

**Which way towards Europeanisation of trade union strategies? Regional differences in trade union officers' views**

Vera Glassner and Kurt Vandaele  
Senior researchers  
European Trade Union Institute  
Brussels  
Belgium

Email: [vglassner@etui.org](mailto:vglassner@etui.org); [kvandaele@etui.org](mailto:kvandaele@etui.org)  
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## **Introduction**

Trade unions today are facing the dilemma of, on the one hand, increasingly internationalised product and financial markets, the further globalisation of production chains and the accelerating dominance of multinational companies. All of this requires a transnational policy approach to effectively address labour market challenges in Europe. On the other hand, trade unions, to derive legitimacy, organisational and institutional resources, are still strongly enrooted in national labour markets and industrial relations. Strategic action of both national and European trade unions therefore takes place in the field of tension between a (further) Europeanisation or, alternatively, a (re-)nationalisation of collective bargaining, labour market and employment policies and other policies relevant to trade unions.

The internationalisation of markets and the increasing international mobility of capital contrasts with the comparatively limited international mobility of labour and further deepened the asymmetry between labour and capital and their interest organisations (Scharpf 1996 and 2010). Downward pressures on social standards settled at national level and with a national scope further intensified in the global economic crisis (cf. Crouch 2009; Keune and Schmidt 2009). At European level, the introduction of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) in 1999 and the partial 'Europeanisation' of national welfare and employment regimes represent a twofold challenge for trade unions. First, trade unions have to participate in decision-making processes in labour market and social policy at European level in order to effectively represent their members' interests. Moreover, in view of challenges resulting from the completion of the EU single market and related regulatory initiatives, unions have to mobilise workers across borders. Secondly, trade unions have to 'internalise' transnational spill-over effects of their wage and collective bargaining policies in the deeply integrated internal market of the EU, and even more so, the Eurozone. Against the background of the centralised monetary regime of the EMU that deprives governments of the instrument of currency devaluations in order to restore international cost competitiveness, nationally decentralised industrial relations regimes became an important parameter to adjust to divergences in international competitiveness. In order to address increasing competitive pressures on wages and working conditions national and European trade unions begun to coordinate their bargaining policies transnationally (Glassner and Pochet 2011).

Trade unions play an important role for the development of a 'European' system of industrial relations. European trade unions participate in European social dialogue at the inter-professional and sectoral level, and they influence public policies at the EU-level by participating in institutions such as the European Economic and Social Committee and the macro-economic dialogue. However, national unions and supranational peak-level (con)federations or trade union centres have to legitimate their action at the EU-level vis-à-vis their often heterogeneous membership base. Therefore, they have, in contrast to industrial lobbying organisations, the potential to reduce the 'democratic deficit' of the EU (Erne 2008; Crouch 2009). Referring to Erne's analytical framework, one can assume that trade unions have three basic strategic options to address global challenges for workers. First, by pursuing 'Euro-democratic' strategies unions are able to mobilise members and workers across borders,

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\* We would like to thank our ETUI colleagues who attended a brown bag lunch in February 2012.

strengthen transnational solidarity and produce legitimacy for transnational action. Secondly, 'Euro-technocratic' union strategies in order to participate in formal decision-making and interest representation at the EU-level contribute to the strengthening of the EU system of industrial relations. Thirdly, and in contrast to the former two strategies, which aim at a strengthening of the social dimension of the EU, trade unions direct their strategies and resources exclusively to national institutions, political actors and members which results in the (re-)nationalisation of the respective policy fields.

For supranational unions that organise a largely heterogeneous membership domain in different sectors, differences in programmes, forms of actions and interests, which are inherent in any labour organisation, are multiplied and cut across several dimensions (e.g. national, sectoral, between workers with different employment status). The unification of largely heterogeneous interests of members, often contrasting or even conflicting, is one of the core tasks for supranational unions in order to ensure strategic transnational coordination (Dølvik and Waddington 2004; Whittall et al. 2007).

This study aims at analysing views of policy officers from trade unions affiliated to a European Trade Union Federation (ETUF) on strategies in key policy fields such as the regulation of the EU labour market, collective bargaining and social dialogue and approaches to enhance the capacity for effective action of the ETUF. The analysis is based on findings from a survey carried out between September 2010 and February 2011. The main research questions addressed are the following; do trade unionists' preferences for a technocratic or democratic approach to Europeanisation, or alternatively, a (re-)nationalisation of policies, differ across the EU? Are their views on EU labour market policies, collective bargaining, social dialogue and the cross-border organisation and mobilisation of workers differing according to industrial relations regimes? And do members' perceptions on specific measures aiming at strengthening the capacity and effectiveness of action of the ETUF vary between different industrial relations regimes?

The paper is structured as follows. Sections 1 and 2 focus on the theoretical debate on how differences in views and perceptions of union representatives can be explained. The next section provides information on the methodology used and the survey sample. Section 4 formulates the hypotheses and provides further details on measurement concepts. Section 5 presents the main findings of the survey with regard to transnational strategies that trade unions have at hand, according to Erne's framework (that is, Euro-democratisation, Euro-technocratisation and re-nationalisation), and presents differences in attitudes of respondents from different European regions. The final section concludes.

## **1. Differences in unionists' views: shaped by different industrial relations regimes?**

Trade unions as 'intermediary' interest organisations are representing labours interests vis-à-vis the state and employers organisations (Müller-Jentsch 1985). Trade unions are thus firmly embedded into the national setting of industrial relations and welfare and employment regimes and derive their legitimacy from their national constituencies. Although organised labour faces common challenges resulting from the internationalisation of product and labour markets, unions still strongly rely on national approaches to respond to these changes. Market internationalisation and the Europeanisation of monetary and fiscal policy in the EU did not result in the convergence of industrial relations institutions. Rather, national industrial relations, and collective bargaining institutions in particular, proved to be rather stable over time (e.g. Crouch 1993, Traxler et al. 2001). Accelerating market integration and the rise of multinational companies however exert downwards pressure on wages and working conditions of workers who still tend to be represented by organisations of a purely national

scope. Thus, economic internationalisation and the emergence of the EU social policy framework require trade unions to extend their action to the transnational level and enhance their cross-border activities in order to effectively represent the interests of their members.

Trade union movements and identities in Europe and elsewhere emerged historically in line with national institutional frameworks. Hyman (2001) distinguishes at least three ideal types of trade unionism in western Europe. Accordingly, trade unions are, first, fulfilling labour market functions by negotiating wages and working conditions; secondly, unions are striving for broader social goals that go beyond collective bargaining and aim at ensuring social justice and equality; and thirdly, trade unions are fighting for workers' rights in a class struggle that rests upon worker militancy and mobilisation and tend to pursue conflict-oriented strategies vis-à-vis employers and the state, and relationships with other unions are often competitive. Keeping in mind that ideal types are not fully grasping the heterogeneity of union movements resulting from differences in regional, sectoral, political and occupational characteristics of their memberships, the three basic models of trade union identities can be broadly aligned to different regions in Europe. Market-oriented union identities are found along the wide spectrum of British (workplace) unionism and the German model of collective bargaining autonomy ('Tarifautonomie'), while the ideological basis of southern European union movements is, generally speaking, based on class-conflict, and social-democratic unionism is a core characteristic of Nordic industrial relations.

More recently, the influence of cultural factors on social actors' views is highlighted in comparative industrial relations (Meardi 2011, Klemm et al. 2011). Thus, perceptions are not only shaped by institutional structures but are also framed by cultural norms. In return, according to the approach of social constructivism (Berger and Luckmann 1967), actors' beliefs and sets of routines are forming, changing and reproducing institutions. Indisputably, the development of industrial relations institutions followed distinctive national historical paths. Thus, interests, attitudes and cultural norms of industrial relations actors are strongly shaped by specific *national* characteristics of institutions. For example, the firmly established and far reaching institutional framework for employee representation in Germany shapes the actors' experiences, practices and traditions and (re)produces 'high-trust' relations between German unions and employers in comparison with more adversarial management-employee relationships in other countries. The bulk of recent studies focus on the divide in attitudes of worker representatives from eastern and western Europe in transnational institutions such as European Works Councils (e.g. Bluhm 2001, Waddington 2003, Meardi 2004, Bernaciak 2010, Dehnen 2010, Klemm et al. 2011). In fact, the recent 'enlargement' of the EU brought about a diversification of industrial relations and labour market regimes. In this analysis, countries covered in the survey sample (see section 3) are clustered on the basis of five 'ideal' types of industrial relations regimes (see Table 1).

