
Communications Handbook

Trade union communications

European Metalworkers Federation

*Communications =
clearly explaining
complex concepts
to the right people
at the right time and
in the right way
in order to make
yourself understood*

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1. Foreword

Peter Scherrer, EMF General Secretary

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Why is communications important to a trade union?

What are the benefits to the EMF and its affiliated organisations?

2. EMF Communications Policy

2.1 EMF Work Programme on Press and Communications 2007-2011

This is an extract from the EMF Work Programme 2007-2011 describing EMF work on Press and Communications. Numbers refer to sections in the Work Programme.

244) The goal for the period 2003-2007 was to modernise the organisation of the EMF press, website and communications and consolidate its infrastructure.

PR Unit

245) The new EMF PR Unit was created in the beginning of 2006 to coordinate all activities concerning the website, press releases, press events, publications, visitors, affiliated organisations' press group and exhibitions.

More systematic cooperation with the trade union press

246) Twice a year the EMF will invite publishers and editors from its member organisations' press departments to discuss the main issues covered by the EMF and planned work.

Information and Communication

247) The Newsletter was restarted during spring of 2006 with a view to improving the information flow from the Secretariat to the affiliates, but changes and modernisation are planned for the next Congress period. Affiliated organisations will be able to contribute to the newsletter. This may be organised per country or region. A message board for affiliated organisations' press officers, which was created in November 2006, will also improve the flow of information.

Website

248) The EMF website was introduced on 10 April 2006 and parts of the website are now also available in German and French. The affiliated organisations' pages on the website were further developed in October 2006 and this will continue in the future. A picture database with pictures from EMF and affiliate's events has also been created.

249) The website is being continuously improved and changed to provide the best possible service to its visitors as well as to serve new needs, such as on line registration to conferences and new password protected areas for certain work groups.

Activities

250)

Continued meetings with the member organisations' press departments twice a year.

The idea is to alternate the locations of the meetings between the affiliated organisations and in that way also increase the exchange of experiences.

Online solutions

Further online solutions will be discussed and developed.

Brochure

The EMF brochure, available in the three languages English, German and French, will be renewed and reprinted.

Newsletter

The newsletter will be modernised into email format with only links to news and events published on the EMF website.

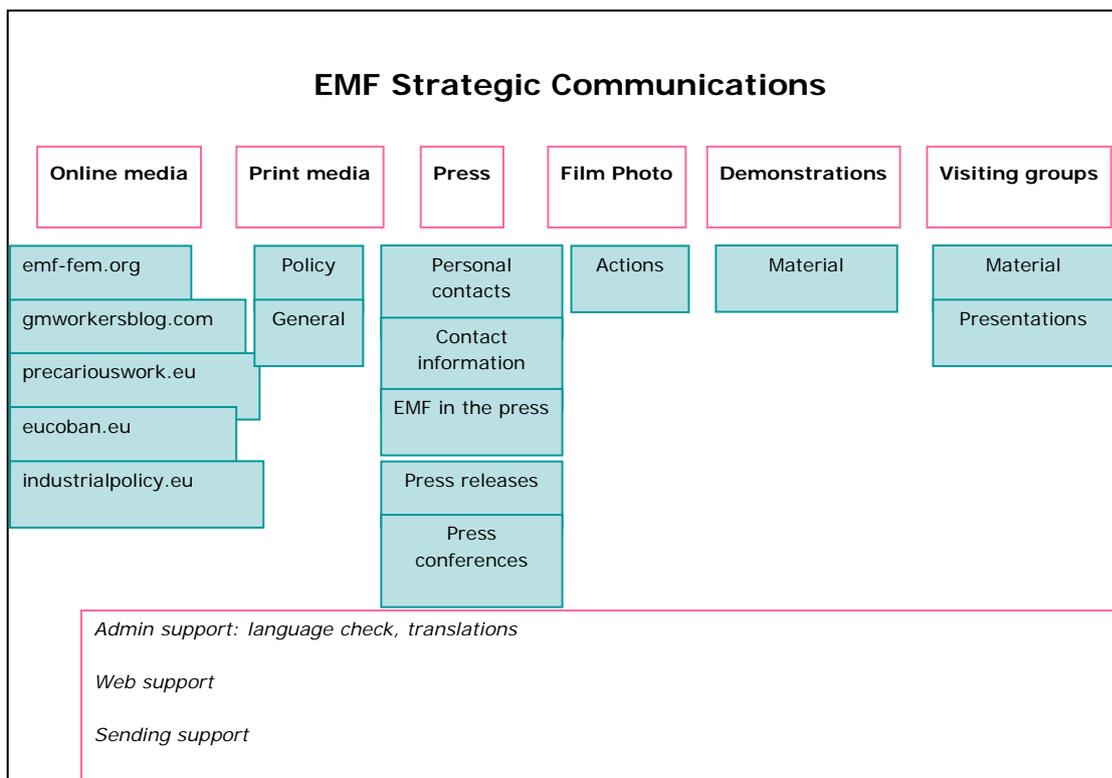
Data base of contacts online (so-called CRM database)

This system allows for an exchange of contact lists between the affiliated organisations and the Secretariat as well as utilising the contact resources already available at the Secretariat in a better way.

2.2 EMF Communications Working Group

The EMF Communications Working Group got its new name in June 2009. It was changed from Press Working Group, since the work includes so much more than just press work; that is to say online media, print media, press, film, demonstrations and visiting groups. By keeping the name Press Group it leads the members to think only press work is focused on and more colleagues would be included in the group if the name is changed.

The Communications Working Group meets twice a year with affiliated organisations taking turns hosting the meetings. All meetings include a study visit to the hosting organisation's communications department.



The online media includes five websites, out of which two are joint with other industry federations.

The print media includes a new EMF brochure and several publications on policy level.

The press work includes active relations with journalists, maintaining of press contact lists, exchange of press contacts with affiliated organisations and with the IMF, gathering and analysis of articles that mention the EMF, writing and distributing press releases as well as organising press conferences.

A number of films about EMF policy work and actions have been produced.

The EMF has both organised and participated in a number of demonstrations across Europe.

Frequent visiting groups from affiliated organisations are received at the EMF Secretariat. Furthermore the group has produced a European Best Practice Catalogue on organising methods.

2.3 Communicating with affiliated organisations

The EMF uses e-mail as its primary communications channels with affiliated organisations. In addition to e-mail more conventional forms of communications channels such as telephone calls and face-to-face meetings are also used. The EMF general website is used in addition to e-mail to relay large amounts of documents for meetings or to promote conferences and announcements.

