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## **THE EUROPEAN INDUSTRIAL CITIZEN – HE OR SHE?**

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### **Abstract**

The European industrial citizen – he or she?

The paper presents the first results from a project, which aims at studying the Europeanization of industrial relations from a gender perspective. Despite the fact that the Europeanization of industrial relations has been one of the most important areas within the wide field of industrial relations research, there has not been any systematic study of the development from a gender perspective.

The project makes use of both quantitative and qualitative material. Three variables are studied, representation, activities and output, in the five European institutions created; among them the social dialogue and the European Works Councils, as well as the European social partners (trade unions and employers' organisations) and the European industry federations. The period of study is 1994 until today. The material used is documents such as common positions, joint texts and protocols, but also interviews with representatives and delegates from the institutions and social partners. The first results tell us that the European industrial citizen is a man. In spite of the fact that many women in the European Union are working in paid employment, the European institutions created for industrial relations are heavily dominated by men. Compared to the political arena, as exemplified by the European Parliament, the industrial relations arena is thus performing poorly.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The paper presents the first results from a project, which aims at studying the Europeanization of industrial relations from a gender perspective. The Europeanization of industrial relations, its scope and possible effects, has been one of the most important fields of study in European industrial relations research in the past 15 years. In spite of this, the emerging European industrial relations regime has seldom been discussed from a gender perspective, a perspective which might greatly add to our knowledge.

According to the Amsterdam Treaty, the European Union aim at fighting inequality and promote gender equality in all policy areas of the European Union (The Amsterdam Treaty article 3(2) EC). Against this background, it is interesting to study whether the emerging European industrial relations regime actually has a particular gender, if men and women are equally affected and promoted by the new institutions created within the European Union. The European Union is actively promoting industrial relations within the Union and on a European level, and this has resulted in a number of directives and joint agreements. In addition there are also a number of organisations that represent male and female workers at the European level.

### **Aim of study**

The study aims at studying the Europeanization of industrial relations from a gender perspective. Despite the fact that the Europeanization of industrial relations has been one of the most important areas within the wide field of industrial relations research, there has not been any systematic study of the development from a gender perspective.

## **EUROPEANIZATION OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND GENDER**

A gender perspective is still often missing in contemporary industrial relations research, but has gained ground in the last few years, even if there are usually two separate research communities, the traditional gender blind and the gender aware (Gonäs 2000). In industrial relations, gender research has mainly been devoted to wages and work organization.

Ever since Jacques Delors invited the social partners to join in on the European level in 1985, there has been an ongoing process to integrate the social partners and industrial relations in the European Union. When the accelerating development towards a social Europe, as disputed that may be, this is further accentuated. Even if the encompassing Europeanization of industrial relations anticipated by some has not come about, and national industrial relations regimes seem still going strong, European influence over national condition has grown stronger (Murhem 2003). A number of institutions have been created, the social dialogue, the sectoral social dialogue, the European Works Councils, the Eurocompanies, and the increased right to information and consultation for smaller companies (Mücklenberger 2004). The social dialogue, which takes place both on a European and on a sector level, makes the European social partners an integrated part of the decision making process of the European Union (Dufresne et al 2006). There has hardly been any discussion on this process from a gender perspective. An exception is Ulrich Mücklenberger, who points to that "it would be important to "gender" equally the process of building industrial citizenship in Europe" (Mücklenberger 2004).

The Europeanization of industrial relations, its scale and effects, has been one of the most important fields of European industrial relations research the past 15 years. Important contributions to the knowledge has been made over the years by for instance Van Ruijsseveldt & Visser (1996), Streeck (1998), Ferner & Hyman (1998), Martin & Ross (1999), Traxler et al (2001), Hyman (2001), Sisson et al (2003) and Marginson & Sisson (2004).

But for whom is the new industrial relations institutions created? There has been no overall study conducted on the development from a gender perspective. In fact, previous research has rather neglected the issue. For instance, when Jeremy Waddington made a thorough survey on European Works Councils in chemical industry, he concluded that "As the overwhelming majority of respondents were men (216 or 86.4 percent), gender is nor pursued as a central variable in the

analyses...” (Waddington 2006), a conclusion which may be seen as symptomatic of mainstream industrial relations research.

Though, the effect of certain directives has been studied, for instance Bleigenberg et al (2004), as well as the European Employment Strategy (Rubery 2005, Gonäs 2004). In addition, Bergqvist (2004) has analysed the gender representativeness within the ETUC and concluded that compared to Sweden, the European Union is less equal and that Swedish trade unionists and members therefore experience a loss of equality as an effect of the Swedish membership. Mücklenberger point in passing to that the representation in the sectoral social dialogue in the areas covered by UNI-Europe (the industry federation for service) was quite unequal, as there were only in two women dominated sectors where women had more than 50 per cent of the representatives, and in most others below 20 per cent or even 10 per cent. He found it likely that a gender perspective thus seldom is included in the resulting agreements (Mücklenberger 2004). When the European Foundation for Improvement of Living and Working Conditions analysed how different EWCs worked in EU15 and Norway, they concluded under the heading of gender that ”Very little information is available from most countries as to the breakdown of works council members or other employee representatives by gender. However, the little data available indicates that men predominate.” (Carley et al 2005). When Millns discuss the process of creation of the new European Convention there are only two women of all seven observers, including three observers from the social partners (Millns 2004). However, while representativeness is very important, it is but one part of a gender perspective. An analysis should also include the activities within the institutions and the outcome.

