulations on protecting employees have to limit any kind of self-overestimation and self-exploitation.

The most important aim for churches is to watch that human beings are not “run over” by all the changes in economic processes. The dignity and the health of people have to be preserved. Furthermore and much more fundamental, the question of working hours has a profound effect on the wellbeing of our society and on a sustainable socio-political peace in Europe.

Short Report- MNCP

Founded in 1986, the National Movement of unemployed and precariously employed federates (MNCP) today numbers forty associations named "precarious houses of unemployed and solidary citizens " spread over the following territories:

- Paris, Nanterre
- West: Rennes, Morlaix, Vannes, Le Havre, Cormelles le Royal
- South: Toulouse, Montpellier, St Giron, Villeneuve sur Lot, Perpignan, Tarbes
- Center: Clermont Ferrand, Montauban, Le Creusot, Montluçon
- East: Strasbourg, Colmar, St Dizier, Than, Mulhouse, Haguenau, Sermaize les Bains, Belfor
- Nord : Lens, Annoeulin, Courcelles les lens, Aires sur la lis
- Ile de la Reunion

The objective of these associations is to work alongside with the unemployed and precariously employed and not for them.

The MNCP aims to defend the rights of the unemployed and precariously employed and to make them recognized as main social stakeholders. The shared missions of MNCP are :

- unconditional inclusion,
- employment rights defense
- the organization and collective representation of the unemployed and precariously employed.

It promotes links between the associations of unemployed by using its strengths in outreach and counseling. It represents nationally the associations of unemployed to the public authorities and to social organizations of trade union partners.

It spreads the innovative actions carried out in these houses especially when there is a link with social and solidary economy. It develops their ideas into propositions, for the recognition of the unemployed and precariously employed, for collective expression and representation in all the places that decide their fate. This allows the visibility of the associations in their role of main stakeholders of social cohesion. It organizes the actions of the unemployed and precariously employed to access and defend their rights and dignity.

A mobilization movement

The UNEDIC collective (Solidaires, SNU, CIP, Apeis, AC !, Recours radiation, Maternittentes, MNCP), which arose in the struggle on the recent negotiations on the status of intermittent jobs, meets twice per month to claim the consideration of the proposals made by the unemployed and precariously employed in the framework of these negotiations. The UNEDIC collective also brings attention on the recent "Loi Travail", art 119.

October 26: implementation of a legal monitoring essentially focused on questions related to "Pôle Emploi" (state agency) and "RSA" (minimum revenue).

November 21 and 22: The MNCP associations from the south of France organize a forum on the precariat with the participation of the unemployed and precariously employed and stakeholders concerned with the extent and consequences of this phenomenon.

December 3: national demonstration against unemployment and job insecurity in Paris, same as each year since the beginning of the movement in 1998

To realize this ambition the MNCP impulse the realization of a book in which 25 trade unions and associations show how the act practically and daily, with their differences, against unemployment. (MNCP (et les Amis du MNCP-PART AGE), APEIS, JOC, AC, CIP, DAL, ATIAC, SOIDAIREs, CGT, SNU-FSU, CGC, FNARS, EMMAUS, COORACE, CREPI, ADIE, ATD, APF, SECOURS CATHOLIQUE, France TERRE D ASILE, CNIDFF, COLLECTIF ROOSEVELT, PACTE CIVIQUE, LES COLIBRIS)

The New Economics Foundation's proposal for the reduction of working hours

The New Economics Foundation advocates a gradual reduction in the shorter working week, towards an eventual optimum length of 21 hours. This is close to the average that people of working age in Britain spend in paid work. Reducing the working week to this length would redistribute paid work more equitably across the labour market, tackling overwork, underemployment, and joblessness.

A significantly shorter working week would shift paid work to simply one aspect of a flourishing life rather than the central pillar around which many of our lives revolve. This shift would have significant benefits for our societies, economies and the environment, enabling people to lead more sustainable lifestyles with time to care, to participate in their communities and in democracy.

How do we want to realise it?

The move towards a shorter working week would need to be gradual, and would have to go hand in hand with tackling low pay.

Conditions necessary for successfully reducing the working week include:

Changing the way work is managed to discourage overtime

Providing training to combat skills shortages

Managing employers' costs to reward rather than penalise hiring extra staff

Introducing regulations which standardise hours and promote flexible arrangements to suit employees

Offering more and better protections for the self-employed Initial steps to reducing the length of the working week:

Work with employers and organisations to encourage pilots of a range of different options for reduced working e.g. four day weeks, six hour days

Evaluation of existing examples of a reduced working week to more fully understand the effects

Greater research into, and awareness of existing examples of reduced working

Greater support for employers and employees interested in reduced working

Who are our key partners?