When relying on e-mail as a primary channel of communications it is essential to the organisation to have reliable contact lists and IT support system that facilitates sending and receiving e-mails without too many technical hiccups. In 2010 the EMF implemented a so called Civi-CRM Database for its contact management. Civi-CRM is a free, open source software constituent relationship management solution. Civi-CRM is web-based, internationalized, and designed specifically to meet the needs of advocacy, non-profit and non-governmental groups. Integration with both Drupal and Joomla! content management systems provides the tools to connect, communicate and activate supporters and constituents.

3. Writing a communications plan

3.1 What is a communications plan?

A communications plan is a document that describes what you want to accomplish, how to do it, to whom you are directing your efforts, what tools you can use and the time table. Adding a budget overview is also useful.

Developing a written communication plan will take time and effort. Set aside four or five days the first time you do it. Once in place, the written plan will smooth your job all year long, earn you respect from your employer and other staff, help set work priorities, protect you from last-minute demands, and bring a semblance of order to your chaotic job. Take the following steps to develop an effective communication plan.

1. Evaluate your current communications

To conduct your own evaluation, find out:

- what every staff person is doing in the way of communication
- what each communication activity is designed to achieve
- how effective each activity is

To get the answers you need:

- brainstorm with communication staff
- talk to other departments
- interview other colleagues
- survey the membership
- host focus groups
- query non-members

2. Define objectives

After the evaluation, define your overall communication objectives - the results you want to achieve. These might include:

- visibility for the organisation and its members
- broad acknowledgement of policies
- influencing other organisations such as government institutions, companies, media and other audiences
- presence in printed and online press
- excellent service to members
- member loyalty
- centralization of the communication effort
- increased employee teamwork

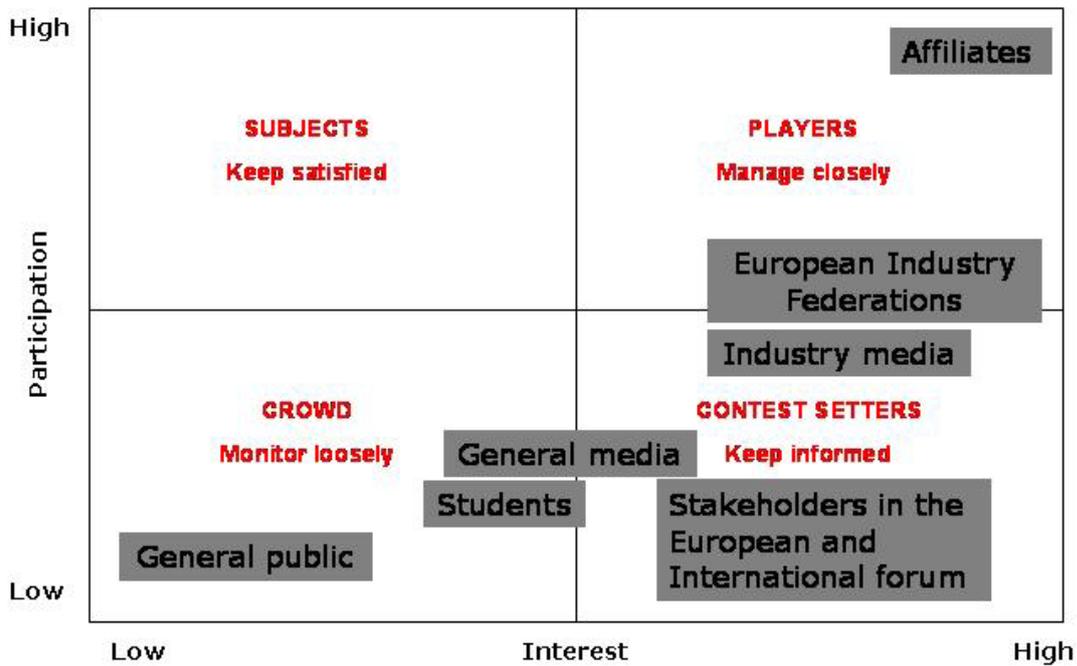
3. Define audiences

List all the audiences that your association might contact, attempt to influence, or serve.

Included on your list may be:

- members
- non-members
- related associations
- adversarial associations (such as employer organisations)
- educators
- federal, regional, and local governments
- related industries
- the media

Stakeholder Map



4. Define goals

With stated objectives, and considering available human and financial resources, define goals. That is to say work tasks for each objective. If your objective is to organise more members to the union, one goal is to improve the training of those colleagues who are responsible for organising. Perhaps another goal is to hire more colleagues to that department or to reorganise the department so it functions better.

5. Identify tools

Decide what tools will be used to accomplish stated goals. These tools can be anything from a simple flyer to a glossy magazine or hiring an outside consultant. Don't overlook less obvious tools such as posters, report covers, improved contact management systems in the office such as a joint database, and websites.

Mechanism/Stakeholder Grid

	Website	Press releases	Newsletter	Studies/Reports	Press events	Specific information	Traineeship	Exchange of information	Website representation
Affiliated organisations	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
European Industry Federations	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	x
Stakeholders in the European & International forum	X	X	X	x	X	X		x	
General media	X	X			X				
Industry media	X	X		X	X	X			
Students	X			x			x		
General public	X								

6. Spokespersons

Decide who in your organisation should be the official spokesperson a) about policy in general and b) at events and c) to the press. These functions may differ because the target audiences are different and even though the message is kept the same the formulation of the message changes to fit the target audience.

7. Establish a timetable

Once objectives, goals, audiences, and tools have been identified, quantify the results in a calendar grid that outlines roughly what projects will be accomplished and when. Separate objectives into logical time periods (monthly, weekly, etc.).

8. Money, money, money

If the content of the communications plan is part of the work programme of your organisation resources are normally already allocated. If the communications plan includes an activity that is ad-hoc or in other ways not previously foreseen perhaps project funding can be obtained, or funding is contributed by those organisations that prioritise the issue.

Chose headlines like these in your budget:

Editorial budget: written material for websites, magazines, booklets, brochures etc.

Design budget: additional web design, artwork for posters, booklets, video titles, press release headers, power point headers

Photography budget: collection of photography already available at the organisation archive, hiring of an external photographer, purchasing photographs from a picture bank

Video budget: collection of films from member organisations, production of new film, produce DVD, upload on various websites

To these items come proof reading, editing, translation, printing and distribution.