## **Methods**

We use both quantitative and qualitative methods. We concentrate here on the social partners; on the central level the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), the main employers’ organisation, BUSINESSEUROPE, and on the sectoral level the European Industry Federations (EIFs), and the European industrial institutions; the sectoral social dialogue and the European Works Councils (EWCs).

We discuss the institutions themselves from a gender perspective, representativeness and opportunities, but also how the actors work with gender issues and what their work tell about their attitudes. For the full study, the time period studied is 1994 up until today, but for this first preliminary study, only figures from recent years have been used. We use written material, such as protocols, common positions, resolutions etcetera, but also statistics and interviews.

## **THE EUROPEAN INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS INSTITUTIONS AND GENDER**

The European industrial relations institutions and their actors are today a very considerable body. This paper includes the ETUC, the European Industry Federations, the sectoral social dialogue and the European Works Councils. Together, they involve thousands of people on many different levels and have produced hundreds of documents. Below, we chose a few of the most important factors as a first beginning.

### **EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION - ETUC**

The ETUC leadership, elected by the congress, is the Executive Committee, the President, the General Secretary, the two Deputy General Secretaries and four Confederal Secretaries. In 2009 the secretariat consisted of seven people, a Secretary General (male), two Deputy General Secretaries (one male, one female) and four Confederal Secretaries (one woman). In 2010, the Secretariat had diminished to five people, of which only one of three Confederal Secretaries was a woman. However, the president is a woman, Wanja Lundby-Wedin of Sweden, elected in 2007 as the first woman President of ETUC. This means that women were a minority at the top positions, in spite of the female president. With the 2011 elections, this changed. The new president is, admittedly, a man, Ignacio Fernández Toxo, but the new General secretary, Bernadette Ségol, is a woman, as three out of four Confederal Secretaries. With two male Deputy General Secretaries, we could actually speak of an equal leadership of the ETUC. The ETUC also have so called groups of special interest, of which one is the Women’s Committee. The other two are the Youth Committee and the Interregional Trade Union Councils. The

Women's Committee has three seats on the ETUC Executive Committee and one on the Steering Committee, "to provide expertise and ensure that the gender dimension is integrated into all ETUC policies and activities" (www.etuc.org/r/480). This means that, in contrast to what Olsson showed in 2001, the ETUC is gradually becoming more equal, which is according to its present policy.

### **The ETUC Gender equality plan and the mid-term review of the plan**

The gender equality plan of the ETUC focuses on specific gender issues, namely three main objectives, but also general gender mainstreaming, i.e. the inclusion of gender issues in other policies. The three objectives are eliminating the female representation gap in decision-making bodies, extend gender mainstreaming and strengthen the role of the body responsible for gender equality policy.

Table 1  
The ETUC Gender equality plan 2003

Objective	Measures to be considered
Eliminate female representation gap in decision-making bodies	Equality plan Statistics Adapting meeting ways and change trade union culture
Extend gender mainstreaming 1. In collective bargaining 2. At the heart of a new social welfare architecture 3. Develop mechanisms and tools	Training for negotiators Prepare negotiations with equality officers Include evaluation in ETUC annual reports ETUC exert pressure to include this in European social protection ETUC campaign for adequate income during parental leave
Strengthen the role of the body responsible for gender equality policy	Body responsible for gender equality policy Strengthen links between EIFs between gender equality bodies and Brussels secretariats Include women who face multiple discrimination ETUC set up equality networks for EWC together with EIF ETUC training on equality, especially for accession countries Evaluate in mid.term report Publish list at ETUC congress of bad students, also reduction in number of votes.

Source: ETUC Gender equality plan

The plan is comparatively short, only four pages. Most of the measures suggested by the ETUC are fairly modest. Certainly, a measure such as change of trade union culture is potentially radical, but the under-laying vagueness opens for many different implementations. The most far-reaching is the idea of gender-mainstreaming in all policy fields, a notion which, if implemented, certainly would radically change the gender landscape. We will below discuss how it has been put to use in the ETUC resolutions.

The interest in the 2007 review of the plan was limited, only 30 national confederations and 4 EIFs responded, in spite of several reminders. This makes it difficult to evaluate the answers. The common explanation is that those especially interested in a certain issue, will respond to a higher extent. If that is the case here, it seems that gender issues are very low ranking indeed. For our purposes, we would be interested in the responses of the EIFs, but those are unfortunately impossible to distinguish. Average female membership had increased slightly, from 40 to 44 per cent between 1998 and 2006, while female congress representation was significantly lower, albeit increasing from 28 per cent in 1998 to 32 in 2006. Less than half of the respondents had an equality plan and about one third had special measurements to ensure female meeting participation. Very few had gender mainstreaming mechanisms and about half promoted training in gender issues in collective bargaining.

## ETUC resolutions

The complete execution of the ETUC gender equality plan will be evaluated at a later stage of the project. Here, we will focus on the ETUC resolutions of the past three years. According to the ETUC website, “The ETUC makes special arrangements to consult and represent the interests of young people and women, through its Youth Committee and Women’s Committee, the implementation of Equality Plans, and a policy of ‘mainstreaming’ gender equality into all ETUC decisions and activities.” (www.etuc.org/r/479). This should mean that gender equality would be present in virtually all documents and resolutions of the ETUC.