Table 1 – Industrial relations regimes in EU: an overview

<b>Regime</b> <b>Dimension</b>	North European	Central-West European	South European (Mediterranean)	Liberal-West European (Anglo-Saxon)	Central-East European
Countries	Denmark (DK), Finland (FI), Sweden (SE).	Austria (AT), Belgium (BE), Germany (DE), Luxembourg (LU), Netherlands (NL),	Greece (GR), France (FR), Italy (IT), Spain (ES), Portugal (PT).	Cyprus (CY), Ireland (IR), Malta (MT), United Kingdom (UK)	Bulgaria (BG), Czech Republic (CZ), Estonia (EE), Latvia (LV), Lithuania (LT), Hungary (HU), Poland (PL),

		Slovenia (SI).			Romania (RO), Slovakia (SK).
Trade union density (2000-2009) <sup>a</sup>	73.1	33.9	23.5	33.2*	19.8
Collective bargaining coverage (2000-2009) <sup>a</sup>	88.4	83.3	74.7	42.1*	36.3
Predominant level of collective bargaining	sector	sector	sector (FR : company)	company	Company
Predominance of MEB <sup>b</sup> or SEB <sup>c</sup>	MEB	MEB	MEB	UK, MT: SEB IR, CY: MEB	SEB
Practice to extend collective agreements	No (except FI)	Yes**	Yes**	No	Limited
Statutory minimum wage	No	Yes (DE partly)	Yes (except IT)	Yes	Yes
Role of social partners in policy-making	Institutionalised	Institutionalised	Varying, politicised	Ad hoc, issue-specific	Politicised; social partners weak
Role of state in collective bargaining	Limited	Limited; strong legalism	State active, clientelistic relations	State strong but its interventions rare	State dominant, strong legalism,

\*without Cyprus and Malta; \*\* in Austria and Italy: functional equivalent to extension; <sup>a</sup> unweighted average over countries <sup>b</sup> 'Multi-employer bargaining'; <sup>c</sup> 'Single-employer bargaining'

Sources: authors' own compilation based on Marginson and Traxler (2005), Visser (2011), ETUI (2011) and European Commission (2008 and 2011).

The Nordic countries feature the highest levels of union density, high bargaining coverage resulting from high organisational density among employers, and collective bargaining predominantly takes place at industry level. However, with the exception of Finland, it is not possible to extend collective agreements, that is, to declare them legally binding for other employers in the sector. Social partners are highly autonomous and strongly involved in public policy-making while the influence of the state in the determination of wages and working conditions is limited, and statutory minimum wages are not present. The central-western European countries are characterised by medium-range levels of union density and high coverage rates (though notably lower in Germany) due to the widespread use of extension mechanism. Collective bargaining is carried out primarily at the sectoral level. Social partners enjoy a high degree of autonomy vis-à-vis the state and have an important role in public policy-making. The southern group differs from the two previous ones in terms of low union densities, the more politicised involvement of social partners in social policy and sometimes, a clientelistic relationship to the state, which tends to play an active role in setting (minimum) wages and working standards.

The liberal-western group of EU countries consists of the UK, Ireland, Cyprus and Malta. Union density is considerably lower in the former two countries than in latter two (Cyprus: around 60%, Malta: around 50% in 2008, European Commission 2011). Bargaining coverage is low with the majority of workers not covered by collective agreements, and no legal extension mechanisms existing. Single-employer bargaining predominates in the private sector, with negotiations taking place between unions and the management of a company. This contrasts with multi-employer bargaining, where trade unions and employers' associations negotiate jointly, and which prevails in north, central-western and southern Europe, as well as in Ireland and Cyprus. The Irish bargaining though underwent some

changes recently, when central negotiations broke down in the midst of the economic crisis and bargaining since then takes place most often at company-level. The state, although being less active, has a strong role and involvement of unions and employers' organisations in social policy is rather ad-hoc and issue-specific in the liberal-western group.

Finally, the group of central-eastern EU-countries is characterised by low union densities and even weaker organised employers, making single-employer bargaining, besides negotiations between the individual employer and employee, the predominant form of settling wages and working conditions. As a consequence, bargaining coverage tends to be lowest in this region. Statutory minimum wages, also existing in most of central-western, Anglophone and southern Europe, are important tools to set a floor to wages, whereas social partners are in general playing a rather weak role in minimum wage setting and public policy-making. The state tends to be strongest and autonomy of social partners weakest in this group of countries as compared to other regions in the EU.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Strategic options for transnational union policies: Euro-technocratisation, Euro-democratisation and (re-)nationalisation

The classification of trade union strategies by Erne (2008) is exemplary as it provides a basis for the conceptualisation of transnational union action, rather than union strategies that are limited to the nation state. The author distinguishes between Euro-democratic and Euro-technocratic as well as (re-)nationalisation strategies. Trade unions promote Euro-democratisation if they encourage collective action at EU-level and politicise EU decision-making at a transnational scope (Erne 2008:23). Furthermore, Euro-democratisation is based on bottom-up processes of transnational interest and policy formation. Euro-democratisation thus does not *per se* exclude the use of formal tools and institutions, which have the potential to facilitate interest articulation and policy formation across borders such as European Works Councils. This contrasts to Euro-technocratisation strategies that focus on top-down processes of interest unification and participation in formal EU decision-making processes (ibid:24). Like Erne the focus in this paper is on the sector as the main level of union action, although the paper is limited to one particular ETUF. The concepts of Euro-technocratisation and Euro-democratisation, which are derived from a qualitative approach, are considered a beneficial tool to analyse trade unions' strategies using quantitative methods. Furthermore, by adapting Erne's framework to paper's object of investigation the theoretical concepts of Europeanisation and (re-)nationalisation are extended as can be judged from Table 2.

Table 2 – Trade union strategies between Europeanisation and (re-)nationalisation

Strategy Dimension	Euro-technocratisation	Euro-democratisation	(Re-)nationalisation
	Top-down (European peak-level organisations)	Bottom-up (National affiliates, rank-and-file)	Top-down and bottom-up
<b>Represented interests</b>	Particularistic (sectoral) interests of (potential) members	Common, transnational interests	Particularistic national interests
<b>Degree of formality of processes of policy-making</b>	Formal EU institutions and policy instruments (e.g. European social dialogue, EESC, lobbying for EU	Informal, rather based on mobilisation, involvement and participation of rank-and-file, broader public and other societal	Both formal and informal

<sup>1</sup> In our analysis we consider four industrial relations types, that is, the Nordic, southern, central-western and Anglophone group (see section 3).

	legislation etc.)	actors (including EU-level instruments such as EWC	
<b>Socio-economic and institutional factors driving Europeanisation/Re-nationalisation</b>	Market integration, Europeanisation of monetary and fiscal policies (EMU). Existence of formal institutions for the participation of European social partners in political decision-making.	Increasing competitive pressure on wages and working conditions resulting from market internationalisation and rise of MNCs. Existence of transnational institutions, less formal and typically network-formed, that promote the exchange of views of participations, social learning and trust-building	Market integration and increasing of international competitive forces on national labour markets. Lack of existence of transnational institutions for the participation of European social partners in political decision-making. Lack informal networks for cross-border information exchange and interaction.
<b>Power resources of union strategies</b>	Strengthening institutional power at European level	Strengthening membership power	Strengthening institutional and membership power at national level
<b>Outcomes</b>	‘Institutionalising’ or reproducing the legal-institutional framework of EU industrial relations, labour market and employment policy.	‘Democratising’ EU decision-making processes by producing legitimacy of formal procedures for policy-making at EU-level, requires building-up of transnational solidarity.	‘Nationalising’ unions’ agendas and scope of action.