An alliance on the shorter working week should involve a diverse range of groups including:

Environmental groups

Trade unions

Disability rights groups

Parents/carers organisations

Large organisations/ organisations interested in improving their employees' experiences of work and productivity

Political parties

Health and mental health organisations

What's next for shorter working time policies ?

As a responsible for the parliamentary Commission of inquiry about the social, economic, and financial impact of working time reduction in France, Mrs Romagnan proceeded to the audition of many actors of working time policies, such as chief human resources officer, CEO, sociologists, economists, former chief of staff, etc.

These studies have brought the Commission to the conclusion that shorter working hours policies have to be taken forward after some of its limits have been taken into account. When it comes to the implementation of reducing working hours, one has to realize we are facing a huge diversity of situations that require specific examinations. This is the reason why in 1997, French Government first developed labour relations with social partners, in order to identify key differences among various production sectors and job categories. Thus, if the French Government was to launch a reduction of working time policy, it would probably have to consult the social partners first and foremost.

Having said that, however, many experts think that reducing working hours should not be done anymore at the scale of the week but throughout life, thanks to sabbatical leaves dedicated to resumption of studies or raising children for instance.

Regarding the timing for the continuation of such a policy, it appears that reducing full-time job is not only possible but also necessary in view of the estimated productivity gains for the coming years. As a matter of fact, letting the market drive the process of work time sharing – instead of organizing one by ourselves – will lead us to more and more unemployment, since we will need less and less working time to produce the same amount of wealth.

A strong opposition from the conservatives

Contrary to what one may be bound to think, the opposition does not come that often from the companies themselves. Indeed, most of them are quite satisfied with the Aubry acts, because they benefited from the reduction of employer's social security contributions, and also because of the annualisation of working time that allowed them to increase the use of their equipment. Since 2002, the debate about reducing working times in France is strongly polarized between right and left. This is all the more surprising given that before 1998, reducing working time had been a shared policy, and the Robien act of 1996 allowed some companies to reduce their working time up to 32 hours for a week, on the principle of voluntarism though.

After 2002, all the studies about evaluating working time policies have been dropped in favour of an ideological debate on whether it was morally reasonable or not to let people have free time instead of work. Though the French national statistical institute INSEE established in 2004 that the Aubry acts created around 350.000 jobs between 1998 and 2002, these policies have been accused of being responsible for a supposedly lower productivity for French workers.

Partners and works

Several French organizations and medias are trying to encourage debate around these questions : the Collectif Roosevelt, the newspaper Alternatives Economiques, (...) are regularly raising questions to get reduction working time policies out of its ideological deadlock. The parliamentary Commission of inquiry helped renewing discussions about one of the main measures of the late 1990s, but even the current Government does not claim this policy as its legacy.

Les Conditions de succès de la RTT/Les écueils à éviter

Il est nécessaire de mettre en oeuvre une RCTT forte pour avoir des effets bénéfiques, tant sur la qualité de vie que sur l'efficacité économique et sociale (30-32h). Il faut donc des mesures de soutien fortes et attractives. L'aide octroyée doit être obligatoirement conditionnée à la création d'emplois ; les mesures qui sont limitées dans le temps et qui répondent uniquement à des situations critiques (restructurations et autres) ne sont pas efficaces. Il faut donc veiller à éviter des mesures transitoires qui ne permettraient pas le choc nécessaire pour permettre de nouveaux engagements et qui ne feraient alors qu'augmenter la pression sur les actifs. Le financement proposé par Larrouiturou via la part des cotisations dédiée aux allocations de chômage n'est pas applicable en l'état ici, mais le soutien des pouvoirs publics, conditionné à l'obligation de nouvelles embauches, doit être suffisant et pérenne pour amener l'entreprise à opérer le changement.

La RCTT doit être appliquée par tous, pour toutes les catégories de travailleurs, au risque qu'elle ne devienne dénigrante/dévalorisante pour certains ; Il faut éviter de créer 2 classes de travailleurs, ceux qui travaillent

4 jours dans des métiers perçus comme peu valorisants et ceux qui travaillent 5 jours car ils sont « indispensables ». Ce serait le meilleur moyen de rendre la réduction du temps de travail peu attractive pour tous. Ne pas sousestimer l'impact du « Travailler plus pour gagner plus » : c'est sur le terrain de la bataille des idées que la RCTT doit aussi se gagner.