9. Evaluate the result

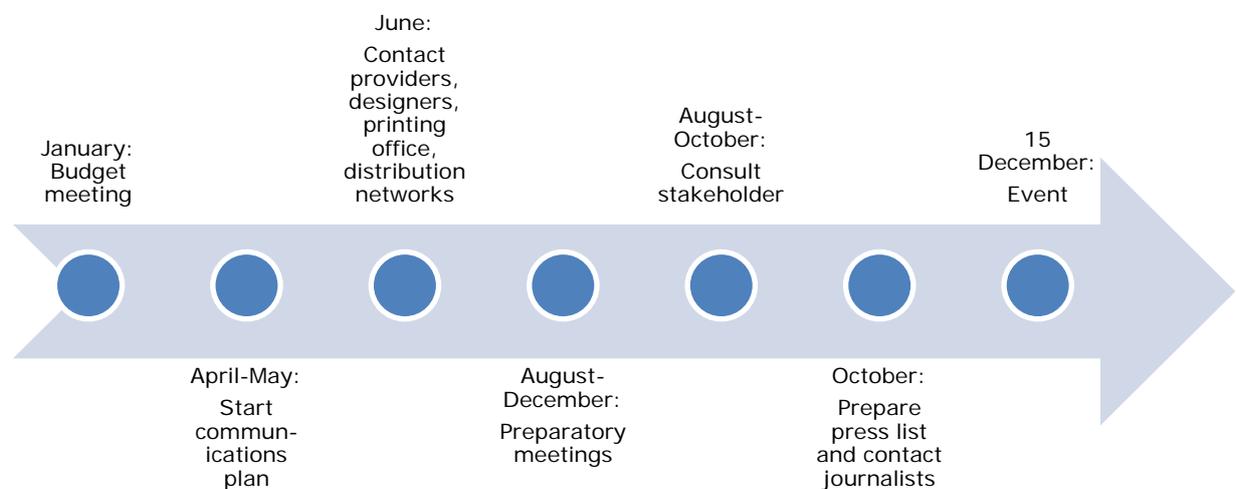
Build into your plan a method for measuring results, such as a list of outputs (printed material and media coverage) and a list of expected impact (increased engagement from target groups, wide support from target groups, actual changes in regulations). The evaluation may be in the form of a progress report, annual report or short briefing.

3.2 Issue specified communications plan

Let's say you are launching a new policy paper that has taken a year to develop and timing is important because there is a specific event where you will present the policy paper.

In this situation you start with the time frame. You have a deadline (when the event is talking place – it could be a vote in the Parliament, a conference at an international organisation that you want to influence). Along the time line you pin point other important activities such as preparatory meetings or prior approvals by statutory bodies. Leave room for text editing since changes to the text might occur while you are consulting other partners.

Next you make a list of the products you want to present at the event and you want to make sure that all products are in place for that day. These products could be printed material. If so, note down weather editing and translations are needed and how long that would take. If you are using other media to promote the policy paper, such as a promotional film, campaign postcards, posters, roll ups/exhibition stands, gift items etc. Check time frame with providers to make sure you will have everything delivered on time.



While planning these items you need to take into consideration who your target group is and plan communications tools to match the target. Are the people in your group experts? Will they understand your policy without visual aids? Have you included enough pictures or diagrams in the policy presentation to make it clear? Is it written in a language people understand?

Are you also interested in reaching the broader public with your policy? Is the topic such that people in general would be interested? Take a look at your ordinary press list and see who would be interest in promoting the policy paper. Maybe you can adjust the

message to the broader public. This may include simplifying the wording and explaining concepts and of course remove abbreviations of all kind.

Items included in a communications plan (the list is not exhaustive):

- periodic print publications
- online communications
- meeting and conference materials
- media relations materials
- marketing tools
- incoming communications, including reception procedures and voice mail content
- committee and executive communiques
- corporate identity materials, including letterhead, logo, and envelopes
- surveys
- work programmes
- speeches
- invoices

Why bother?

Is it really worthwhile to write a communications plan? Who except the communications officer will care about its contents and better yet, will follow the plan? Present the communications plan to the policy officer in charge and to the colleagues in the office since you may need their support along the way in terms of proof reading and translation. Have the budget approved as well.

Once you have the communications plan at hand it will:

- give your day-to-day work a focus
- help you set priorities
- provide you with a sense of order and control
- help get the staff to support your program
- protect you against last-minute, seat-of-the-pants demands from staff and members
- prevent you from feeling overwhelmed, offering instead peace of mind

When to develop the plan

Early bird catches the worm, as they say. The best time to develop your plan is in conjunction with your annual budgeting or organizational planning process.

Where to get information

Information needed to complete the communications plan is gathered from

- The work programme of the organisation
- Meetings with member organisations
- Input from colleagues
- Leadership input
- A communications evaluation

4. Internal communications

4.1 What is internal communications?

Internal communications is a generic expression for all communication (formal and informal) that the EMF undertakes with its members. The main purpose of formal internal communications is to inform members of the direction and performance of the organisation to which they belong.

The profession of internal communications builds on fundamental principles of other disciplines such as human resources (HR), marketing, project management and media planning. As a result it often gets adopted in organisations under different labels: member communication (circular letters), secretariat communications, committee communication etc. Responsibility for internal communication can also reside within different functions: General Secretary, human resources, policy adviser, communications department etc.

In common with other communication professions, there are different areas of specialism within internal communications: channel management, speech-writing, change communications, HR communications, project communications, event management, social media, intranets, etc.

Technological advances have left a mark on internal communication as it has on communications in general. Simultaneously, a global trend towards less security and more flexibility in the workforce and a fluctuating economical environment have pushed underlying strategic considerations to the fore.

4.2 The Intranet

An intranet is a private computer network that uses Internet Protocol technologies to securely share any part of an organization's information or operational systems within that organization. The term is used in contrast to *internet*, a network between organizations, and instead refers to a network within an organization. Sometimes the term refers only to the organization's internal website, but may be a more extensive part of the organization's information technology infrastructure. It may host multiple private websites and constitute an important component and focal point of internal communication and collaboration.

Case study: IG Metall intranet

In a world in which communication is all-pervasive and everyone with internet access is entitled to their own audience, the line between internal and external becomes blurred and it is clearly impossible to hold on to two distinct communications strategies for inside and outside. The logical conclusion is that internal communication as a discipline gains in strategic importance and, therefore, internal communicators will play an essential role in the formulation and definition of the overall communication strategy.

4.3 The Social Intranet

Ever since the first intranets started to appear in the early nineties, this useful tool has undergone a constant process of adaptation. The Web 2.0 revolution has opened many possibilities that are increasingly a must-have for a younger, more internet savvy generation, accustomed to work in collaboration on documents, conducting wide-ranging research without major effort, sharing discoveries and commenting on content produced by others. The rise of collaborative tools such as the ones presented by Google Wave (Google Wave is an online tool for real-time communication and collaboration. A wave can be both a conversation and a document where people can discuss and work together using richly formatted text, photos, videos, maps, and more.) and the cross-pollination of the intranet and external resources (including, for example, the convergence of internal

and external social media profiles) are the next steps of an evolution which seems to have no limit.