Source: Authors’ own compilation based on Erne (2008).

The complexity of the multi-level system of European industrial relations, with various overlaps and inter-linkages between levels of action, instruments and governance mechanisms, reduces the clear-cut delineation of Euro-technocratic and Euro-democratic approaches. For instance, the transnational coordination of collective bargaining within inter-regional networks of unions in the metal sector is promoted by the European sectoral peak-level union, i.e. the European Metalworkers’ Federation (EMF), by making use of formal instruments for coordination (i.e. a guideline for the coordination of wage bargaining). Typically, such coordination processes are the result of both bottom-up and top-down processes (Glassner 2009). Thus, Erne’s categorisation of the EMF’s approach to transnational bargaining coordination as ‘Euro-technocratic’ is not entirely evident. Within these transnational coordination networks national member organisations exert a considerable degree of autonomy with regard to agenda-setting. Thus, explaining polity outcomes by purely interest-driven strategic action within transnational institutions (e.g. EWCs) underestimates the question how interests, possibly nationally diverging, are articulated (Klemm et al. 2011:296). Conversely, the emergence of formal EU industrial relations institutions might be driven by interlinked and common interest positions of national unions on which demands for transnational solidarity and action are based (ibid).

In contrast to Erne (2008:191) we assume that the specific characteristics of European industrial relations regimes influence unionists’ interests and strategies. Euro-technocratisation strategies are driven more by particularistic, often sector-specific, interests,

and (re-)nationalisation strategies are driven by purely national interests. In contrast, Euro-democratisation is based on common, transnational interests that go beyond improving the effectiveness of sector policies. Compared to Euro-technocratic strategies, Euro-democratisation strategies are more demanding as they presuppose the overcoming of the national bias that is inherent in trade unions by producing transnational solidarity. Thus, the identification of common goals, the unification of – often nationally diverging – interests and the commitment to joint, transnational strategies to address challenges that cannot be effectively tackled solely at the national level, are the preconditions for Euro-democratisation.

Euro-technocratic strategies are pursued via institutionalised, formal channels of interest representation and participation such as European social dialogue, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and lobbying EU institutions while Euro-democratisation relies on more informal institutional structures and the involvement of the rank-and-file as well as other societal actors such as NGOs. A (re-)nationalisation approach might involve both formal and informal institutional structures of interest articulation and action (see Erne's distinction between 'democratic' and 'technocratic' (re-)nationalisation, 2008:24ff.).

Table 2 further indicates that different types of trade union strategies are driven by specific socio-economic factors; the introduction of the Euro came along with the centralisation of monetary policy, a reinforcement of fiscal policy coordination and a further integration of markets. Formal institutions, such as the 'macroeconomic dialogue', were created to involve European social partners in the European Commission's and the European Central Bank's monetary decisions. Market integration and economic policy coordination however were not only driving Euro-technocratic approaches of unions. Mounting pressure on wages and working conditions resulting from increasing international competition in national markets also fostered 'democratic' responses by unions. Typically, Euro-democratisation requires the existence of rather informal structures for direct and autonomous, often ad-hoc, cross-border action. Transnational networks for union cooperation and information exchange allow social actors to build up mutual trust and understanding and promote processes of social learning, the key preconditions for building-up transnational solidarity.

By mobilising and organising, workers across borders trade unions enhance the legitimacy of their goals and action and strengthen their organisational power (Table 2). However, unions might re-affirm their institutional and associational power by pursuing strategies of an exclusively national scope; a re-nationalisation of union action aiming at averting increasing competitive forces and strengthening their social and political power might either occur via interaction between different *national* social actors, or by unions targeting their strategies exclusively to national institutions and members. Erne's concept of different forms of strategic action by unions is defined by the effects such strategies have on 'EU-polity developments' (ibid:25). In line with such an 'output-defined' conceptualisation of strategic action we distinguish between three types of effects. Unions, by pursuing a Euro-technocratic approach, contribute to the reproduction, or to a further institutionalisation, of the legal-institutional framework of the EU labour market and industrial relations regime. When following a democratic approach unions contribute to the democratisation of the European integration project, either by more strongly involving the rank-and-file in formal decision-making, or by explicitly promoting transnational solidarity among workers. This contrasts to (re-)nationalisation strategies which reduce and (re-)focus trade unions' agendas and action to the national level.

### 3. Methodology and survey sample



Findings presented in this paper are originally based on a questionnaire survey that was set up in cooperation with a selected ETUF. During a five-month period the questionnaire was dispatched at several international meetings organised by this ETUF across Europe. At those meetings, the aim and purposes of the questionnaire have been communicated by an ETUF union officer and the participants of the meeting had to fill in the questionnaire on the spot. In other words, the survey was carried out, in principle, among trade unionists that have attended and participated in the ETUF meetings.<sup>2</sup> Although no information on their specific status within the union was requested, it can be assumed that most of the respondents are full-time paid union officers commonly working in the field of European or international policy.

The survey was conducted between September 2010 and February 2011; that is, at the time the European sovereign debt crisis fully hit the political agenda. Questionnaires were received from 36 meetings, resulting in a total of 419 returned questionnaires. Admittedly, it cannot be excluded that the nature, i.e. the agenda and attendance composition of the meetings scheduled in the six-months-period, could have affected the degree of representativeness of the survey. So, while some of the meetings had a more trans-sectoral nature, i.e. involving different economic sectors, other meetings concerned only a specific economic sector. Likewise, some of the meetings solely focused on a specific theme, whereas other meetings had a broader agenda. There is no thorough indication about the response rate, however.<sup>3</sup> Yet, the overt support of the ETUF and the working method for collecting the survey at the international meetings alludes to a relatively low non-response rate. At least, this assumption can be made for those union officers who have attended the meetings.

It is only possible to partially test the representativeness of the survey sample for one characteristic of the population, i.e. the regional distribution, which is largely linguistic or based on a pragmatic concept of members' geographical distribution used by the ETUF. However, it should be noted that the comparison between the survey sample and the population is limited. Whereas the regional distribution within the survey sample is based on the number of received questionnaires, the number of members forms the basis for the distribution of the population. Although a minimum and maximum representation is defined, there is however a very rough link between them since the maximum number of participants at the ETUF meetings is limited to the member size of the corresponding affiliated union. The percentages in table 3 demonstrate that the UK and Ireland as well as the Nordic countries are underrepresented and that the Mediterranean countries are clearly overrepresented. Furthermore, probably due to the fact that many ETUF meetings take place in Brussels, the Benelux and France are a bit overrepresented. To a certain extent the CEE-EU countries are overrepresented as well, while Germanic Europe is slightly underrepresented.

Table 3 – Regional distribution in the survey sample and ETUF population

Region	Survey sample		ETUF Population (%)
	Frequency	Percentage	
Benelux and France	92	23.7%	20.1%
CEEC in EU	14	3.6%	2.0%
Eastern countries outside EU	1	0.3%	0.3%
Germanic Europe	63	16.2%	19.7%
Israel and Palestine	1	0.3%	0.1%
Mediterranean countries*	103	26.5%	16.1%

<sup>2</sup> The original English survey has been translated into German French, Dutch, Spanish and Italian.

<sup>3</sup> Although information was asked for, *systematic* data were neither available on the number of trade unionists that were invited to the meeting, nor on the number of actual attendance at those meetings.

Nordic countries	78	20.1%	25.2%
UK and Ireland	36	9.3%	16.5%
<i>Total</i>	388	100.0%	100.0%

Source: survey results and internal ETUF membership statistics in 2010.

Note: \*Those countries include also Cyprus and Malta.

