

Making training a reality for quality jobs in European industries

TRADE UNION GUIDE



PART 2 – WORKPLACE LEVEL

Introduction

This Resource Guide has been designed as a tool to make training a reality for quality jobs in European industries.

Who is it for?

This Resource Guide has been designed as a tool to support trade unions in affiliated organisations of industriAll European Trade Union so that their officers and representatives are better equipped at the sectoral and workplace levels to make training a reality for quality jobs in European industries.

What is in it?

This Resource Guide presents a practical trade union approach to the development of workers' training – at the sectoral level (Part 1) and at the workplace level (Part 2).

How to use it?

This Resource Guide presents 10 different ways in which trade unions can participate in and/or advocate for the development of training. Each section provides a brief introduction to the subject and a check-list of issues designed to support trade union reflection and action.

It can be used as a stand-alone resource or as an aid for awareness-raising and capacity-building within trade unions in Europe. It will clearly be more effective if it forms part of a broader trade union strategy.

Part 2 – Workplace Level will provide an opportunity to consider the following:

Part 2/Section 1

Examining existing training support and provision

Part 2/Section

Identifying workers' training needs and experiences

Part 2/Section 3

Preparing trade union demands for training

Part 2/Section 4

Entering into an agreement with employers

Part 2/Section 5

Reconnecting with workers

Part 2/Section 1

Examining existing training support and provision

In certain countries, for example Austria, France and Germany, works councils provide an opportunity to shape workers' training at the workplace.

In Austria,

trade unions are not formally represented on works councils, as members are elected by all employees. However, quite often members are trade union representatives. The rights of the works council with regard to vocational training are underpinned by the Labour Constitution Act.

- The employer must inform the works council about planned measures for in-company vocational training as well as in-company training and retraining
- The works council has the right to make proposals as regards in-company vocational training, training and retraining. The employer is obliged to discuss these proposals with the works council
- The works council has the right to participate in the planning and implementation of in-company vocational training as well as in-company training and retraining measures
- The works council is entitled to take part in all official inspections that affect the planning and implementation of in-company vocational training
- The works council has the right to take part in the administration of company and company-owned training and educational institutions (Article 94)

In countries with no statutory right to consultation at the workplace level, for example in the United Kingdom, trade unions have established other ways of shaping workers' training, through networks of union workplace learning representatives who have certain roles and responsibilities for training.

These roles and responsibilities of the Unite union learning representatives may include:

- Working with other union representatives to raise Unite's profile through learning
- Increasing awareness of the benefits of learning
- Providing advice and guidance on learning to fellow workers
- Ensuring equality in learning
- Identifying and promoting learning opportunities
- Identifying and addressing barriers to learning
- Conducting learning surveys to identify employees' needs and interests
- Forwarding details of course and individual learning outcomes to the Learning Organiser
- Compiling and submitting learning case studies
(ULR Handbook of Unite the Union)

With or without statutory institutional support, trade union representatives at the workplace level will need to prepare the ground and gather the evidence so that they are a credible and authoritative interlocutor for the development of workers' training.

In order to gain a better understanding of the existing situation at the workplace level, please consider the questions in the template Part 1/Section 5/A – Examining existing training provision and support on the following page.

Part 2/Section 1/A

Examining existing training support and provision

1. Workplace social dialogue and training

Is there a works council with certain responsibilities for training?

Yes No

If yes, what are its functions? How are the workers represented?

Please give details

2. Workplace level agreement on training

Is there a workplace agreement on training?

Yes No

Please give details

3. Types of training supported in the company

If yes, what types of training are supported in the company?

- vocational skills – e.g. linked directly to existing work
- transversal skills – e.g. problem-solving, communication, teamwork
- basic skills – e.g. numeracy, literacy, digital skills
- personal development – e.g. improving self confidence

Please give details



4. Types of workers eligible for training

If yes, which workers are eligible for training?

- all white collar blue collar
 indefinite contract fixed term contract
 full time part time

Please give details

Which workers are not eligible for training?

Please give details

5. Provision for time off for training

Are workers entitled to time off for training and if so, how much?

- none 1-5 days per year
 6-10 days per year more than 10 days per year
 other

Please give details

6. Remuneration for time off for training

If workers are entitled to remuneration during the training period, how much?

- full partial none

Please give details

7. Other costs relating to training

If workers are entitled to reimbursement for other training costs

(e.g. tuition fees, material, travel, accommodation) is this

- full partial none

Please give details



8. Process for requesting training

Is there a company policy for requesting workplace training?

Yes No

What is the process for requesting training?

Please give details

9. Training management

Is there a department within the company that is responsible for training?

Yes No

What resources does it provide?

Please give details

10. Forms of training – 1

Is training provided internally within the company?