As the EMF reported in its European Best Practice Catalogue on Organising, instead of using social media to crack down or spy on workers, employers should be embracing it as a way of creating better workplace communities, engagement and communication. Similarly the trade unions can use social media to communicate with its members on all levels. When it comes to using social media technology and, used effectively, it has the potential to be a key tool in promoting workplace engagement instead of what some union IT departments do, even blocking employees from accessing the most popular external social media tools.

Unions can also use the social intranet instead of simply mass e-mailing information or posting to an intranet in hopes employees will see it. Social media tools help employees actively participate in creating and sharing information. This shift to employee-generated content has resulted in employees becoming more internet savvy and more engaged online. There is however a need to set clear guidelines for acceptable use while, at the same time, adopting social media for a productive, internal purpose.

It is therefore recommended to explore how the intranet fits into the overall communication strategy of the trade union, outline which social media tools are used and how they are used, what is the impact so far and also the question of getting senior manager support and getting everyone, including older generations, to participate.

Case study: Using social media tools to communicate with members

4.4 Crowdsourcing

The term crowdsourcing was coined by Jeff Howe in the June 2006 issue of Wired Magazine and refers to reward systems for employee feedback. Instead of outsourcing apparently insolvable tasks and problems, first present the problem to the colleagues in the office in an effort to secure an in-house solution. Thus, you save valuable resources and get tailor-made solutions, while colleagues feel more involved, motivated and valued, and also earn the opportunity to develop skills that may not have been part of their initial job remit but can contribute to their career advancement.

Crowdsourcing describes the way in which the Internet has broken down traditional employer/employee relationships to create vibrant new enterprises that are 'staffed' by informal, often large gatherings of enthusiasts. A few weeks before the article hit the news-stands, a Google search for the word 'Crowdsourcing' returned zero results. One month after the article appeared, the same search returned nearly 500,000 hits. What makes this phenomenon so remarkable is that it is starting to transform the way many companies operate and to change their relationship with their customers and employees. Moreover this revolution is rapidly changing our culture, introducing a consumer democracy that has never existed before. There is no reason this development also can take place in a trade union.

4.5 Knowledge management

If a grocery store kept losing items from its shelves, buying produce it did not need and storing its goods in untraceable locations, such gross mismanagement would be evident to all. But a large part of what makes an organisation work these days is constituted by knowledge, skills and experience, and the management of these three pillars is essential to businesses success. Internal communication could help enable the best access and distribution of knowledge and lift the main barriers to a sensible management of the body of knowledge available in-house. It can also contribute by finding ways to include the active participation of employees and their mutual assistance in the dissemination of best practices, researching problems or providing answers to questions raised by clients, suppliers and stakeholders.

4.6 Post merger integration

Change communication is a communication classic, but is too often associated only with dramatic, one-off changes, requiring careful pre-planning and then forgotten about until the next dramatic period of readjustment. But with both companies and trade unions merging or selling and buying parts of their organisations almost annually change is becoming a constant. With change established as a permanent presence, it is possible to prepare for it differently and pay attention to other aspects of the process, such as the aftermath: how are the employees coping? Do they identify with the new structure? Where are there still problems? Are both working cultures fully integrated? Post-merger integration (PMI) is an increasingly important communication discipline, and the current economic situation suggests that it can only become more important in the near future.

Example: Belgian union...

4.7 Mistakes made in internal communications

Language

Electronic tools

Too much technical information

It's not uncommon for policy advisers to get caught up in technical details and language when they're drafting or presenting policies. However, it is important for communicators to avoid using too much technical detail and language when presenting new information. Streamlining detailed concepts and explaining them in terms that everyone can understand are the two most important aspects of clear communication. This means using less technical language, and always explaining what a concept means.

Not enough lead time

Communicators are often brought in to help right before an announcement is made. But communicators should be involved with new plans and announcements right from the start. This is to prevent from putting communication objectives and messages at risk because it does not allow the communicator enough time to learn about the plan. Amend this by always making the communicator available at the beginning of a process.

Messages are not personalized

Communicators should personalize information by tailoring it to specific departments or employees. Do this by determining how each set of employees will best comprehend information and explain it using the best vehicle for reaching that audience. Keep in mind that adult learners learn differently—some people need to hear information, some need to read it and others need to experience it in order to comprehend it. For example, the financial sector of your organization might prefer to see statistics on a chart, while the marketing or advertising sector may prefer to get their information in a visual and creative way.

Why is not always explained

Sometimes communicators forget to explain the reason we are doing something when we announce a change or new piece of information. Leaving the audience in the dark only leads to questions, confusion and disengagement. When communicating, be open and honest with employees upfront and tell them why something new is taking place.

We must try and understand how colleagues relate to a particular issue before the issue is communicated. For example, research your audience by developing a survey on how they prefer to get information about internal policies, benefits, compensation plans, etc.

Not enough opportunities for feedback

Communicators forget to implement opportunities for feedback in their communications plan. To redeem that you can incorporate surveys, blogs, question and answer sessions,

meetings, and other outlets and opportunities for two-way communications into your communications plan.

The impact is not considered

During the development of a new communications plan, communicators should ask themselves questions about how target groups are going to respond. This is an essential part of any communications process because this consideration can change the way things are communicated. Communicators should personalize their messages to different target groups and address issues in ways that best relate to their audience.

5. External communications

5.1 The Media

All trade unions will sooner or later have to deal with the media. It is best not to wait until the last minute before deciding on media strategy and the day-to-day procedure for handling media relations. The media strategy includes how, when and why the organisation is going to work with the media to relay its message. The media policy provides a clear internal procedure of who handles the media and how.

5.2 What makes the news?

What should you write in your press release in order for the press to be interested? Well, anything new or unusual is a good place to start. Matters of controversy and arguments are also interesting. For trade unions issues such as negotiations with employer organisations and layoffs, accidents and plant closures or outsourcing normally make the news as well. The press likes stories where there are clear winners and losers, villains and heroes involved. Interesting numbers or trends can also attract attention. Forecasts, predictions and the future are interesting. Journalists can relate to the forecasts of a particular sector or company for instance. Money issues, corruption and salary inequalities also make the news. The more examples and case studies that you can show the better. In the case of accidents or layoffs, interviews with individual workers telling their story attract more attention than a trade union leader telling the same story.