Given the analytical focus in this paper on the European integration, respondents (n=22) from non-EU member countries are not considered. Except for Slovenia, all other countries belonging to the Central and East European (CEE) countries are also excluded from the analysis given the low number of returned questionnaires from those countries (n=13).<sup>4</sup> The analysis of the survey results will thus only take into account questionnaires received back from respondents from 17 EU member countries (hereafter 'EU17'). This relates to 91.0% (n=353) of the survey sample (from which the country of the respondents is known).<sup>5</sup> In other words, from an analytical point of view, the survey results *de facto* represent the opinions and views of respondents in western European countries (including the Mediterranean islands Cyprus and Malta). 76.5% (n=270) of the respondents from EU17 countries are a member of the Eurozone, whereas the countries of 83 respondents have not introduced yet the Euro currency. For a further analysis of the survey outcomes a regional distribution is made based on the similarities of the industrial relations regime of the countries concerned. In order to account for regional differences in the industrial relations regime, a distinction is made between respondents from Anglophone countries (Cyprus n=3, Malta n=3, Ireland n=7 and UK n=29; 11.5%), central-west Europe (Austria n=27, Belgium n=46, Germany n=30, Luxembourg n=1, Netherlands n=8 and Slovenia=1; 30.9%), Northern Europe (i.e. Denmark n=18, Finland n=10 and Sweden n=36; 17.5%) and southern Europe (France n=37, Greece n=6, Italy n=46, Portugal n=8 and Spain n=37; 36.6%).

Table 4 – Survey sample – respondents' and union characteristics by IR regime / region

	IR regime / region				Total
	Anglophone Europe	Central-west Europe	Nordic Europe	Southern Europe	
% Women	26.8% (n=11)	33.0% (n=36)	46.8% (n=29)	40.5% (n=53)	39.1% (n=129)
Average seniority (years)	5.2 (n=40)	6.5 (n=105)	6.4 (n=57)	6.6(n=129)	6.3 (n=331)
% Single-sector union	85.4% (n=35)	67.0% (n=73)	61.3% (n=38)	63.2% (n=84)	66.7% (n=230)

Source: survey results.

Table 4 shows that 37.6% (n=129) of the respondents are women and 214 respondents are male. The average seniority of the respondents in participating and representing their national trade union in international meetings of the ETUF is a bit more than six years (n=344), with a minimum of less than one year (n=13) and a maximum of 35 years (n=1). Although with an average of 5.7 years (s=0.5; n=122) women tend to have less seniority than men with on average 6.7 years of experience (s=0.5; n=202), there is no significant difference in seniority (t=-1.36; p>0.10). Furthermore, a majority of the respondents, 66.7% (n=230), belong to single-sector trade union, i.e. a union representing workers of one economic sector, and 115

<sup>4</sup> As can be judged from table 3, the low percentage of CEE-countries corresponds with the general low representation of trade unions of these countries within the ETUF.

<sup>5</sup> The country is unknown for 31 questionnaires.

respondent are representing a multi-sector union. There are no significant differences in terms of sex and seniority between respondents in the various regions. The share of single-sector unions is particularly high in Anglophone Europe.

#### 4. Hypotheses and constructing subscales

The survey sample can be considered rather homogeneous in terms of the relatively high level of respondents' familiarity with European issues that are relevant for trade unions. In other words, the attitude of the respondents towards the European integration might be labelled as 'synoptic involvement', that is they have 'in common their involvement in European issues, and the fact that they have an overarching view of them – a political one, in the sense that their arguments echo the ongoing debates on Europe in politics and the media' (Gaxie 2011:52). Although their 'synoptic involvement' might not exclude a critical stance towards European integration, one might expect that the respondents are more positively inclined towards European integration issues than the unions' rank-and-file. As has been shown by popular rejections of initiatives on European integration, particularly trade union members have been among the most sceptical or even hostile towards a further integration (Hyman 2010). Contradictorily, until very recently, mainstream trade union leaders have generally been supportive of or even enthusiastic about the European integration (Hyman 2005:19-24). In a very similar way like the trade union leaders, one might think that the respondents are as well more prone to a pro-EU bias, given their socialisation via the ETUF meetings and given their 'European' role and position in their respective unions.

##### Hypotheses

*H1: Respondents will generally reject a re-nationalisation strategy.*

*H1a: Respondents from Anglophone and Southern Europe will generally reject a re-nationalisation strategy.*

*H1b: Respondents from centre-west Europe will generally reject a re-nationalisation strategy.*

*H1c: Respondents from Nordic Europe will generally favour a re-nationalisation strategy.*

*H2: Respondents will generally favour a more technocratic Europeanisation.*

For all that, in the field of collective bargaining, one of the core areas of EU regulation that has remained in the realm of the national states, one might suppose that a majority of the respondents rejects a re-nationalisation strategy but favour an Europeanisation strategy. The form of Europeanisation might tend to a more technocratic instead of a democratic interpretation because of the respondents' position and role in the union bureaucracy. At the same time, although acknowledging intra-regional differences, i.e. (within-)country differences, one might expect regional differences, i.e. differences at the aggregated level of the industrial relations regimes, being of major importance for the respondents for evaluating the European integration. In other words, the respondents' preferences and views towards the European project are expected to differ between industrial relations regimes, because of the trade unions' embeddedness in the nation-state, the national trade union identities, cultures and traditions and their tendency for regional clustering. Interlinked to this regional bias, the views and preferences of the respondents on re-nationalisation or a further Europeanisation strategy might be influenced by utilitarian considerations.

Therefore, we suspect that respondents from northern EU countries are less supportive of Europeanisation since their unions could rely on extensive power resources both with regard to supportive and inclusive industrial relations institutions and strong and

encompassing memberships (Due et al. 2000, Bieler and Lindberg 2009, Larsson et al. 2011). In other words, since Nordic unions are able to represent their members' interest most effectively by directing their strategies towards national institutions and constituencies they prefer (re-)nationalisation over Europeanisation more frequently than unionists from other regions. For the same reason, respondents from Anglophone and southern Europe are expected to be more supportive of Europeanisation than their counterparts of northern Europe given the more restricted organisational and institutional resources.<sup>6</sup> Finally, one can assume that respondents from central-western Europe also favour an Europeanisation strategy above a re-nationalisation strategy, although for slightly different reasons. Namely, respondents from central-western Europe have been fulfilling an active and strong role in promoting the 'social dimension' of the EU. Positive views of EU integration are most widespread in the Benelux countries and in Germany. Industrial relations institutions at EU-level, as EWCs or the ETUFs wage coordination rules, are strongly shaped by the German and, to a lesser extent, by the Benelux industrial relations models (e.g. Gollbach and Schulten 2000, Bicknell 2007, Turner 1993). In particular with regard to employee participation at workplace level, the German model of 'co-determination' has been regarded as very dominant (e.g. Klemm et al. 2011, Hürtgen 2011).

Table 5 – Subscale on Euro-technocratisation

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
European sectoral minimum wages should be introduced (n=352)	6.8%	11.1%	8.2%	<u>42.3%</u>	31.5%
European sectoral minimum regulations on working conditions should be introduced (n=352)	1.7%	2.3%	3.1%	<u>56.3%</u>	36.7%
The European Commission should set common employment goals (n=349)	0.9%	2.0%	10.9%	<u>57.0%</u>	29.2%
Unions should put more efforts in promoting the European sectoral social dialogue (n=350)	0.3%	1.1%	6.6%	<u>52.6%</u>	39.4%
The ETUF should promote negotiating transnational company agreements (n=340)	1.1%	4.1%	16.8%	<u>53.8%</u>	24.1%
The ETUF should promote negotiating transnational (multi-)sectoral collective agreements (n=342)	1.5%	8.5%	23.4%	<u>49.4%</u>	17.3%
<i>The ETUF should promote the strengthening of the European sectoral social dialogue (n=346)</i>	0.3%	0.6%	7.8%	<u>50.6%</u>	40.8%

Source: survey results.

Note: Cronbach's alpha: 0.68.

Table 6 – Subscale on Euro-democratisation

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
A European legal framework on guaranteeing the right to take cross-border industrial action should be introduced (n=350)	0.6%	2.6%	9.7%	43.1%	<u>44.0%</u>
Strengthening cross-border solidarity and	0.0%	3.4%	8.6%	43.3%	<u>44.7%</u>

<sup>6</sup> Unionists from central-eastern Europe would also fall into this group. They are however not considered in the analysis since the number of survey responses from this region was insufficient for any further analysis.