Yes No

What form does it take?

coaching/shadowing classroom other

Please give details

11. Forms of training – 2

Is training done by an external provider?

Yes No

Who provides the training?

public institution private agency



Please give details

12. Recognised qualifications

Does the training lead to a formally recognised qualification?

Yes No

What is the name of the qualification?

Please give details

13. Funding company training

Who funds company training?

- employer public authorities workers themselves
 shared (employer/worker) social partner training bodies

Please give details

14. Training, without a workplace agreement

If there is no workplace agreement on training, what is the process for designing and implementing company training, and how does your trade union influence this process?

Please give details



Part 2/Section 2

Identifying workers' training needs and experiences

In order to negotiate on the behalf of workers, it is obviously essential to know what their training needs are, what training they may have had and what is their opinion as regards their training experience.

Establishing a dialogue on training with workers may not be an easy task. Their experience of formal education may have been a disappointment, and they may not wish to be reminded of these times. Moreover, at a time of considerable change or indeed upheaval, they may not be willing to divulge what they cannot do and do not know.

Contacting workers may also be a challenge. So, it is advisable to develop a survey questionnaire which is simple for workers to use and easy for union workplace representatives to analyse. It should include an invitation for further information and advice which could lead to some form of training guidance. It must, of course, be confidential.

The responses to the survey questionnaire will be central to any negotiation with employers' representatives. Trade union representatives will be the custodians of information that employers will not have. On this basis, they will be able to enter into negotiations with employers on an equal footing.

In order to gain a better understanding of training needs and experiences, please consider the questions in the template Part 2/Section 2/A – Identifying workers' training needs and experiences on the following page for inclusion in a survey questionnaire which can be distributed to workers.

Part 2. Section 2/A

Identifying workers' training needs and experiences

Survey questionnaire to identify workers' training needs and experiences

This survey questionnaire is designed to investigate workers' individual and collective training needs and experiences, as a basis for trade union demands that can be used in negotiations with the employer.

Important. All information concerning individuals' needs and experiences will remain strictly confidential.

1. Personal details

Name _____

Job title _____

Department _____

Contact details _____

Formal qualifications _____

2. Previous training in the company - 1

Have your training needs and experiences been investigated before?

Yes No

If yes, did this lead to an opportunity for training?

Yes No

Please give details



3. Previous training in the company - 2

If in the past you have had an opportunity to benefit from training,

What training did you take up? _____

When did it take place? _____

How would you describe the experience?

Very good Good Satisfactory Poor

How could the experience have been improved?

Please give details

Have you been able to use the knowledge and skills you acquired
in your daily work?

Yes No

Did it lead to some form of recognised qualification?

Yes No

If yes, please give details

Did the training lead to some form of improvement in pay or working conditions?

Yes No

If yes, please give details



4. Present training needs

In your present area of work, are there problems that could be solved by opportunities for training?

Yes No

If yes, please give details

What training opportunities would you be interested in?

- vocational skills – e.g. linked directly to existing work
- transversal skills – e.g. problem-solving, communication, teamwork
- basic skills – e.g. numeracy, literacy, digital skills
- personal development – e.g. improving self confidence

Please give details

Why would you want to take up this training opportunity?

Please give details



5. Further information and advice

Would you like more information and advice about training opportunities?

Yes No

Please give details

When the questionnaire has been filled in, please send it back to

Name _____

Contact details _____

By (date) _____



Part 2/Section 3

Preparing trade union demands for training

Part 2/Section 1/A has provided a clearer understanding of the existing provision for training within the company, and Part 2/Section 2/A has provided a clearer understanding of workers' needs and experiences.

This represents an abundance of significant information that can provide the backdrop for trade union demands:

- Is there a workplace agreement as regards training?
- What investment has been made in the past?
- What types of training were on offer?
- Were workers eligible for time off to take up training?
- Were workers remunerated during the training period?
- Were training costs covered by the employer?
- Did the training lead to a recognised qualification?
- Who has benefitted (and importantly, who has not)?
- What was the experience of the beneficiaries?
- What present and future training needs have been identified?
- Who is interested in taking up training?
- What is the motivation for taking up new training opportunities?
- Do workers need counselling and guidance for training?

In order to gain a better understanding of the ways in which existing training provision and workers' training needs and experiences can be transformed into trade union demands, please consider the questions in the template Part 2/Section 3/A – Preparing trade union demands for training on the following page.

Part 2/Section 3/A

Preparing trade union demands for training

1. Trade union objectives

What are the main trade union objectives for a workplace training strategy?

Please give details

2. Arguments for a workplace training strategy - Benefits

On the basis of the responses to the survey questionnaire, what are the benefits of a workplace training strategy for workers?

Please give details

How can a workplace training strategy generate a win-win situation for workers and the employer?

