



2015-2019 Activity Report
of the Federal Committee for the 15th Congress of the *Union Syndicale Fédérale*
(USF) (2019)

Adopted by the Federal Committee on 16 February 2019

The 2015 Federal Congress identified the following priorities:

- Strengthening federal identity at all levels and increasing synergies between member organisations;
- Strengthening our presence and influence within EPSU and PSI;
- Modernising the trade union's communication;
- Strengthening our presence and influence within the agencies;
- Combating harassment in the workplace;
- Combating TISA.

TISA

USF played an active role in the global, informal structures working to prevent ratification of the TISA free trade agreement. This project represented a threat to the democratic sovereignty of our countries and their public services.

We have worked continuously to keep the public informed of developments, contributed to debates amongst trade union federations around the world and organised round table meetings open to the public.

Finally the project was abandoned, mainly due to the protectionist U-turn taken by American commercial policy. This was a side-effect, albeit a positive one, of the chaos caused by the American government elected after our 2015 Congress.

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Harassment

Considerable resources, including legal assistance, have been used by our member organisations to provide assistance to members who have suffered harassment. The Court of Justice has found in our favour in cases against the European Parliament.

A USF joint action day was organised in October 2018. A joint action day will be held every year.

The Federal Committee established a 'Harassment and well-being' permanent working group. It submitted the conclusions of its work to the Federal Committee at the beginning of 2019.

Agencies

Only one new member organisation, US Eurojust, joined USF.

As for the existing member organisations:

- US Eurofound is experiencing critical difficulties as a result of the management's anti-trade union attitude.
- US Cedefop also went through a difficult period, caused by disruption, power struggles and harassment connected with the renewal of the management. Stability was restored, and US Cedefop won all of the seats on the Staff Committee.
- US ETF experienced a spectacular rate of growth, seeing a sixfold increase in the number of its members. This was made possible by the commitment of US ETF's leaders and by assistance from USF.
- We have not heard from US OSHA.

Discussions on the recognition of Union Syndicale in the different agencies were held, or are ongoing, in Thessaloniki, Turin, Barcelona, Brussels, The Hague, Bilbao and Valenciennes. We have not yet been able to conclude these discussions, but we are making progress towards this objective.

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Communication

We have modernised USF's visual identity (new logo, new typographical appearance) and electronic communication platforms (website, social media).

Agora has been revamped, and we now have a magazine we can be very proud of. The magazine is issued less frequently, deals with a specific subject in each issue and has an up-to-date appearance. It is distributed on paper and in electronic format, in French and English, but more can be done to improve it.

Communication has not always been valued as much as it should in our day-to-day activities, although many battles are won on this front.

EPSU / PSI

We were able to increase our influence within EPSU. We actively participated in campaigns led by EPSU and were heard within EPSU bodies. The next EPSU Congress is imminent and USF will be allocated an ordinary seat on its Executive Committee. EPSU included a USF representative in its delegation to the ETUC Congress.

A USF delegation took part in the 2017 PSI Congress in Geneva.

The fact that we belong to a European trade union family is a characteristic which sets us apart within the European and international civil service. We have succeeded better in making the most of this than we did in the past.

Federal identity - development of the organisation

The modernisation of communication has greatly contributed to strengthening the identity and federal consciousness of member organisations.

The federal bodies have been attentive to member organisations, and available to assist them.

Regular meetings of the Committee and the Federal Bureau in the various locations where we are established has enabled us to develop a greater understanding of our organisation, to develop joint activities, to assist local organisations and to develop aid and expertise networks (since the last congress, seven meetings of the Federal Committee, and almost twenty meetings of the Federal Bureau have been held outside Brussels).

Essential services - legal aid, insurance, preparation for competitions - have been made accessible to members in all locations.

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USF's internal organisation has been strengthened: the frequency of meetings is more predictable, responsibilities are allocated more effectively, meetings are better prepared and there is a clearer distinction between the Committee and the Bureau.

Overall, the number of members has remained stable since 2015. Great progress was made by the Luxembourg organisations, at IPSO and US ETF. On the other hand, EPSU-Fusion, SACE and SUEPO Den Haag registered significant losses.

As regards the statutory elections, Union Syndicale achieved the best results in Cedefop, COM HU, Petten, the EEAS, the ECB and the EPO. Significant progress was made at the Council and at the Commission in Luxembourg. On the other hand, the elections were lost at Ispra, the Court of Justice and the Council of Europe.

Since the 2015 Dubrovnik Congress we have welcomed:

- Union Syndicale European Parliament,
- Union Syndicale Eurojust
- and the Staff Association of the Secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States.

The Federal Committee proposes that the Congress ratify these membership applications.

- The Union Syndicale of the Bergen European School
- and the Union Syndicale of the Economic Development Centre

no longer exist (the latter because the Centre has been dissolved).

European Patent Office (EPO)

Events at the EPO deserve a special mention, particularly since they have mobilised a lot of our union's resources.

The President of the EPO - who has now been replaced - was conducting an open war against the Staff Union of the European Patent Office (SUEPO), criminalising union activities, and even dismissing several SUEPO leaders. The Administrative Tribunal of the International Labour Organization (ILO-AT) recently annulled some of the dismissals, but we are still awaiting a decision on other cases.

USF has contributed significantly to both political and material solidarity with the victims of these events.

The most recent signs, following the replacement of the President, have been encouraging.