(industrial) action is important for my union members (n=351)					
Unions should put more efforts in promoting the cross-border coordinating of collective bargaining (n=352)	0.6%	4.6%	12.5%	<u>50.9%</u>	31.5%
Receiving information on pay and working conditions of subsidiaries of the company in other countries (n=348)	0.0%	3.7%	6.3%	42.2%	<u>47.7%</u>
Receiving information on trade union actions of subsidiaries of the company in other countries is important for my union members (n=345)	0.9%	2.3%	7.0%	<u>47.0%</u>	42.9%
The ETUF's capacity for action could be strengthened by increasing membership through organising campaigns (n=338)	1.2%	4.4%	16.3%	<u>52.1%</u>	26.0%
The ETUF should support cross-border organising campaigns in multinational companies (n=344)	1.2%	1.2%	17.2%	<u>57.3%</u>	23.3%

Source: survey results.

Note: Cronbach's alpha: 0.75.

For testing the hypotheses, it has not been possible to rely on well-defined scales for measuring (re-)nationalisation or Europeanisation. Consequently, given the fact that the survey has been commissioned by the ETUF, it is important to note that the questionnaire has primarily been developed in an inductive way in accordance with the vision of the ETUF. Hence, for the current paper, only a selection of questions and items have been analysed, which are considered relevant for testing the hypotheses. This implies that only one question of the original questionnaire can be attributed to the re-nationalisation strategy. For the two types of the Europeanisation strategy, two sub-scales have been constructed by selecting certain items and attributing them to the technocratic or democratic Europeanisation strategy – see Tables 5 and 6. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for both Europeanisation strategies demonstrate that both sub-scales are internally consistent.

## 5. Main findings: regional variation of unionists' views

This section presents findings from the survey on views of union officers from different regions on the Euro-technocratic, Euro-democratic and (re-)nationalisation policy approaches. The first sub-section addresses the issue of collective bargaining as the core competence of national trade unions. Before going into detail with regard to activities representing either a Euro-democratic or a Euro-technocratic approach, general agreement (and disagreement) to each of the two types of Europeanisation (i.e. averaged over the two sets of items measuring Euro-technocratisation and Euro-democratisation) is summarised in Table 8. The final two subsections present findings on respondents' views on different items measuring strategies towards Euro-technocratisation and Euro-democratisation.

### *Rejecting a (re-)nationalisation strategy?*

For national trade unions, in order to counter competitive pressures on pay and social standards that were reinforced in the EMU, three responses are feasible. First, unions support and participate in EU-wide initiatives for the cross-border coordination of collective bargaining to avoid competitive wage setting and downwards pressure on labour standards

initiated by the ETUC and ETUFs. Secondly, unions from neighbouring countries enter into cross-border cooperation to achieve the same goal without the formal involvement of the ETUF. Thirdly, trade unions make use of national power resources to affirm their autonomy, either by securing support from national institutions or participating in the negotiation of social pacts aiming at the improvement of national competitiveness. In addition, at the company level local unions pursue (re-)nationalisation strategies when negotiating ‘Pacts for Employment and Competitiveness’ that ensure the viability of domestic production sites of multinational companies (MNCs). Findings on unionists’ views on a (re-)nationalisation of collective bargaining policy are shown in Table 7.

Table 7 – Collective bargaining on pay and working conditions should entirely remain a responsibility of national states

	<b>(Strongly) Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>(Strongly) Agree</b>
Anglophone Europe (n=42)	33.3%	16.7%	50.0%
Central-western Europe (n=112)	26.8%	17.9%	55.4%
Nordic Europe (n=63)	22.2%	14.3%	63.5%
Southern Europe (n=131)	46.6%	13.0%	40.5%
<i>Total (n=348)</i>	<i>34.2%</i>	<i>15.2%</i>	<i>50.6%</i>

Source: survey results.

Note: Fisher’s exact test:  $p < 0.05$ ;  $n = 348$ .

Responses to the statement that collective bargaining on pay and working conditions should remain an exclusive competence of national social partners largely differ between union representatives from different European regions (see Table 7). Unionists from southern Europe disagree to the largest extent to the notion that collective bargaining should remain purely national. In the central-western European and Nordic countries however, where collective bargaining actors enjoy a high degree of autonomy when settling wages and working conditions and bargaining systems are encompassing, the majority of respondents agree to this statement. Views that indicate a reaffirmation of national bargaining autonomy are more frequent than attitudes that point to a more ‘Europeanised’ approach towards collective bargaining in northern, central-western and Anglophone Europe while in the southern EU a larger part of the respondents disagree with the statement. As hypothesised, Nordic unionists are most sceptical towards the Europeanisation of collective bargaining, fearing to lose their bargaining autonomy and weaken their bargaining power at ‘at home’ by enhancing their engagement at the EU-level. The hypothesis that unionists from central-western Europe, where support for EU integration is traditionally strong, are more averse towards (re-)nationalisation strategies is not confirmed with regard to the issue of collective bargaining. As mentioned above, this might be explained by the fact that unions from these countries have nothing to gain from a European approach and are rather set to maintain their own strong bargaining systems. The pronounced agreement to reaffirm national bargaining autonomy by respondents from the Anglophone EU states is more in line with Hyman’s (2001) argument that collective bargaining is a core function of ‘market-oriented’ union movements and is thus protected from state interference, more or less corresponds to the Anglophone and central-western regions. Furthermore, a relatively large share of the respondents, in particular from the latter two regions, neither agrees nor disagrees with the statement that bargaining is an exclusive responsibility of national social partners. Based on the sum of the average response to the respective seven questions on technocratic-Europeanisation and democratic-Europeanisation<sup>7</sup>, Table 8 indicates that respondents

<sup>7</sup> For each question the possible answer runs from 1 to 5.

favouring a (re-)nationalisation of collective bargaining are significantly more supportive at a democratic Europeanisation than a technocratic Europeanisation. This finding might indicate that the underlying sentiment of those respondents is a perceived lack of legitimacy of the current European integration in the field of industrial relations. Respondents who reject a (re-)nationalisation strategy show no significant difference between a technocratic or democratic Europeanisation, although they tend to favour as well a demo-Europeanisation strategy.

Table 8 – Average scores of the sub-scales on the type of Europeanisation

	<b>Technocratic Europeanisation</b>	<b>Democratic Europeanisation</b>
Favouring re-nationalisation****	3.9 (n=162)	4.1 (n=164)
Rejecting re-nationalisation	4.2 (n=114)	4.3 (n=112)
Anglophone Europe**	4.1 (n=39)	4.3 (n=40)
Centre-West Europe**	4.1 (n=105)	4.2 (n=101)
Nordic Europe**	3.6 (n=58)	3.8 (n=56)
Southern Europe	4.2 (n=125)	4.3 (n=127)
<i>Total****</i>	<i>4.1 (n=327)</i>	<i>4.2 (n=324)</i>

Source: survey results.