In table 2, all resolutions by the ETUC 2008-2010 are included. The text have been scrutinized for writing showing a gender perspective on the industrial citizen, i.e. writings which indicate an awareness that workers are not an ungendered mass. This means that writings such as “parents who are facing less quality in education and training for their children” (EU Policy towards Financial Market Regulation) have not been included, since they firstly refer to social citizenship and secondly are not concerned with gender per se.

Table 2  
ETUC resolutions with a gender perspective 2007-2010

Year	Number of resolutions	Resolutions including a gender perspective	Directive(s)	Text
2010*	9	1	The Working Time Directive: Limitation of working hours and more influence of workers, for healthier working lives	Update the notion of ‘adapting the work to the worker’, acknowledging that the average modern worker is a worker (male/female) with other obligations in life than work, which can lead to different needs throughout the life course
2009	10	8	1.ETUC Resolution Guidelines for the coordination of collective bargaining in 2010 2.ETUC Declaration on 2010 – European Year for combating poverty and Social exclusion 3. Resolution on the ETUC and the Lisbon Treaty 4. ETUC reply to the EC consultation on the follow-up strategy to the Roadmap for equality between women and men 2006-2010 5. EU Policy towards Financial Market Regulation 6. ETUC Resolution	1.High and rising unemployment rates for particular groups on the labour market such as youngsters, lower skilled, female workers and migrants will be used as an alibi to divide workers into ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’ and to push for a general downgrading of working conditions of all workers. 2. The same goes in the case of the development of structures to provide care for young children, which also enables the parents concerned to balance their family life with their work life. 3. The ETUC will be exploring with its affiliates the new provisions of the Lisbon Treaty, how to use these provisions and how to build on its positive social features, many of which were included as a result of ETUC pressure: * the reinforcement of social values and principles (such as solidarity, equality and gender equality, non-discrimination, etc.)

			<p>on conditions for free movement: more protection of workers and fair competition</p> <p>7. ETUC Resolution on initial and continuous vocational training for a European employment strategy</p> <p>8. ETUC Position on the revision of the Pregnant Workers Directive</p>	<p>4. Entire text</p> <p>5. Those affected groups who bear the economic and social risks of the crisis with no responsibility for it whatsoever - trade unions and other civil society organisations, in particular women's organisations, must get involved.</p> <p>6. When it comes to the sending countries, especially in central and eastern Europe, brain drain and youth drain, as well as negative impacts on family cohesion and children when one or both parents are working abroad, are generally understood as negative side effects of the increased mobility.</p> <p>7. Our first priority is to ensure access to training for all those who need to develop their aptitudes and skills. It must be based on the initial training of quality for all. Participation in lifelong learning is higher among younger age groups and gradually declines in the older age groups. Participation is also higher among men than women. It is necessary to foresee skill and competences needs, notably in order to match the training offer and the labour market needs, particularly for young men and women and unemployed people. Young women and men have different skills and different possibilities for developing their qualifications. Vocational training and education open possibilities to young women and men entering the labour market. This right must be accessible for all citizens independently of their age, gender, employment, social status or nationality.</p> <p>8. Entire text</p>
2008	11	2	<p>1. ETUC Resolution on the salary campaign and guidelines for collective bargaining coordination in 2009</p> <p>2. ETUC Resolution 'Reducing the gender pay gap'</p>	<p>1. Salary discrimination which already affects women – a 15% gender pay gap remains within a same professional category – involves both migrant workers and young people.</p> <p>2. Entire text</p>

\*Until June 2010

In all, out of 30 resolutions, 11 include gender issues. Of those are three entirely devoted to gender issues, two in response to EU consultations and directives, and one stemming from the ETUC gender equality plan. The difference between the years is very clear. In 2008, gender issues are rare. Leaving

the follow up of the former ETUC resolution of reducing the gender gap, only one resolution for every year include references to gender issues, one sentence each. In 2009, eight of ten resolutions include gender issues. According to our interviews, the difference is due to personal reasons. The development from 2008 onwards was the result of one devoted individual. Two of those eight resolutions refer to specific gender issues, one on the EU roadmap to equality and one on pregnant workers. Of the remaining six, five include one sentence each, while the sixth, on vocational training, mentions gender issues in several instances. While the figures may seem quite impressive, the content is less so. We can hardly speak of a gender mainstreaming even in 2009, since gender issues in most cases are only mentioned in one sentence each in five resolutions, in spite of the texts having many potential possibilities for discussing gender issues.

## **BUSINESSEUROPE**

BUSINESSEUROPE is run on a daily basis by the male Director General, Philippe de Buck, and a female managing director. The rest of the staff comprises of two male senior advisors and two male advisors, and one female assistant to Mr de Buck. In addition, the president, is male, Jürgen R. Thumann. The presidency consists of the president, the director general, the managing director, a male advisor and Mr Buck's assistant. In 2009, of all its committee chairs, including the committee deputy chairs and the chairs of the workings groups, only eight out of 59 are women, and none of the women are committee chairs. In the management committee, only two out of eight members are women. In 2011, of 63, the proportion women had increased slightly, to 12. In all, the positions and top management of BUSINESSEUROPE is far from equal, and the organisation has no such policy either. One interviewee claim however, that if the choice stood between two equally competent candidates, the woman would be likely to get elected, but as it is, they find it difficult to fine one candidate, let alone two. In contrast to the ETUC, BUSINESSEUROPE does not have a specific gender policy for the organisation and its work. Gender issues are included in their responses to various EU propositions, and in the social dialogue, see below. If they are asked by a presidency or other body or conference to deliver a speech on a certain issues, they will find an expert of theirs to do so. Thus, they have for instance during the Belgian presidency delivered a speech on the gender pay gap. Their equality goals are, naturally, closely linked to their overall goals, such as increasing employment rates, which will include increasing female participation rates. While they respond favourably to the Lisbon and Barcelona objectives on childcare, they conclude, here as in all other instances concerning equality, that they object to European level legislation and increasing costs for companies, and favour local solutions. However, they are presently trying to get the European Union to take on the issues of female entrepreneurship and women in science on their gender agenda.

