

LT/IK May 7

Brussels, 18 May 2020

**To the industriAll Europe members of the Building Trade Union Power Task force
To all industriAll Europe affiliated organisations**

Dear Colleagues,

Re.: Recommendations on how to prepare for building stronger trade unions in Post-Corona times

IndustriAll Europe is paying close attention to the consequences of the COVID-19 outbreak, the lockdowns, and the impact on the workers in our industries. We are facing enormous challenges. Besides the major risks to health, workers are also affected by short-time work, unemployment, and working from home - often with the double burden of family life. In these times of threat to health and workers' jobs, strong trade unions are more important than ever. We are convinced that strong trade unions supported by secure collective agreements can influence positively the working and living conditions of industrial workers in the post-pandemic economy in Europe.

IndustriAll Europe's priority is organising for collective bargaining!

The COVID-19 crisis has made very visible, that only in countries, sectors and companies where trade unions have a reliable social dialogue with their counterpart with stable collective bargaining structures, workers and their families could benefit from sufficient protection. While in other countries and companies the crisis has been used to restrict or - worse- destroy legal protection for workers and suspend collective agreements.

We must ensure that in post-corona times, work regulations, working conditions, collective agreements, individual employment contracts, and wages will remain as before or even strengthened.

Only with strong and active trade unions, can we successfully fight for workers' health, income, jobs and our industries all over Europe.

This is the right time to prepare for organising and recruiting workers while activating and retaining members!

The key recommendations from the BTUP Task Force remain the same as before:

- ✓ Organising for a stronger collective bargaining position
- ✓ Establish an organising culture
- ✓ Identify and train organisers
- ✓ Build organising campaigns

In times of physical distancing, short-term work, and working from home, the methods of building trade union power need to be adapted accordingly.

Organising gets support from digital organising!

Here we summarise some **hints and tips**, which have contributed to positive results in recent organising and recruitment campaigns of affiliated organisations. We kindly present these for building trade union power in times of digital organising and for preparing building stronger unions in post-corona times:

- **Create a good database:** Every organising campaign needs a good database with contact data. The Trade Union organisers/activists can use the time of lockdown to contact workers directly by phone or other digital communication tools.
- **Form a compelling narrative:** It is important to anticipate the needs of workers, when talking to them. Turn the fear of individual workers into a collective power source.
- **Communicate through strategic listening:** Strategic listening means to build a connection, to help workers finding out on their own, that only collective action leads to a better working live. Prepare your organising and communication team with specific training and psychological guidance.
- **Identify a good issue:** The issues of a campaign need to meet the concrete demands of the workers; thus, they must come from the workers. In times of lockdown, teleworking, and physical distancing, workers feel insecure and are often missing information from the employer about their workplace. This can be a good starting point to approach workers.
- **Keep the momentum:** Use phone calls for a period when you cannot meet in person. This might be difficult for many activists without call-centre experience, but with some practise most of them can do it. Organising needs face-to-face meetings, but digital meetings can bridge the period.
- **Build trust:** Retention of workers is an important topic for all trade union organisations. Trade unions must find solutions for keeping workers interested in unionisation. The best way is to demonstrate to workers that they can solve problems together.

Please visit our website for hints and tips on [building trade union power](#) as well as [good examples](#) of campaigns of our affiliates. If your union is interested in getting further involved in organising please contact: Ildiko Krén, Policy Advisor industriAll Europe, ildiko.kren@industriall-europe.eu

Best regards,

Luc Triangle

General Secretary