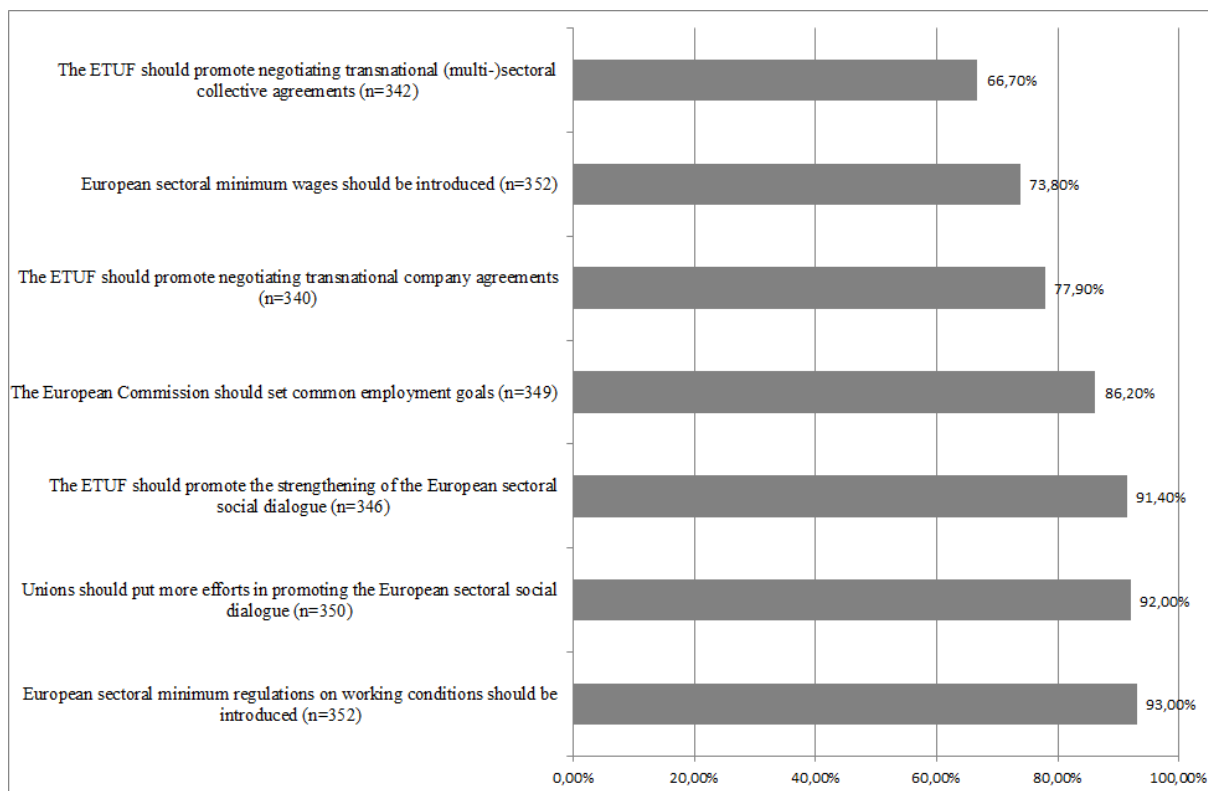
Note: \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*\*p<0.001.

Furthermore, Table 8 represents the sum of the average response by region. In general, responses from unionists' from all regions indicate strong agreement with both types of Europeanisation, with high average scores that point in the same direction. Regional differences in preferences for the two forms of Europeanisation are thus gradual and point to the perseverance of common views rather than differences in opinion. Nevertheless, differences in views on either a technocratic or a democratic approach towards Europeanisation are significant among respondents from the Anglophone EU countries, centre-west and northern Europe. Agreement is significantly higher with items that represent Euro-democratic strategies in these regions. In southern Europe the difference in the average score on either form of Europeanisation is not significant, although it tends to be higher for a democratic approach. The following two sections present more detailed survey results on a democratic and a technocratic approach to Europeanising labour market policies, collective bargaining, union renewal and the internal-decision making structure of the ETUF.

### *Views on a technocratic approach to the Europeanisation of trade union strategies*

Positive agreement scores to items measuring a technocratic approach towards the Europeanisation of union policies are presented in Figure 1. Respondents agree to the largest extent (with agreement scores above 90%) to the introduction of a European sectoral minimum regulation on working conditions and the promotion of European sectoral social dialogue by national unions as well as the ETUF. Common employment goals, set by the European Commission, are widely agreed to (i.e. agreement score above 85%). The promotion of transnational company agreements by the ETUF and the introduction of European minimum wages at sectoral level is agreed to by around 75% of the respondents while around two thirds agree to the statement that the ETUF should promote the negotiation of transnational (multi-)sectoral collective agreements.

Figure 1 – Positive agreement scores on technocratic Europeanisation



Source: survey results.

Table 9 summarises agreement (and disagreement) to a number of items measuring a Euro-technocratic policy approach. Differences in attitudes are highly significant (either at the 0.1% or 1% level) on most items between respondents from different EU regions, with the exception of the item on the promotion of European sectoral social dialogue by unions, where (dis)agreement does not differ significant between regions. Regional differences in views are statistically less significant (i.e. at the 10% level) with regard to the item on the promotion of European sectoral dialogue and transnational company bargaining by the ETUF. Agreement to a common approach to EU labour market regulation, with the European Commission setting common employment goals, is highest among unionists from central-western and southern Europe, reaches a medium level among Anglo-Saxon respondents and is lowest among Nordic unionists.

Table 9 – Items on technocratic Europeanisation strategies

<i>1. The European Commission should set common employment goals***</i>	<b>(Strongly) disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree, nor disagree</b>	<b>(Strongly) agree</b>
Anglophone Europe (n=41)	0.0%	12.2%	87.8%
Centre-west Europe (n=112)	0.9%	8.0%	91.1%
Nordic Europe (n=63)	9.5%	22.2%	68.3%
Southern Europe (n=133)	2.3%	7.5%	90.2%
<i>Total (n=349)</i>	<i>2.9%</i>	<i>10.9%</i>	<i>86.3%</i>
<i>2. European sectoral minimum regulations on working conditions should be introduced****</i>	<b>(Strongly) disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree, nor disagree</b>	<b>(Strongly) agree</b>
Anglophone Europe (n=42)	4.7%	2.4%	92.9%
Centre-west Europe (n=112)	1.8%	0.9%	97.3%
Nordic Europe (n=64)	12.5%	10.9%	76.6%
Southern Europe (n=134)	1.5%	1.5%	97.0%
<i>Total (n=352)</i>	<i>4.0%</i>	<i>3.1%</i>	<i>92.9%</i>
<i>3. European sectoral minimum wages should be introduced****</i>	<b>(Strongly) disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree, nor disagree</b>	<b>(Strongly) agree</b>



Anglophone Europe (n=42)	19.1%	7.1%	73.8%
Centre-west Europe (n=112)	8.9%	4.5%	86.6%
Nordic Europe (n=64)	48.4%	17.2%	34.4%
Southern Europe (n=134)	10.5%	7.5%	82.1%
<i>Total (n=352)</i>	<i>17.9%</i>	<i>8.2%</i>	<i>73.9%</i>
<b>4. Unions should put more efforts in promoting the European sectoral social dialogue</b>	<b>(Strongly disagree)</b>	<b>Neither agree, nor disagree</b>	<b>(Strongly agree)</b>
Anglophone Europe (n=42)	2.4%	7.1%	90.5%
Centre-west Europe (n=113)	1.8%	4.4%	93.8%
Nordic Europe (n=64)	1.6%	12.5%	85.9%
Southern Europe (n=131)	0.8%	5.3%	93.9%
<i>Total (n=350)</i>	<i>1.4%</i>	<i>6.6%</i>	<i>92.0%</i>
<b>5. The ETUF should promote the strengthening of the European sectoral social dialogue*</b>	<b>(Strongly disagree)</b>	<b>Neither agree, nor disagree</b>	<b>(Strongly agree)</b>
Anglophone Europe (n=40)	0.0%	10.0%	90.0%
Centre-west Europe (n=113)	2.7%	9.7%	87.6%
Nordic Europe (n=61)	0.0%	11.5%	88.5%
Southern Europe (n=132)	0.0%	3.8%	96.2%
<i>Total (n=346)</i>	<i>0.9%</i>	<i>7.8%</i>	<i>91.3%</i>
<b>6. The ETUF should promote the negotiation of transnational (multi-)sectoral collective agreements****</b>	<b>(Strongly disagree)</b>	<b>Neither agree, nor disagree</b>	<b>(Strongly agree)</b>
Anglophone Europe (n=40)	5.0%	27.5%	67.5%
Centre-west Europe (n=111)	7.2%	17.1%	75.7%
Nordic Europe (n=60)	23.3%	41.7%	35.0%
Southern Europe (n=131)	7.6%	19.1%	73.3%
<i>Total (n=342)</i>	<i>9.9%</i>	<i>23.4%</i>	<i>66.7%</i>
<b>7. The ETUF should promote the negotiation of transnational company agreements*</b>	<b>(Strongly disagree)</b>	<b>Neither agree, nor disagree</b>	<b>(Strongly agree)</b>
Anglophone Europe (n=40)	7.5%	17.5%	75.0%
Centre-west Europe (n=110)	3.6%	12.7%	83.6%
Nordic Europe (n=60)	11.7%	25.0%	63.3%
Southern Europe (n=130)	3.1%	16.2%	80.8%
<i>Total (n=340)</i>	<i>5.3%</i>	<i>16.7%</i>	<i>77.9%</i>

Source: survey results.