## **The Work on Gender Issues within ETUC**

The information provided by resolutions and other texts on the work on gender equality in ETUC has been complemented by an interview made with the confederal secretary in charge of this area.

At the centre of ETUCs work on gender issues is the organization's women's committee. ETUC has working groups in different policy areas. In contrast to the majority of these groups, the women's committee has a presidium that consists of elected members. The committee meets twice a year. The presidium has meetings more often to discuss future committee meetings and more urgent matters together with ETUCs secretariat. The women's committee does not have a budget of its own, but ETUC stand for travel expenses etc. for members of the presidium. Much of the costs are nevertheless covered through project funds given by the European Commission.

All members of ETUC can send representatives to the meetings of the women's committee. The women's committee is represented by three members in the executive committee and has the right to send delegates to the congress. All policies, resolutions and similar are discussed and prepared by the women's committee. Formal decisions on the position of the organization are nonetheless taken in ETUCs executive committee. Although there is an ambition within the organization to mainstream gender equality issues, a gender perspective is missing in several policy areas. This could be explained by the nature of the areas of work as well as by the personal commitment to gender equality of the people involved.

A substantial part of the work done within ETUC on gender equality is initiated by the European Commission. Many initiatives has however been taken by the ETUC on gender in this area. The ETUC has for example initiated projects on women in decision-making positions.

A substantial part of the work on gender equality within ETUC relates to the member organizations. Surveys studies regarding gender equality the European Industry Federations (EIF) and national member organization have been made on several occasions. According to the interviewee many members have shown much interest in the work done in this area inside the organization and they have also made use of the material produced by the ETUC in their own activities. There are nonetheless large differences between member organizations when it comes to the amount of attention given to these matters. This is partially due to differences in available resources in terms of personnel and funds, but is also related to the share of female members in the sector in which the different organizations are active.

The diversity of the ETUCs member organisations also reveal themselves through the positions taken by the EIFs and the national organizations in relation to gender equality. One particular area where these differences are apparent is the gender pay gap and how to deal with this problem in collective bargaining. Many Nordic organizations oppose themselves to more coordination of collective bargaining at the European level, while many national organisations in southern Europe see this as a positive development. This is an internal matter of disagreement within the ETUC that also could affect the work on reducing the gender pay gap.

The relationship with employers’ organizations on the European level appears to leave much to ask for in the area of gender equality. There have been some concrete results of trade union-employer cooperation, e.g. the Framework of Actions on Gender Equality, which is one of the outcomes of the European social dialogue. According to ETUC representative, however, the European employers’ organizations have generally shown little interest in gender equality matters.

**THE EUROPEAN INDUSTRY FEDERATIONS**

There is also a lack of research concerning the sector-based trade union federations at the European level, the so-called European Industry Federations (EIFs). The EIFs have nevertheless been examined from a gender perspective in an ETUC report (ETUC 2003) from 2003. All existing federations (see Appendix for a list of all EIF) at the time were included in the report and only one additional federation (EUROP COP) has been created since. Based on interviews conducted with officials of the federations, the ETUC report presents data on variables such as female proportion of members in affiliated organisations, women’s representation in decision-making bodies and management, and the existence of formal organisation structures dedicated to gender equality issues. The information provides in this report has been complemented by interviews made with representatives in a number of EIFs.

The ETUC report show that several EIFs lack proper statistics regarding female membership levels, as well as reliable figures on women’s representation in decision-making bodies. It is nevertheless clear that trade union managers were predominantly male. Despite somewhat unreliable figures (see Table 3) the results show that women were underrepresented compared to female membership within the decision-making bodies of the EIFs in general. Exceptions are ETF and EFBWW which stated that women hold positions in decision-making bodies in accordance to overall female membership. However, since a majority of EIFs (8 out of 11) were unable to present precise statistics on these matters the situation is difficult to assess.

Table 3 Proportion of women in EIF decision-making bodies in 2002

<b>EIF</b>	<b>% female members</b>	<b>% women at congress</b>	<b>% women in executive committee</b>	<b>% women on steering committee</b>

ETF	12	16	15	25
EFFAT	30-40	21	20	14
EMF	n.a.	n.a.	6	7
EFJ	37	24	n.a.	33
EEA**	>30	n.a.	*	*(ca 50)
EFBWW	5-10	ca 10	10	*
EPSU	>50	42	ca 45	43
EMCEF	n.a.	15	*	10
UNI-Europa	47	n.a.	29	37
ETUF	60-70	ca 40	ca 25	ca 30
ETUCE	n.a.	35	35	*
<b>EIF average</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>28</b>

\*Body does not exist in these federations

\*\*More recently European Arts and Entertainment Alliance (EAEA)

Source: ETUC (2003)

In addition, the report (ETUC 2003) state that only few of the studied federations had voluntarily adopted policies to secure women's participation in decision-making bodies. Although a majority of the federations included in the study had specific women's structures, the report moreover show that these arrangements often were limited to performing an advisory role and that few had their own economic resources. The report also addresses the formal policies and strategies of the EIFs. Despite that the constitution of all studied federations contained equal opportunity provisions, only half had adopted "genuine" strategies for promoting gender equality. In sum, even though some federations (UNI-Europa, ETUCE, EPSU and EFFAT) stated that they had adopted strategies to promote gender mainstreaming, such initiatives were rare in the EIFs in general. A majority of federations stated that they had been involved in the coordination of collective bargaining at the European level. However, only four EIFs (EFFAT, EPSU, EMF and ETUF) stated that equal pay had been an issue in these coordination initiatives.