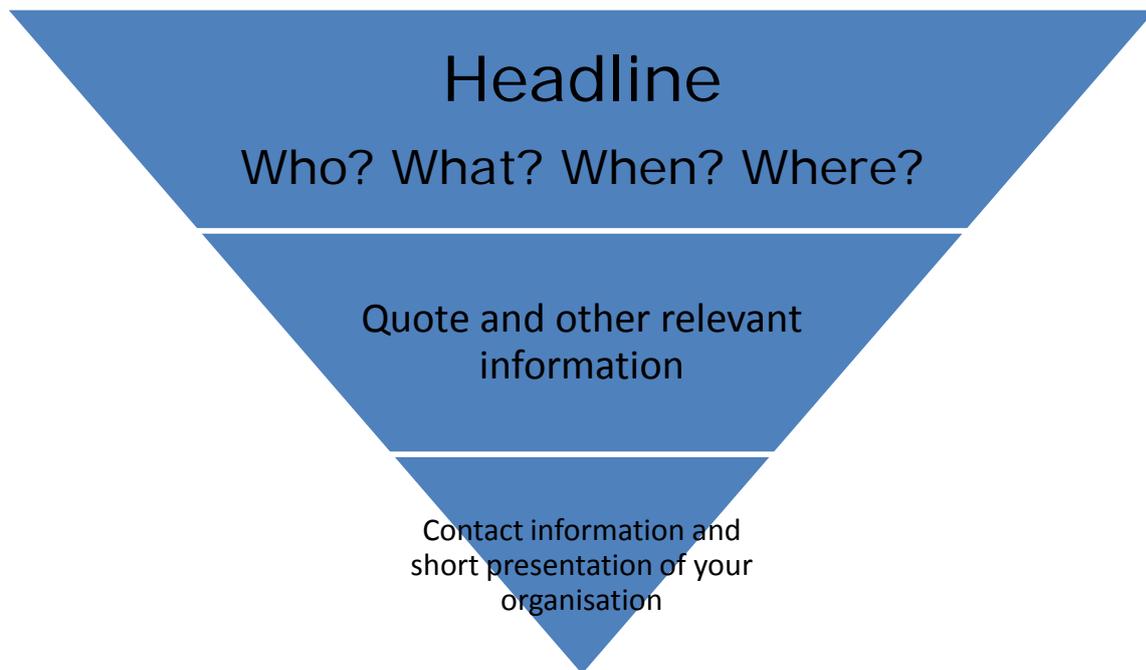
5.3 Press releases

Write a press release when you have something new to tell. That is the number one key advice when writing and sending press releases.

Information is not the same as news. For a press release to be relevant to a journalist the text cannot only consist of data, but also context. Preferably the context is associated with a person who can be interviewed in order to tell the story that illustrates the significance of the press release.

Other things to think about when writing a press release are:

1. Use headed paper to give authority to your message and make sure it includes contact information to your organisation.
2. Add date and a reference code so you can find it back later and who it is intended for - 'To Members of the press'.
3. Short simple catching headline to get the attention of the reader.
4. In the first paragraph try to answer the classic questions Who? What? When? Where?
5. In the rest of the press release add other relevant information and put the most relevant at the top. Think of the press release as a pyramid turned upside down.



6. Add a quote, which contains the key message, with name and position of the speaker. You will soon notice that the press will pick up the quote.

7. At the bottom of the page always add contact information to a person (who is available!) in case the press wants to contact someone for more information. Also add a short one or two-liner that tells the journalist about your organisation.

8. When e-mailing a press release never ever attach documents. E-mails with attachments are deleted first. Instead put a link on the press release that directs the press to a website containing further information or maybe to a picture database to illustrate the press release. Note that the pictures have to be without copy right in order for them to be used by the press. You can use the so called CC Policy - Creative Common, which means that the images can be reused freely as long as your organisation is cited as the owner, and for no commercial usage.

9. Check with your main spokesperson when he or she is available for interviews in case the press calls to make an appointment

And keep in mind – *you communicate in order to be understood*, so write the press release so that anyone can understand what you are talking about. This means avoiding abbreviations and jargon.

Other things to keep in mind: keep the press release on one page if possible. Do not assume that the press release has been read. Call journalists to make sure they have read it. Do not use irony or jokes. They are likely not to be understood. Do not lie or exaggerate facts! Ask a colleague to read the press release or make language and accuracy test before you send it out.

5.4 The road of a press release

It is interesting to track a press release in order to find out how it is picked up and relayed by the media. In the process the contents and message may be altered and the view of the sending organisation can be positive or negative accordingly. The EMF normally aims to have its press releases picked up by one of the major wire services such as Reuters, Bloomberg-Thomson, AP or AFP in order for the press release to be relayed onto national, regional and local press.

Example: Joint EMF-EEF statement sent as press release number 32 2009 sent on 8 September 2009, entitled 'Joint statement of the European Employee Forum of General

Motors (EEF), the European Metalworkers' Federation (EMF) and the European Unions on the upcoming meeting of the GM Board of Directors'

<i>Media</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Language</i>	<i>Headline</i>
Business4Media	EMF	English	Same as press release
AP	AP	English	Labour impatient for Opel decision
New York Times	AP	English	Labour impatient for Opel decision
The Houston Chronicle	AP	English	Labour impatient for Opel decision
The Detroit News	The Detroit News	English	GM may decide on Opel as early as Wednesday
Auto Insider	The Detroit News	English	GM board to review Opel Wednesday
Express	Belga Nieuwstele	Dutch	Vakbonden dulden geen uitstel meer voor Opel-verkoop
Sina	Sina	Mandarin	

Buiness4Media is the first to pick up the press release in its daily summary of press releases related to the metalworking industry. The second to pick it up is AP. Two other media then pick up the story and refer to AP. One is New York Times (daily newspaper) and the second is The Houston Chronicle (daily newspaper).

The Detroit News writes an article based on its own research. The EMF has good contacts with journalists at the Detroit News and can contribute immediately with a quote or other details to the story. The Auto Insider (a UK online news portal focusing on auto news) picks up the story from Detroit News. Up until now the language has been English. The first article in another language is the Belgian newswire Belga and the Belgian online newspaper Express picks up the story and writes an article in Dutch. The Chinese newswire Sina finally picks up the story and publishes an article in Mandarin.

5.5 EMF in the media

Coverage of the EMF in the media (printed press, online press, radio and TV) is continuously monitored. The coverage is saved and over all information about the coverage including name of media, name of source, langue, headline and topic) are noted. The coverage has steadily increased from 35 cuttings in 2006 to just short of 300 in 2009. The cuttings include both online and printed press. Since the cutting is done manually by a colleague in the Secretariat (instead of hiring an outside company) the process is time consuming. The improvements of online search tools such as Google Alerts and its associated research tools have been a great help. It has also become easier to find older articles since more and more material become available online. It has therefore become possible to trace articles to the late 1990s. Actual hard copies are only cut from the magazines of affiliated organisations and from news papers that are available to the Secretariat on a daily basis. Important to notice is that many newspapers today are changing their strategies in order to push online content before printed editions since time to market is quicker online and there is an immediate opportunity to make correction and updates.