Note: Fisher's exact test for all items except item 3. Item 3: Chi<sup>2</sup>: 68.09; df: 6. \*p<0.10; \*\*\*p<0.01;

\*\*\*\*p<0.001.

The same pattern in responses is observed with regard to the introduction of European sectoral minimum regulation on working conditions and European sectoral minimum wages. Differences on the latter item might reflect the (perceived) increased pressures on wages and working conditions in the European Monetary Union, where labour costs are regarded as an important determinant of international competitiveness. Union respondents from centre-west and southern Europe, representing the largest regional group in the Eurozone, most strongly agree to the introduction of EU-wide sectoral minimum wages. Trade unionists from the Nordic region largely disagree to a European approach to regulating wages. This view might be explained by far-reaching scepticism of any form of legal regulation of wage-setting in the Nordic countries where pay is exclusively settled via collective bargaining by unions and employers' associations.

Regional differences are less pronounced with regard to the promotion of European sectoral social dialogue by *national* unions; the strongest proponents of a strengthening of European sectoral social dialogue are found among southern European unions and agreement also reaches remarkably high levels among respondents from the Anglophone, centre-west and Nordic countries. This somewhat contrasts to views on the role of the *ETUF* in European social dialogue; Anglophone respondents are, together with the southerners, most supportive

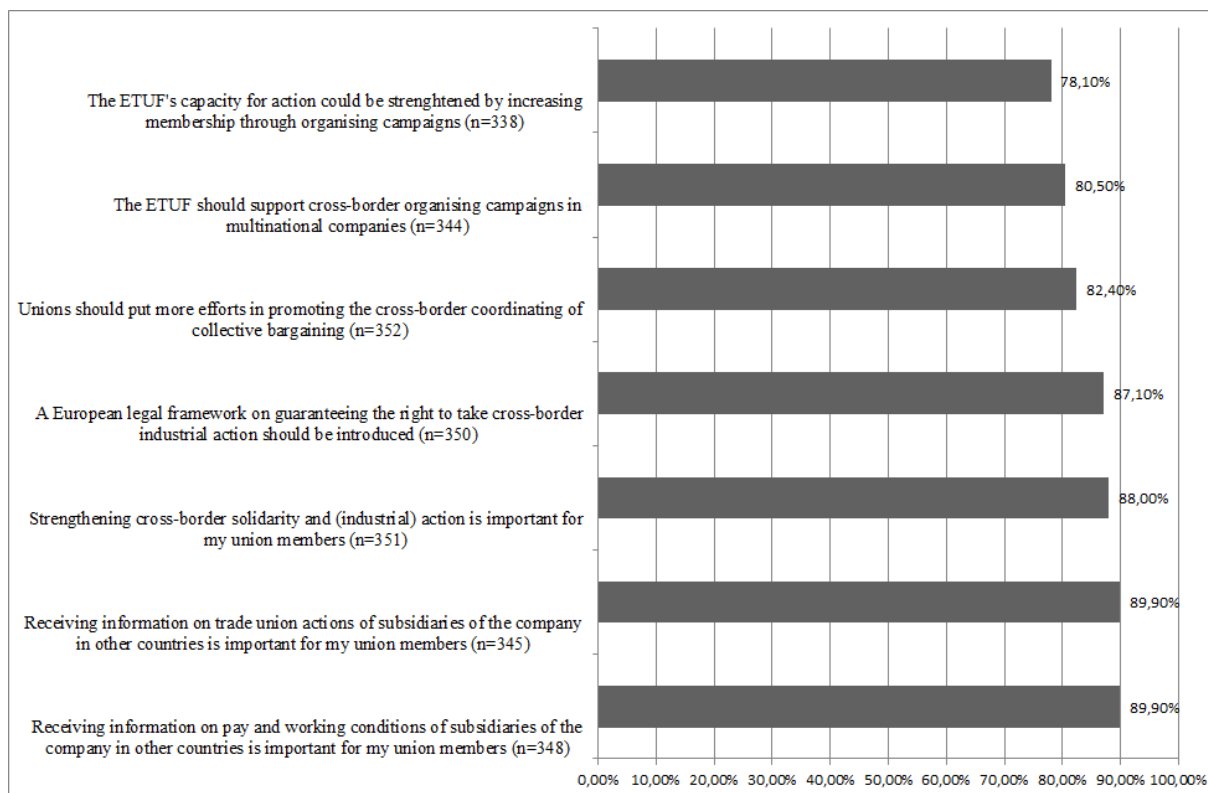
(scores above 90%) of a more active approach of the ETUF but agreement is also high among unionists from centre-west and northern Europe.

In contrast to the importance ascribed to European social dialogue at the sectoral level, the negotiation of transnational sectoral and multi-sectoral agreements is viewed as being of much less importance among union officers. Unionists from centre-west, southern and, to a lesser extent, Anglophone Europe are more positively inclined towards the conclusion of transnational (multi)sectoral collective agreements than respondents from the Nordic countries who, to the largest extent, neither agree nor disagree to the negotiation of transnational agreements. Likewise, agreement to the negotiation of transnational company agreements as a means to guarantee equal minimum labour standards in different plants and locations of MNCs is higher among unions from centre-west, southern and Anglophone Europe than among those from the Nordic countries.

### *Views on a democratic approach towards the Europeanisation of trade union strategies*

Activities, goals and preconditions for a democratic approach to the Europeanisation of union strategies are summarised in Figure 2. Agreement is largest to the cross-border exchange of information on pay, working conditions and union actions of a multinational company's subsidiaries (with agreement scores reaching almost 90%). Likewise, the strengthening of cross-border solidarity and action, including industrial action, is viewed as important for union members by almost 90% of the respondents. Almost equally high is agreement to the introduction of an EU legal framework that guarantees the right to take cross-border action. Agreement is thus strongest to the statements that are passive in intent. The agreement score is lower, though still high, at around 80%, on the reinforcement of the cross-border coordination of collective bargaining, the support of cross-border organising campaigns in MNCs by the ETUF and the strengthening of the ETUF's capacity for action by increasing membership through organising campaigns.

Figure 2 – Positive agreement scores on democratic Europeanisation



Source: survey results.

Regional differences on the above-mentioned issues are highly significant (at the 0.1%, and in one case, at the 5% level) on all of the items measuring Euro-democratic union strategies. Agreement on the reinforcement of the cross-border coordination of collective bargaining is highest among respondents from southern European countries, and also high among those from central-western Europe, and maybe somewhat surprisingly, Anglophone Europe. The high agreement on a cross-border approach to collective bargaining among unionists from Anglophone countries, where the institutional preconditions to implement such a coordination approach are less favourable, that is the predominance of decentralised collective bargaining and an individualised approach to settle wages and working conditions, is remarkable. Less surprising though is the finding that the transnational coordination of national collective bargaining policies is of least relevance for respondents from the Nordic countries who tend to favour a (re-)nationalisation of collective bargaining policies (see Table 7) over a common, 'European' approach.