More recent interviews made with EIF representatives that are responsible for gender equality issues confirm that there are substantial differences between federations both in terms of organisation of the work on gender equality and initiatives taken in this area.

There are, as described above, clear differences among the EIFs when it comes to the level of activity in the area of gender equality. This is an impression that is confirmed also by the interviews made with EIF representatives within the research project. Some state that they only recently have started to discuss these matters, while others describe how they have established a well functioning structure for the work and implemented gender equality provisions in statutes, policies etc. Several EIFs have done internal studies on gender representation in their organisation and regularly initiates campaigns directed towards their member organisations. The possible explanations for these differences are many. A number of factors that was addressed in the interviews made with EIF officials are discussed below.

There are, for example, apparent differences in how the work on gender equality is organised in different EIFs. Some EIFs have very little activities in the area altogether and have not developed a specific structure for the work. Others have a dedicated body, i.e. a "women's committee" or a "gender equality committee", which is responsible for the work. This dedicated body does almost all of the work in the gender equality within some of the EIFs, while there has been a clear ambition to "mainstream" a gender perspective in all areas of work in other federations. Although the formal organisation of gender equality activities seems to be of significance, other factors appear to be even more important for the outcome of the work.

Many EIF representatives describe, for example, the positions taken by the member organizations as a central factor for the outcome of the work done on gender equality. It seems, however, as if the attitude of national member organizations can have a negative as well as positive impact. Some EIF representatives describe a situation where the national member organisations are quite negative towards European initiatives in the area of gender equality. Others, however, stress the importance of initiatives taken at the national level. The interviews do not, which might be seen as a bit surprising, suggest that organizations from any particular countries generally are more active than others.

Yet another important factor is funding. Many EIFs state that gender equality issues do not get sufficient attention because of lack of resources, both in terms of personnel and money. Much work is also done in project form, which makes it possible to get financial support from the European Commission. The lack of resources is probably more crucial for the smaller federations. The European Federation of Building and Wood Workers (EFBBW) could be mentioned as an example of a small federation that state that the lack of resources affects the extent of activities in the gender equality area. The fact that there are few activities dedicated to gender equality issues also in some of the largest federations suggests that other explanations might be even more important.

One additional factor that should not be neglected is personal commitment. In the EIFs that have many activities in the area of gender equality there are also people on top positions that see this particular topic as important. One of the federations that do much in the gender equality area is the European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU). One representative for the organisation mentions the commitment of the leadership as one of the most important factors behind the initiatives taken within this organization.

According to the interviewed EIF representatives, ETUC play an important role for the work done on gender equality in several of these organisations. The EIFs do, for example, usually attend the meetings of ETUCs women's committee. However, not all EIFs feel that they have the time and resources to take part in the work initiated by the ETUC.

When it comes to the relations with European employers' organizations in the area of gender equality there are also considerable differences between sectors. Some EIFs state that they have very few if any discussions with the employers regarding gender equality. Others however cooperate with the employers in this area, e.g. within the sectoral social dialogue (regarding the outcome of this work, see the next section of the paper).

Since previous studies suggest that gender equality issues seem to be given a higher priority in EIFs with a higher proportion of female members, gender distribution of employment might be seen as an important factor behind initiatives in this area. However, the interviews made with EIF representatives indicate that there are other important factors that explain the extent and outcome of the work done within different EIFs. Below two areas where the EIFs play an important part, the sectoral social dialogue and the European Works Councils, will be discussed more in detail.

## **THE SECTORAL SOCIAL DIALOGUE**

The sectoral social dialogue consists of 36 different sectoral dialogues, very different in size and scope. Some include a vast number of employees in Europe, others, such as professional football, are rather small. Some have concluded many agreements, ranging from 34 in railways and 32 in agriculture, while others have concluded only a few, such as one in shipbuilding and professional football respectively and two in audiovisual, hospitals, and steel respectively.

Table 4

Sectoral social dialogues, organisations, number of agreements concluded and gender distribution of employment