The research of the press cuttings is used to plan press conferences and press sendings in terms of how media covers the EMF and what languages should be used as well as knowing what topics the press is interested in. Research for 2009 shows that the press is mostly interested in company related stories such as ArcelorMittal and GM. Demonstrations and trade union actions always attract attention in the media as well. EU policy related issues are more difficult to attract attention to. One reason is the lack of human interest in these stories. The media is also overwhelmed by EU related stories and many organisation send press releases that are very similar and relate to the same story but with different angles.

On average the EMF media reach is 11 million people per year (based on print edition circulation and not including online editions) with the largest audiences in Germany, Belgium, Spain and the US. China and Russia are increasing their coverage of the EMF mainly concerning GM and ArcelorMittal related stories.

5.6 Press conferences

Some key points to remember when arranging a press conference:

1. Send the invitation one day in advance, not more because the invitation will be drowned by other invitations.
2. Call the journalists you really want to be present at the press conference. Do not assume they will just show up.
3. Make a list of participants so that you know who is coming and so that you can follow up later or add journalists to your press sending list.
4. Clearly write date and location on the invitation as well as main topic and what speakers that will appear at the press conference itself and who will be available for interviews after the press conference.
5. Start on time!
6. Provide a press package with information about your organisation and the issue that is presented.
7. Place your organisation logo or other imagery associated with the topic of the press conference behind the speakers so that it is included in the photos and TV segments.

5.7 Press relations

Building and maintaining personal relations with members of the press are vital in order to achieve media coverage of your organisation. Finding out what journalist writes about what and in what media is a basic step of building these relations. Contacting the journalists and maintaining a good relationship is the second step. Contacting journalists are important both when you are looking to have a story picked up and on a day to day basis to keep journalists updated on what topics or events are coming up or just to say a friendly word. It is ok to call journalists just to chat and be friendly, not only when you want something.

It is normally recommended to be careful when using terms such as on or off the record. Only when you have a very good and reliable relationship with an individual journalist you go off the record. Planting stories is a better way of feeding the journalists in a way that guarantees their interest.

Treating journalists to lunch or on trips to site locations can be an opportunity to build useful relations and to ensure that the journalist is well informed when writing a story or covering a specific long term issue. **A trade union has to be careful though that the journalists in question are not regarded as "bought" or "corrupted" ...**

6. Crisis communications

Crisis communication can be broadly defined as the exchange of information before, during, or after a crisis event. A crisis event can be an announcement of major redundancies, move of a production site or an accident in the workplace. A crisis is therefore normally something unexpected and non-routine that creates a high level of uncertainty and threat or perceived threat.

The definition tells us that trade unions every day face situations where crisis communication is needed. At the core of the crisis communication is the protection of workers' rights. When a crisis situation occurs, the media firestorm can quickly overwhelm the ability of the organisation to effectively respond to the demands of the crisis. To emerge from the crisis in one piece, an organization must anticipate every move and respond immediately and with confidence. The practice of crisis communication is a predictive art, whereby you must make correct assumptions and determine appropriate courses of action within a very short period of time.

Example: EMF immediate response in the Opel/Vauxhall case

European trade union action in response to Opel/Vauxhall restructuring

"The Opel/Vauxhall case is a bad example of big multinational companies trying to play off workers and unions across borders. There is only one answer to this in the European metal unions' view: Unity of the unions and the workers across borders to ensure no plant closures and no compulsory redundancies."

By definition a crisis is an unexpected and detrimental situation or event. Crisis communication can play a significant role by transforming the unexpected into the anticipated and responding accordingly. Responding quickly, efficiently, effectively and in a premeditated way are the primary objectives of an effective crisis communication strategy. Harnessing technology and people to ensure a rapid and co-ordinated response to a range of potentially crippling scenarios distinguishes a well thought out and executed plan from a poorly or ill-considered one. The inherent lag time in marshalling responses to a crisis can result in considerable losses in reputation, credibility as well as substantially impacting on costs.

Effective crisis communication strategies will typically consider achieving most, if not all, of the following objectives:

- Maintain connectivity
- Be readily accessible to the news media
- Show empathy for the people involved
- Allow distributed access
- Streamline communication processes
- Maintain information security
- Deliver high volume communications
- Support multi-channel communications
- Remove dependencies on paper based processes

The best approach to responding to a crisis is with facts – not with fury. Focus on the facts of the matter and apply the position of your organisation.

Example: If a site is threatened by redundancies you find out the facts of the matter. For instance; has the site received financial support from a regional government or from the EU and will that money now be lost. Explain the facts to the media such as they are.

If you are caught off guard by a journalist telephoning you and asking you what your reaction is to the redundancies the best response is to say that "We do not have an official position on that right now but I will get back to you." Instead of flying off the

handle against the announcement of redundancies without having any real arguments at hand; find out the facts and you have the arguments.

7. Communicating policy work

7.1 Disseminating position papers

Introduction

Perhaps the term *dissemination* can be best described as the “delivering and receiving of a message”, “the engagement of an individual in a process” and “the transfer of a process or product”. The term “dissemination” has become a familiar part of our vocabulary and it is easy, therefore, to talk about dissemination without having a real grasp of what it means or what it is you are trying to achieve. It is helpful to think about dissemination in three different ways:

1. Dissemination for Awareness

It can be assumed that, at the very least, you wish people to be aware of the position paper. This may be useful for those target audiences that do not require a detailed knowledge of your work but it is helpful for them to be aware of your activities and outcomes. Creating such an awareness of your work will help the “word of mouth” and help you build an identity and profile within your community.

2. Dissemination for Understanding

There will be a number of groups that you will need to target directly with your dissemination. This will be because you believe that they can benefit from what your position paper has to offer. It will be important, therefore, that these groups have a deeper understanding of your work.

3. Dissemination for Action

“Action” refers to a change of practice resulting from the adoption of the position paper. These groups will be those people that are in a position to “influence” and “bring about change” within their organisations. These are the groups that will need to be equipped with the right skills, knowledge and understanding of your work in order to achieve real change.

4. Dissemination for Dissemination

Think network: your strategy should include other people disseminating your position paper for you. Help them to let you promote your work.

Contents of a dissemination strategy

You should devise a dissemination strategy to ensure that the right people are aware of the position paper. A dissemination strategy could include:

- a printed final paper with an executive summary
- the final paper and/or the executive summary being published online
- a presentation and discussion at workshops with key stakeholders, national, regional or local conferences
- an e-newsletter
- the production of a CD-ROM
- one-to-one meetings

You should consider which of these would most effectively reach the necessary target groups. In most cases, you would not need to use all of these methods.