Table 10 – Items on democratic Europeanisation strategies

<i>1. Unions should put more efforts in promoting the cross-border coordinating of collective bargaining****</i>	<b>(Strongly) disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree, nor disagree</b>	<b>(Strongly) agree</b>
Anglophone Europe (n=40)	0.0	12.5	87.5%
Centre-west Europe (n=113)	5.3	7.1	87.6%
Nordic Europe (n=61)	11.5	27.9	60.7%
Southern Europe (n=132)	1.5	8.3	90.2%
<i>Total (n=346)</i>	<i>4.3</i>	<i>11.9</i>	<i>83.8%</i>
<i>2. Receiving information on pay and working conditions of subsidiaries of the company in other countries is important for my union members****</i>	<b>(Strongly) disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree, nor disagree</b>	<b>(Strongly) agree</b>
Anglophone Europe (n=42)	9.5%	0.0%	90.5%
Centre-west Europe (n=112)	2.7%	6.3%	91.1%
Nordic Europe (n=63)	9.5%	17.5%	73.0%
Southern Europe (n=131)	0.0%	3.1%	97.0%

<i>Total (n=348)</i>	3.7%	6.3%	89.9%
<i>3. A European legal framework on guaranteeing the right to take cross-border industrial action should be introduced****</i>	<b>(Strongly disagree)</b>	<b>Neither agree, nor disagree</b>	<b>(Strongly agree)</b>
Anglophone Europe (n=41)	2.4%	9.7%	87.8%
Centre-west Europe (n=113)	0.0%	6.2%	93.8%
Nordic Europe (n=63)	14.3%	23.8%	61.9%
Southern Europe (n=133)	0.8%	6.0%	93.2%
<i>Total (n=350)</i>	3.1%	9.7%	87.1%
<i>4. Strengthening cross-border solidarity and (industrial) action is important for my union members****</i>	<b>(Strongly disagree)</b>	<b>Neither agree, nor disagree</b>	<b>(Strongly agree)</b>
Anglophone Europe (n=39)	2.6%	20.5%	76.9%
Centre-west Europe (n=113)	0.9%	6.2%	92.9%
Nordic Europe (n=61)	11.5%	18.0%	70.5%
Southern Europe (n=133)	0.8%	5.3%	94.0%
<i>Total (n=346)</i>	2.9%	9.5%	87.6%
<i>5. Receiving information on trade union actions of subsidiaries of the company in other countries is important for my union members****</i>	<b>(Strongly disagree)</b>	<b>Neither agree, nor disagree</b>	<b>(Strongly agree)</b>
Anglophone Europe (n=42)	7.1%	7.1%	85.7%
Centre-west Europe (n=109)	2.8%	3.7%	93.6%
Nordic Europe (n=62)	6.5%	19.4%	74.2%
Southern Europe (n=132)	0.8%	3.8%	95.5%
<i>Total (n=345)</i>	3.2%	7.0%	89.9%
<i>6. The ETUF should support cross-border organising campaigns in multinational companies**</i>	<b>(Strongly disagree)</b>	<b>Neither agree, nor disagree</b>	<b>(Strongly agree)</b>
Anglophone Europe (n=41)	0.0%	9.8%	90.2%
Centre-west Europe (n=110)	1.8%	14.6%	83.6%
Nordic Europe (n=61)	8.2%	18.0%	73.8%
Southern Europe (n=132)	0.8%	21.2%	78.0%
<i>Total (n=344)</i>	2.3%	17.2%	80.5%
<i>7. The ETUF's capacity for action could be strengthened by increasing membership through organising campaigns****</i>	<b>(Strongly disagree)</b>	<b>Neither agree, nor disagree</b>	<b>(Strongly agree)</b>
Anglophone Europe (n=42)	9.5%	0.0%	90.5%
Centre-west Europe (n=112)	2.7%	6.3%	91.1%
Nordic Europe (n=63)	9.5%	17.5%	73.0%
Southern Europe (n=131)	0.0%	3.1%	97.0%
<i>Total (n=348)</i>	3.7%	6.3%	89.9%

Source: survey results.

Note: Fisher's exact test for all items. \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*\*p<0.001.

Agreement with the item on the importance of cross-border information exchange on pay and working conditions in the subsidiaries of a transnational company in generally high; respondents from southern Europe agree to the largest extent, and agreement is also remarkably high among union officers from centre-west and Anglophone Europe. Respondents from Nordic countries are not least likely to agree to the introduction of European rules on cross-border industrial action as a large share of respondents from this region neither agrees nor disagrees with this item. This view contrasts to views among unionists from centre-west, southern and, to a lesser extent, Anglophone Europe who express a strong agreement to the need to establish common strike rules. In line with findings on the previous item, agreement to the importance of strengthening of cross-border solidarity and (industrial) action is highest among unionists from southern and centre-west Europe and markedly lower in the Nordic and Anglophone regions where, moreover, a large share of respondents neither agrees nor disagrees to this statement. The cross-border exchange of information on trade union action in subsidiaries of a MNC is viewed positively by union members from southern, centre-west and, to a lesser extent, Anglophone Europe while those from northern Europe are expressing less agreement, and more indifference, to this item.

When asked for the ETUF's approach on transnational organising, respondents from Anglophone Europe are most convinced about this strategy, whereas one fifth of the respondents from southern Europe are undecided about it. In line with the findings on the previous items, Nordic unionists are disagreeing more with a transnational organising approach than the respondents from the other regions.

## Conclusions

Empirical findings from the survey suggest that union officers largely support both Euro-democratisation and Euro-technocratisation strategies. European social dialogue is considered a highly important and effective instrument for the regulation of working conditions in the EU. The role of the Commission in the regulation of the labour market is perceived as highly important. Remarkably, the strong preference for a European legislative approach does not include the introduction of sectoral minimum wages at EU-level. This is underscored by the perception of half of the respondents that wage setting is an exclusive competency of national social partners (as an indicator of a re-nationalisation strategy). Euro-democratic approaches are viewed as highly relevant in areas such as the cross-border information exchange at the level of MNCs, cross-border mobilisation and industrial action. In contrast, the strengthening of the membership base by transnational approaches on organising as a central element of a process of Euro-democratisation is considered as less important. A Euro-democratic approach is however strongly supported with regard to cross-border (industrial) action and mobilisation.

When looking at regional differences in views, respondents from the Nordic countries are consistently more sceptical about the EU-project than respondents from centre-west southern and Anglophone Europe. Furthermore, on most items there is no significant difference between respondents from centre-west and southern Europe. The significant differences relate mostly to the different evaluation of strategic approaches between respondents from centre-west and northern Europe (e.g. see Bicknell and Knudsen 2005, Waddington 2003) and or between those from southern and northern Europe (e.g. see Weiler 2004), or both. Northern reluctance, scepticism and, sometimes, indifference towards a European approach was the most unambiguous and striking finding. Disagreement was most pronounced with regard to the introduction of a European sectoral minimum wage, a more active role of the ETUF in negotiating European (multi)sectoral agreements, cross-border coordination of collective bargaining and the introduction of a EU-wide legal framework for transnational industrial action. The finding of northern EU scepticism or exceptionalism, in particular in the fields of collective bargaining and wage policies, is explained by the strong autonomy of northern unions in the determination of wages and working conditions, and their far-reaching involvement in social and labour market policies, as compared to unions' role and capacities in other EU countries and regions. Thus, unions from the Nordic countries are gaining less from strengthening their institutional and organisational power via European channels of interest representation, policy-making and organising but by rather focusing on the national level or the geographically more limited cooperation between unions from the Nordic region. Furthermore, as hypothesised, respondents from southern Europe are often most enthusiastic towards Europeanisation, both with regard to the technocratic (e.g. strengthening European sectoral social dialogue, promoting the conclusion of European sector-level and transnational company agreements) as well as the democratic approach (e.g. putting more efforts into the cross-border coordination of collective bargaining, strengthening cross-border action and solidarity, improve the exchange of information on trade union action between a company's subsidiaries and enhance the ETUF's capacity for action through organising campaigns). Although unions from both southern and Anglophone Europe might

reaffirm their power and resources through Europeanisation strategies in order to compensate for their weaker position within national industrial relations, union officers from the latter region tend to be less supportive of a European approach as compared to respondents from southern and central-western Europe (their strong support of cross-border organisation campaigns promoted by the ETUF is one exception). Confirming the hypothesis of a generally positive stance towards Europeanisation in central-western Europe, respondents from this region, together with the southerners, tend to be most supportive of Europeanisation strategies.

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