Sectors	Employees' organisations	Employers' organisations	Number of agreements	Male dominated 60 % or more	Mixed 41-59 %	Women dominated 60 % or more
Agriculture	EFFAT	GEOPA/COPA	32	x		
Audiovisual	EURO-MEI, FIA, FIM, EFJ	UER/EBU, FIAPF, CEPI, AER, ACT	2		x	
Banking	UNI-Europa	FBE; ESBG; EACB	7		x	
Catering	EFFAT	FERCO	7		x	
Chemical industry	EMCEF	ECEG	10	x		
Civil aviation	ETF; ECA	AEA; CANSO; ERA; ACI-EUROPE; IACA	27	x		
Commerce	UNI-Europa	Eurocommerce	23			x
Construction	EFBWW	FIEC	19	x		
Electricity	EPSU; EMCEF	Eurelectric	18	x		
Extractive industry	EMCEF	APEP; Euracoal; Euromines; IMA	13	x		
Footwear	ETUF:TCL	CEC	11			x
Furniture	EFBWW	UEA; EFIC	3	x		
Gas	EMCEF; EPSU	EUROGAS	3	x		
Horeca	EFFAT	Hotrec	19		x	
Hospitals	EPSU	HOSPEEM	2			x
Industrial cleaning	UNI-Europa	EFCI	18		x	
Inland waterways	ETF	EBU; ESO	8	x		
Insurance	UNI-Europa	CEA; BIPAR; ACME	5		x	
Live performance	EEA	Pearle	10		x	
Local and regional government	EPSU	CEMR	9			x
Maritime transport	ETF	ECSA	16	x		
Personal services	UNI-Europa	EU Coiffure	6		x	
Postal services	UNI-Europa	Posteurop	25		x	
Private security	UNI-Europa	CoESS	18	x		
Professional football	FIFPro	EPFL; ECA	1	x		
Railways	ETF	CER; EIM	34	x		
Road transport	ETF	IRU	17	x		
Sea fisheries	ETF	Europeche/Cogeca	27	x		
Shipbuilding	EMF	CESA	1	x		
Steel	EMF	EUROFER	2	x		
Sugar	EFFAT	CEFS	20		x	
Tanning and leather	ETUF:TCL	Cotance	12			x
Telecommunications	UNI-Europa	ETNO	41		x	
Temporary agency work	UNI-Europa	Eurociett	6		x	
Textile and clothing	ETUF:TCL	Euratex	11			x
Woodworking	EFBWW	CEI-Bois	8	x		

Source: European Commission, Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Social dialogue texts database, European Foundation for Improvement of Living and Working Conditions' 2005 and European Working Conditions Survey and Eurostat's European business — Facts and figures 2007

A rough classification, to be further refined, is based on the European Foundation for Improvement of Living and Working Conditions' 2005 European Working Conditions Survey and Eurostat's European business — Facts and figures 2007. The sectoral social dialogues have been divided into three groups, one for male dominated employment (60 per cent or higher), one for female dominated employment (60 per cent or higher) and one for mixed employment (between 40.1 per cent to 59.9 per cent for the genders respectively). No consideration for the economic importance or differences in employment between the sectors has been taken in this first step. 16 of 34 sectoral social dialogues are in male dominated sectors, 9 in mixed sectors and 6 in sectors dominated by women. In average, 13.5

agreements per dialogue is concluded in male dominated sectors, 16.7 in mixed sectors and 11.3 in women dominated sectors. We have not compensated for the fact that some sectoral dialogues are older than others, making it natural for them to have more agreements, if we assume that agreements are equally distributed over the years. We may do this later on, but there the reason for leaving it out right now is that what we are interested in is basically impact, and an early sector dialogue is in itself an indication of impact. According to Eurofound (2009), in the EU27, 55.5% of workers are men and 45.5% are women. Compared to this, the European sectoral social dialogue is definitely biased towards male dominated sectors, especially in terms of numbers of sector dialogues, but also when it comes to agreements concluded. In addition, evidence from an ETUC research report (ETUC 2003) suggests that some EIFs have promoted the issue of gender equality in relation to the sectoral social dialogues. Nonetheless, the results of the report show that few of the organisations have signed agreements, codes of conduct etc. in this area, and the outcome of these settlements remain unclear. The interviews that have been made with EIF representatives also support the conclusion that there is a considerable variety among different sectoral social dialogues when it comes to the room given to gender equality issues.

The European social dialogue has resulted in over six hundred joint texts at the central as well as the sectoral level. These documents are gathered in European Commission's "Social dialogue texts database" (<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=521&langId=en>) and are divided according to "date", "sector", "theme", "type" and "addressee". As revealed by the different types of texts, the social dialogue is both a form of consultation in relation to EU institutions and an arena for negotiations between the social partners. In addition, the documents concern a number of different themes. There are 17<sup>1</sup> documents that are categorised under the theme of "Gender equality". In total, less than three per cent of the documents in the database are aimed directly towards gender equality issues, which might be compared with themes such as corporate social responsibility and sustainable development. 8 out of the 17 texts on gender equality are the product of the cross-industry social dialogue, and 9 have been produced within the sectoral social dialogue. The oldest text is from 1994 and the latest was adopted in 2010. The texts are of different types, which can be divided into two main forms: "common positions" and "reciprocal commitments". (Cf. Dufresne et al 2006; 113-16) In addition a significant share of the documents (5 out of 17) is mere follow-up reports of previous texts. An analysis undertaken within the framework of the project shows that the discussions on gender are limited in the social dialogue texts and that many of the initiatives suggested in the texts is based on a male norm. When gender is discussed it is often on a general level, providing few suggestions for concrete measures that would facilitate a more gender-sensitive approach to work and working-life issues.

## **THE EUROPEAN WORKS COUNCILS**

In 2006 the ETUI-EWC data base registered 773 EWCs in a total of 2.204 companies that would qualify for such a council (Kerckhofs 2006). The percentage was highest in male dominated sectors, such as metal working and chemicals. However, thereafter followed food, hotels and catering, which are mixed sectors gender wise (as defined above), thereafter construction and woodworking, all male dominated. The sectors with the lowest percentage EWCs of qualifying companies were services and textiles, field where many women are employed. If we move on to the actual figures, metal working, which has 312 EWCs was the largest, and chemical industries with 179 is second largest, followed by services with 148 EWCs. Thereafter followed food, hotels and catering with 94 EWCs, construction and wood working with 75 and finally textiles with 25 and transport (male dominated) with 22 EWCs. This means that on an aggregate level, the EWCs represent mainly male workers, in percentage of companies, and in numbers of EWCs. However, since many sectors such as services are large and mixed, further studies are needed.