Il ne faut pas penser la mise en oeuvre de la RCTT sur une entièreseté de la vie/carrière professionnelle mais plutôt sur une base hebdomadaire («éventuellement mensuelle), , à défaut on reste dans une logique de crédit temps ou autres aménagements et il n'y a, dès lors, pas de mouvement social, il n'y a pas de projet commun, il n'y a pas la création d'espoir.

Il faut se montrer flexible dans l'organisation de cette RTT vis-à-vis des entreprises et des travailleurs (négocié avec eux) pour que le gain soit le plus avantageux pour chacun d'eux. Il importe que la société continue à fonctionner durant 5, voire 6 à 7 jours, pour le gain de productivité et pour que ce soit rentable pour elle. Mais il importe vraiment qu'il y ait embauche compensatoire et réduction importante du temps de travail, ce sont les conditions sine qua non pour obtenir le soutien public... autrement on tombe dans les exemples actuels de pseudo-RCTT comme chez Bayer, Monsanto, ...Ainsi, dans ces entreprises anversoises, on a eu de grosses diminutions du temps de travail : 33h mais parce que menaces de délocalisation => pas d'embauche compensatoire, perte de salaire et mesures de soutien du gouvernement !

A la question centrale de savoir comment la réduction du temps de travail s'appliquera pour les TPE et PME, il n'y pas eu de réponses miracles. Il ne faut sous estimer cette difficulté qui pourrait être brandie pour disqualifier tout un modèle. Aux côtés des groupements d'entreprises et d'activités qui peuvent être créés avec une grande mobilité des travailleurs et mise en commun de ressources humaines, il faut aussi certainement penser en parallèle à des aides particulières (ex . de garanties publiques sur factures impayées) pour les PME et TPE qui bénéficieront aussi des effets positifs en cascade. Mais c'est très certainement le point à mûrir pour bétonner et crédibiliser encore davantage le projet.

What is your/your groups' concrete proposal for the reduction of working hours? How do you want to realize it? What time frame is realistic? Today? In the long term?

Left Party in Sweden has supported shorter working hours for a long time. They argue that 6-hour workday, while maintaining same wage, is a strategic reform to reduce unemployment and get a more equal distribution between work and capital. Further on it is a feminist reform; shorter working hours releases time for all working people which create conditions for a more equal distribution of paid and unpaid work. A shorter workday also means that part-time jobs, will be translated into full-time jobs.

The Left Party wants to change the working norm from 40 to 30-hour work week while maintaining same wage. The reduction of working hours will be gradual over a 10 year period. The reform will be financed through higher state taxes.

Together with the Social Democrats and the Green Party they decided to run a trial to show that it is possible to reduce the working hours with good results and to share best practices. The trial is performed at "Svartedalen" elderly care centre with approximately 80 assistant nurses. The aim is to find out how 6 hour workday impact health and life qualities for the assistant nurses. Further on to study the socioeconomic factors benefits and the possibility of creating jobs. The trial included an interactive research for analyzing the effects.

The effects so far shows indications of fewer sick leaves, improved continuity and less stressed employees. Even the elders feel like to receive a better care and get more time with the employees.

Who do you encounter as opponents and what are their reasons?

The opponents in Gothenburg are primarily the rightwing and conservative parties. They argue that the costs for shortening the working hours are too high.

Who are your partners on this topic? What should an alliance/platform/campaign do to make the debate move forward in your country and/or in Europe?

Unfortunately few parties, organizations or unions support the six hour workday in Sweden.

Stadt Göteborg, Schweden

5) Budget

	Costs	Remarks
Conference organisation	./.	Volunteers from Attac Germany and Collectif Roosevelt France
Meeting room including technical services	./.	Room kindly provided by the office of Thomas Handel
Interpreter services	4000	Interpreter services costs kindly covered by the Rosa Luxembourg Foundation
Hotel	3200 (40 x 80€)	Hotel costs kindly covered by the Rosa Luxembourg Foundation
Catering 21.10.	2.000	Catering costs kindly covered by the Rosa Luxembourg Foundation
Catering 22.10.	1.000	Catering costs kindly covered by the Rosa Luxembourg Foundation
Travel fees reimbursement	2.000 (for 15 participants)	Travel fees reimbursement costs, for those who needed it, were covered by Attac Germany, Collectif Roosevelt and ZASS. Most of participants covered their own travel costs.
Others	200	Metro tickets and small materials. Costs were covered by Attac Germany and Collectif Roosevelt
Total	12.400€	