Printed publications like a position paper can be distributed to people drawn from mailing lists owned by affiliated organisations, or from specially prepared lists assembled with reference to industry directories, sectoral associations, members of the European institutions and other sources. In addition, brochures and leaflets can be offered to participants in meetings, conferences and exhibitions – including those organised by third parties.

A so called teaser (a tactical trick that might tease the target group to go into the tactical practical paper) can also be used when disseminating a position paper. The teaser is custom made and adapted to e-mail and website systems. An example is to use the signature that is automatically put on every e-mail sent by the organisation and it would work as a promo of the new position paper. The effect of the link can then be tracked and evaluated.

What do we want to disseminate?

You have, as a core objective, the need to disseminate the outcomes of a position paper to a particular community. This will only be achievable and successful if, from the outset, every member of your team has a shared understanding of exactly what it is you want to disseminate and why. Discuss a joint statement for the group, like a sector committee, of how to present and introduce your position paper. Basic facts about the the industry should accompany the position papers (for instance number of members, number of employed people, total turnover, products total share of European exports etc.)

Who are our target groups and what are we offering them?

A target group can be defined as "Any group or individual who can affect, or be affected by the achievement of the objectives of the position paper - or can influence these objectives." The target groups can be divided into internal, external and connected groups. The internal group consists of your office and the committee/group that wrote the position paper. The external group consists of affiliated/associated organisations, government institutions, the European institutions and employer organisations. The connected group consists of the media, the research world and the public.

Purpose: The target groups are divided depending on the purpose of reaching them.

1. Awareness: the group consists of people who should merely be aware of your work and the progress it makes, like works councils, local union officers etc.
2. Support: the support group consists of an umbrella organisation, affiliated/associated organisations, as well as the research world. Support can also be given by journalists who follow and cover the topic of the position paper.
3. Understanding: the understanding group consists of the European Industry Federations who will also need your support for their own work.
4. Involvement: the involvement group consists of those who wrote the position paper and the closest circle as well as individual companies.
5. Commitment: The action group consists of decision makers in the European Commission, the European Parliament and the European Council (possibly also on a national level) and the employers.

When do we disseminate?

Basic rule: Unless dissemination is built in from the beginning it does not happen. It is important that your dissemination activities are an integral part of the plan. This means that you need to plan your dissemination from the beginning. The approach of leaving dissemination until the final stages of writing a position paper does not work as it fails to allow time for actively engaging users and finding ways of generating a feeling of ownership amongst those people and groups to whom you wish to disseminate and make an impact. The planning and development of your dissemination strategy must have equal importance as the other preparatory work you will be doing, or have already done.

Cognitive theories explain how people learn and develop as well as how ideas are spread. Basically, a person needs to be in touch with an idea several times, and usually receive information from different sources before he accepts it, hence the need of repeating and finding allies that also disseminate the position paper.

Maintain focused target groups. That is to say think hard about exactly who should receive the position paper. If you have pinpointed a certain organisation think about who in that organisation and why you choose that particular person; because of personal

relations, because of the person's potential influence in the area etc. Think quality not quantity.

Dissemination is not a "one shot thing" and there is follow up work to be done after the first launch. The best time to disseminate is when people are looking for that particular information. Use the news, and if there is something in it concerning the topic of your position paper also six months after the launch you should not miss the opportunity to put out a notice saying "by the way, my organisation has a position paper on that topic and I would be delighted to send it to you, and feel free to add that to the ref material..."

Time frame

Starting early usually increases the impact of dissemination. Providing people with advance notice of what is planned can strengthen partnerships and networks. Your target groups need to know that your position paper is being produced and have some idea of what it is about and trying to achieve. This should be done at an early stage and you can use the opportunity to present a clear and easily recognisable identity for the paper.

Cooperation

Your target groups will already have events, journals, professional bodies and topic related associations that they engage with. Your position paper will stand a greater chance of success if you can work through these existing channels as opposed to creating further publications and events that result in overloading already overworked people. It is worth finding out what other organisations working around the same topics are doing and then approaching them with a view to collaborating.

Headlines of a successful dissemination strategy:

- Aims and objectives of the position paper
- What you propose to disseminate
- Target groups
- Benefits to end-users
- Dissemination methods/activities
- Timescales and responsibilities
- Targets
- Costs
- Evaluation and criteria for success

Strategy into action

Producing a coherent strategy does not necessarily result in effective implementation unless the strategy is articulated as a clear set of actions.

Example:

Purpose	Target group	Method	Vehicle	Timing	Responsibility of
Raise awareness of the position paper	Affiliated organisations, EIF, researchers, employers, European institutions	Meetings (committee, informal, one-to-one, conferences)	Committee	Ongoing from the start of writing	Committee members, Secretariat
Promote the position paper in the press	EMF press lists in the target area	Press release, Article, Personal contact with journalists,	EMF communications staff, EMF communications working group,	At the time of adoption	EMF communications staff, EMF communications working group

		Press event	websites, newsletters	e-		
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Costs

Once you have broken down your dissemination activities, for example, a publication, adaptation of the website, e-newsletter, press meeting, travel costs to give talks and presentations about the position paper, you can begin to obtain estimates of the costs involved. Make a breakdown of costs beforehand to avoid surprises.

Success

You will only be able to review and measure your progress if you have established clear targets from the beginning. Link your target groups and the purpose and see what the outcome has been.

Purpose	Target group	Aim	Criteria for success
Awareness	EWC, local union officers	Local discussions	Increased knowledge
Support	ETUC, affiliates, researchers	Seminar, joint press meeting, dissemination to national confederations	Trade union solidarity, printed articles
Understanding	EIF	Mutual support among EIF	Feedback, printed articles
Involvement	Committee, SWP, companies	Dissemination on a national level, individual company involvement	Actual improvements on company level
Commitment	European institutions, employers' organisations	Individual involvement of officers in the European institutions and MEPs, cooperation and agreements with the employer organisations.	Adaptation of approaches, methods, policies, legislation

8. Online communications

8.0 To use or not to use online communication tools...

Are you using online communication tools such as the social network Facebook and are you twitting with the best of them because everybody else is? Well in that case you need to rethink and ask yourself these questions before you convince your organisation that online tools are the best options.

Online communication tools do not have a long *lifecycle*. By the time you discover them, come up with a plan and convince your organisation to use the tool, experts in the field have already moved on to something else.

What cost is associated with using or launching a certain online tool? Does your organisation have the resources needed? Are you prepared to use that much of your overall communications budget on the particular tool? What is the expected return on investment?

Example: Investing in a website with the aim of organising new members

Example: Investing in a printed magazine to inform your members about the work of the organisation (Perhaps it is better to choose an online option?)