Please give details

3. Arguments for a workplace training strategy - Sustainability

What is needed to ensure the sustainability of a workplace training strategy?

Please give details



4. Arguments for a workplace training strategy - Effectiveness

How can the effectiveness of a workplace training strategy be measured?

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ● by the number of certificates of competence issued | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ● by the acquisition of new knowledge and skills | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ● by other means | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |

Please give details

5. Arguments for a workplace training strategy - Measures

What measures need to be taken in the short term (12 months)?

Please give details

What measures need to be taken in the medium term (12-36 months)?

Please give details

6. Arguments for a workplace training strategy - Costs

What costs would be incurred?

Please give details



How can these costs be justified?

Please give details

How can these costs be funded?

Please give details

7. Negotiation strategy

What would be an acceptable result of negotiations with the employer?

Please give details

What arguments would the employer use and what trade union responses would be appropriate?

Please give details

Who will present the trade union arguments to the employer?

Please give details





Part 2/Section 4

Entering into an agreement with employers

The previous sections in Part 2 have examined existing training provision, identified training needs and experiences and prepared trade union demands, with the purpose of entering into negotiations with the employer.

The aim of Part 2/Section 4 is to prepare trade union representatives so that they are in a position to negotiate a workplace training agreement.

For this, it will be necessary to determine the aims of a learning agreement which identifies priorities for workers' training, within a broader context regarding enterprise objectives and funding opportunities. The next step would be to establish a series of priorities for training. There would also be a need to design different types of training programmes – their aims and their duration. The learning agreement should include the creation of a joint employer-trade union committee to ensure that the training process is managed effectively and to ensure that workers' interests are protected.

In order to gain a better understanding of the type of proposals that need to be included in a company learning agreement, please consider the questions in the template Part 2/Section 4/A – Entering into an agreement with employers on the following page.

Part 2/Section 4/A

Entering into an agreement with employers

1. Scope

What is the organisational context? What, if any, agreements have been negotiated at the sectoral level?

Please give details

2. Aims

Which of these aims should be the focus of the agreement?

- Building an effective workplace training agreement
Yes No
- Identifying workplace training needs of all workers
Yes No
- Making workplace training opportunities accessible for all workers
Yes No
- Encouraging workers to take up workplace training activities
Yes No
- Producing a workplace training programme
Yes No
- Monitoring the success of the workplace training programme
Yes No
- Making best use of existing training facilities
Yes No
- Liaising with external training providers
Yes No
- Maximising available funding opportunities
Yes No
- Improving productivity
Yes No



3. Priorities for training

What are the training priorities linked to company objectives?

Please give details

What are the training priorities linked to funding opportunities?

Please give details

What are the training priorities linked to workers' needs?

Please give details

What consensus can bring these three priorities together?

Please give details

4. Training programmes

What training programmes will be entrusted to a joint employer-trade union committee for training?

Please give details

5. Joint employer-trade union committee for company training

How will the training process be managed?

Please give details



Part 2/Section 5 – Reconnecting with workers

This Resource Guide has been prepared to enable trade union representatives to advise and support workers, to enter into a dialogue with employers and to negotiate a learning agreement which will make training a reality for quality jobs.

Without the active (and passive) support of workers – before, during and after the negotiation process - this initiative will not succeed, and so it is imperative to keep them fully on board throughout.

As a result, it will be necessary to provide them with regular information as regards:

- Trade union training objectives
- Brief evaluations of the ability to achieve these objectives
- Challenges that were faced and ways in which these challenges were overcome
- Results of the responses to the survey questionnaire and explanations for the different priorities that were established
- Outcomes of the negotiations with the employer and details of the learning agreement
- Content of the new training programme and how it will be implemented

In order to gain a better understanding of the priorities for a communication strategy designed to reconnect with workers, please consider the questions in the template Part 2/Section 5/A – Reconnecting with workers on the following page.

Part 2/Section 5/A – Reconnecting with workers

1. Aims

What are the trade union aims for the development of training in the workplace?

Please give details

2. Evaluation

What has been done to achieve these aims?

Please give details

3. Challenges

What challenges were encountered in achieving these aims?

Please give details

4. Solutions to the challenges encountered

What solutions were found to tackle the challenges that were encountered?

Please give details

5. Survey questionnaire - priorities

What were the priorities emanating from the survey questionnaire?

Please give details



6. Dialogue with the employers - outcomes

What were the outcomes of the dialogue with the employer?

Please give details

7. Implementation of the agreement

What are the next steps for the implementation of the agreement and who will do what?

Please give details

8. Content of the new workplace training programme

What training opportunities will be included in the new workplace training programme?

Please give details

9. Means of communication

What means of communication will be used by trade union representatives to provide workers with regular information about the different stages of the negotiation process and the different training opportunities that will be included in the new workplace training programme?

Please give details