The diversity of EWCs in different industrial sectors is also visible in the work done by EIFs in relation to this issue. Information provided by representatives of the federations (see ETUC 2003) showed that almost all EIFs have EWCs within their area. However, the ETUC report indicates that few women serve as representatives on EWCs in general. There are no precise figures, but some federations were able to provide "estimates" of proportion of female involvement in EWC work,

which ranged from around 3-4 (EPSU) to 40 percent (ETUF). Other studies (see for example Waddington 2003) also support the conclusion that EWCs are predominantly male institutions. Moreover, only three (EFFAT, EPSU and EMCEF) out of the eleven EIFs studied in the ETUC report from 2003 stated that they had tried to promote gender equality in relation to these institutions. Examples of initiatives of this sort were the spreading of good practices, encouragement to appoint more women as EWC representatives and raising awareness regarding these issues among the people involved in EWC work.

In addition, there are to be little focus on equality issues within the EWCs compared to matters such as company strategies and investments (Cf. Lotta 2000). This is supported by previous studies of the content of EWC agreements. In Marginson et al (1998) the content of Article 13 agreements was examined. The results show that less than ten percent of the agreements stated that equal opportunity issues should be addressed by the EWCs (see Table 5). The fact that a large proportion of agreements specifically stated that issues dealt with on local and national levels, as well as issues concerning pay and remuneration should be excluded from the agenda (see Table 6) further strengthens the argument that matters connected to gender inequality have been excluded from EWC work. In addition, statements made by EIF representatives (see ETUC 2003) indicating that gender issues should be viewed as national and/or international matters supports the conclusion that gender inequality is not seen as a “European” issue.

Table 5 Issues for information and consultation in EWC agreements

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Art. 13 agreements %</b>	<b>Art. 6 agreements % (in 2000)</b>
Economic and financial situation	91	89
Employment and social issues	87	86
Business, production and sales	80	82
Structure	61	82
Transfer of production, closures etc.	54	76
Investment	70	75
New working methods	63	68
Organisation	61	68
Environment	26	41
Health and safety	33	39
Training	27	31
Equal opportunities	5	20

Note: Includes agreements concluded after the adoption of the EWC directive.

Source: Carley & Marginson (2000).

Table 6 Specifically excluded issues in Article 13 EWC agreements

<b>Excluded issues</b>	<b>% of agreements</b>
Issues dealt with on local or national level	42
Pay, remuneration	19
Industrial disputes	4
Personal matters	7
Political matters	5

Source: Marginson et al (1998)

In a later comparison (Carley & Marginson 2000) between Article 13 agreements and agreements concluded under Article 6, which are of a more recent date, a more positive trend was nonetheless revealed. Around 20 percent of Article 6 agreements mentioned equal opportunities as an area for EWC work (see Table 5) and a lower, but still quite high, proportion of agreements excluded national and local matters, as well pay and remuneration issues, from the agenda. Although the connection between these provisions and gender equality issues is not clear-cut, it is reasonable to assume that

differences between the two types of EWC agreements reflects greater possibilities for raising gender issues in more recently established EWCs.

In more recent interviews representatives of the ETUC and the EIFs state that the EWCs are seen as an important topic within these organisations. Some interviewees also mentioned companies where gender equality matters has been discussed in relation to the employee representation in and activities of the EWCs. There has not, however, been any activity that has dealt with gender equality issues in relation to the EWCs in more general terms, neither within ETUC nor in the EIFs.

The reports mentioned above illustrate the general lack of interest in factors related to gender in connection to the EWCs; for example, not anywhere in the statistics presented in the publications does sex appear as a category of analysis. This impression is underscored by the more recent interviews made with representatives of ETUC and the EIFs. In order to further analyse the outcome of the Europeanization of industrial relations from a gender perspective an interview study of the activities of EWCs is thus planned within the project.

## CONCLUSIONS

In all do these first results indicate that the European industrial citizen in fact is a man, but they also emphasise the need for further deeper and more detailed studies. We could certainly argue that the representativeness of the social partners on a central level only reflects the actual situation in the national organisations. That may well be so, but that does not really affect the argument here, namely that the European Union is constructing an industrial relations regime, which is foremost male; a situation that is reflected in the areas addressed in this paper.

The ETUC is the actor, which seems to devote most time and energy to gender issues. The equality plan of the organisation is rather vague, probably reflecting the difficulties to come to agreements in such issues. This means that member organisations can to a large extent themselves decide how much attention they want to pay to gender issues. While the ETUC cannot force its members to take action, the gender equality plan opens up a possibility to punish those who perform poorly and even to diminish their votes. This may be the reason why few answered the questionnaires of the 2006 policy review. If you do not answer, you cannot be blamed for performing poorly. It may of course also be an effect of little interest in gender issues. The few responses sent to the ETUC showed that most of the respondents did not, in fact, do too well in gender issues and that they did not pay very much attention to the issues. It may nevertheless be so, that they were those who had the most interest in gender policy. It is unlikely that they were the worst. Even if they reflect the ETUC average, it is clear that gender issues are low on the agenda. A study of ETUC resolutions between 2008 and 2010 from a gender perspective indicates that the organisation is a long way from reaching its goal of gender mainstreaming. About one third of the resolutions mention gender issues. Apart from the very few resolutions that are entirely devoted to gender issues, only one of the others mentioning gender contain more than one sentence each. The mentioning of gender is unequally distributed over the years, almost all instances is in 2009. It is possible that one or a group of persons did influence the organisation in that direction during those particular years, an explanation that was at least partially confirmed in a recent interview with one ETUC representative. The interview also indicated that internal differences of opinion between member organisations, as well between different parts of the ETUC organisation, have made it difficult to address gender equality issues in an effective manner.

BUSINESSEUROPE do not devote that much effort to gender issues, nor is the organisation equal. They do, however, in some cases try to promote some equality issues, which are closely related to their major aims, such as female entrepreneurship and women in science. But they do not do that kind of work themselves as an organisation, but rather try to put it on the EU agenda.

More research is also needed regarding the work against gender inequality at the sector level. According to figures in an ETUC report from 2003, *Women in Trade Unions: Making the Difference*, women have been underrepresented in decision-making bodies within the European Industry Federations (EIFs). An even more apparent problem, however, is the quality of statistics concerning

the gender dimension. Only a minority of EIFs could, for example, present reliable figures on the proportion of women among their members. The lack of interest in gender issues reflected by the poor statistics was also revealed in the actual work of the EIFs. Although all EIFs studied in the ETUC report stated that they had included equal opportunity provisions in their constitutions, and despite that a majority of the federations had specific women's structures, the absence of concrete measures regarding gender equality was apparent. The more recent interviews that have been made with EIF representatives underscore that there are substantial differences between sectors when it comes to the amount of work done in the area of gender equality. Possible explanations for this diversity are: the attitudes among the member organizations in each federation towards the question, differences in available resources, and the level of personal commitment to gender equality in the leadership in each federation.

The sectoral social dialogues, for which the EIFs are central actors, are definitely gender biased towards men and male dominated sectors. Most dialogues are present in male dominated sectors, thereafter follows sectors with mixed employees, i.e. between 40 and 60 per cent, and then female dominated sectors. When it comes to the number of agreements concluded, the average number of agreements concluded in mixed sectors is 17, in male dominated sectors 14, while the average number of agreements concluded in female dominated sectors is 11. This means that female dominated sectors are disadvantaged when it comes to influence on the European level via sector dialogues. Not only are there fewer social dialogues, but there are also less agreements concluded. However, when it comes to the documents adopted within the sectoral social dialogue, it is not possible to conclude that it is more likely to be a matter in the texts commonly presented by the social partners. In terms of content it might nevertheless be said that the discussions on gender issues is heavily influenced by a male industrial regime.

The lack of research from a gender perspective, as well as proper statistics regarding female representation, is clear also in the case of the European Works Councils (EWCs). Available figures nevertheless indicate that the EWCs must be seen as a predominately male institution. In addition, gender issues appear to be a minor matter in EWC work. Contrary to the EIFs, which should be able to develop into important arenas for gender equality, the structure of the EWCs works against a clearer focus on gender as an important variable. The focus on certain sectors and large multinationals creates a situation where the EWCs foremost represent male workers. The company focus of this institution also tends to exclude a number of issues that can be connected to gender inequality, e.g. pay and remuneration, in benefit of matters more directly connected to production. The EWCs could thus be seen as an institution that, through its structure, excludes women and issues related to gender. Most of the representatives of European trade union organizations that have been interviewed for the project state EWCs are an important matter for them. However, very few say that gender equality is a topic that is discussed in relation to the EWCs, which emphasises that EWCs seems to be an arena in which gender is not an issue of discussion. More thorough research is nevertheless needed regarding the work on gender equality within the EWCs.

While in theory, the right of men and women in the area of European industrial relations is equal, the results presented in this paper indicate that in practise, they are not. The large efforts invested in the European works councils, which directive covers foremost male dominated companies, and where we find the most EWCs also in reality in those sectors, is an example indicating that gender equality has not been a governing practice when organising industrial relations on a European level. The increased right to consultation and information in smaller companies, could be considered as a means of increasing the gender equality, but compared to the EWCs, that institution, is but a bleak effort. Hence, from a gender perspective on the industrial relations regime, the European Union is performing poorly.

Taken all together, the emphasis of the European Union on the industrial relations institutions may well counter act the objectives of gender equality of the Amsterdam Treaty and actually affect the working lives of the men and women of Europe in a way which does not promote gender equality.

One example is the texts adopted within the European social dialogue, which contain few concrete suggestions on measures facilitating a gender aware industrial relations regime.

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## **Appendix. List of European Industry Federations**

ETF	European Transport Federation
EFFAT	European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism
EMF	European Metalworkers' Federation
EFJ	European Federation of Journalists
EAEA (previously EEA)	European Arts and Entertainment Alliance
EFBWW	European Federation of Building and Woodworkers
EPSU	European Federation of Public Service Unions
EMCEF	European Mining, Chemical and Energy Workers' Federation
UNI-Europa	The European Regional Organisation of Union Network International
ETUF	European Trade Union Federation: Textile, Clothing and Leather
ETUCE	European Trade Union Committee for Education
EUROCOP	European Federation of Police

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<sup>i</sup> The database contains 18 documents. One text, however, is miscategorised.