Do you have the required technical equipment installed in the office and are you trained to use it? If you plan to launch a video conference tool in your office make sure that your computers or meeting room are equipped accordingly with web cameras, screens and microphones.

When deciding what tools to go for first, look at where investments are going currently. Since you are already covering the media you have probably already picked up the latest news in the IT industry and you know how Google is developing its business or who just bought You Tube. If the big players are investing in online visual media then that is probably something you also could consider doing.

8.1 EMF websites

The main EMF online tool is the website. To date the EMF has developed five individual websites.

<http://www.emf-fem.org>

The website domain has been in place for many years and was completely redeveloped in 2006. The domain name works in parallel with <http://www.metalworkers.eu>.

The main EMF website was introduced on 10 April 2006. The premier was a result of approximately six months of preparation work, including finding the right web provider and employing staff at the Secretariat do be responsible for the website. The website was created by three parties. First Sydesy Ltd was hired to do the html programming of the website, its structure and functions. Secondly a graphic designer was hired to apply the particular design which was chosen for the website. The graphic design is in line with the overall graphic identity of the EMF. Thirdly one staff member at the Secretariat was responsible for setting up the structure and feeding the website, that is to say, creating all pages and feeding them with material. The website is continuously improved and changed to provide the best possible service to its visitors.

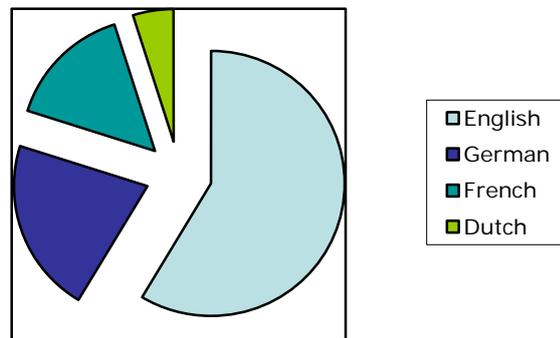
Since the launch of the website it has had about 100,000 individual visitors. Every visitor spends on average 3 minutes on the website looking at 4 different pages. The visitors mainly come from Belgium, Germany, France, United States, United Kingdom, Finland, Spain, Italy, Sweden and the Netherlands.

It is interesting for a webmaster to know what pages are most visited or “most popular”. This is because it makes it possible to improve those pages or change pages that are not visited at all. The most visited page on any website is the start page. Visitors of the EMF website are also interested in the staff section, affiliated organisations, EMF statutory bodies, general information about the EMF and company policy.

Some websites are available in many different languages and this is an option that may be considered depending on what language the website visitors use. Then there is also the financial aspect to be considered. The EMF website is available in English as a main language but parts of the website are also available in German, French and Spanish. The section can be found by following the flags on the start page guiding the visitor directly to all documents that are available in the particular language.

Top 10 languages among visitors

1.	English	45.82%
2.	German	16.63%
3.	French	11.87%
4.	Dutch	3.84%
5.	Spanish	
6.	Swedish	
7.	Italian	
8.	Turkish	
9.	Danish	
10.	Finnish	



Other than the general EMF website the EMF manages the following websites (listed in launch date order):

www.gmworkersblog.com ([Blog for GM workers around the globe](#))

On 26 March 2007 the workers at GM Europe took the first steps in facing management head on by using a tool often overlooked by trade unions – the blog.

The blog is used as a tool for GM workers, not only in Europe, but around the world, to share information, comment on news related issues and as a counter to the various blogs posted by GM management. It combines articles with comments and it is possible to upload pictures and files for the use of the blog visitors. The blog contains news from the factory floor, and concerns the real problems faced by the workers and it talks about what is really going on at GM, without the usual filter of the GM PR department.

What is a blog?

A blog is a user-generated website where entries are made in journal style and displayed in a reverse chronological order. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, web pages, and other media related to its topic. The ability for readers to leave comments in an interactive format is an important part of blogs. The term "blog" is derived from "Web log."

www.precariouswork.eu ([Campaign website on precarious work](#))

A Europe wide campaign on precarious employment was scheduled for the first time in autumn 2008. To best relay information about the campaign and its events as well as political messages a special campaign website was launched on 4 June 2008. The website initially included facts about the campaign, its contents, political message, participants and activities as well as a special section for stories from workers who have been victims of precarious employment.

Several examples exist of similar initiatives and websites and one important part of a campaign website is the possibility for people to participate in it – a so called *interactive* website. This can be made possible through a variety of measures. One common interactive website is the so called blog. In this case however a special section was created where stories from workers are published and website visitors can then comment on the individual articles via a comment box. The difference between the blog and the comment box is that with a comment box all messages go via an EMF administrator and the quality of the input can then be managed as well as the quality of the articles themselves. Another important difference is the learning curve. Many of the visitors are not familiar with how to participate in a blog (where you have to create an account and log in). A comment box is easier to manage for the visitor and it is not necessary for the EMF to build up a network of administrators, train and maintain them since the Secretariat will run all activities on the campaign website. The campaign is set up for a limited amount of time, while a blog can be permanent.

A translation tool is attached to the website, which makes it possible for everyone, no matter mother tongue, to read articles and comment. The translation tool also creates a sense of inclusion for all visitors and encourages participation.

The cost of a campaign website, as described here, is approximately €1000-1500 and can be set up within a week.

Concerning the layout it is strongly recommended that the campaign has an easy identifiable graphic identity and that the identity is used by all parties participating in the campaign. The first campaign run within EMF collective bargaining policy was The First Common Demand on the individual's right to training, **which used this logo**. The logo is already recognised by the affiliated organisations as belonging to collective bargaining and The First Common Demand is closely linked to precarious employment. The text at the bottom of the logo can be changed to "EMF Precarious Employment Campaign 2008" and the colour (of the text) changed to orange. This is a simple measure to maintain the identity of campaigning in collective bargaining policy, while changing the topic. This method can be used for other campaigns in the future as well. There is also a cost reduction aspect related to keeping the logo and only making a few changes to the text.

In November 2009 the website was further developed to be the main website for precarious work as a political issue and for the EMF Second Common Demand, which focuses on precarious work.

www.industrialpolicy.eu ([Industry federations on European industrial policy](#))

Creating a strong European industrial base is fundamental when securing the foundation of the EU's economy, and ensuring a sustainable progression towards a flourishing economy and an environmentally friendly production.

The new industrial policy website is a joint effort between the European Industry Federations EFFAT, EMCEF, EMF and ETUF:TCL, with the aim to strengthen the visibility and impact of trade union industrial policy on a European level, while providing information about priority areas of the federations.

The website is hosted by the EMF server and linked directly to the EMF website as well as to the websites of the other federations. It consists of articles and it is possible to upload images and files of any kind as well as film. The website was launched on 9 March 2009.

www.eucoban.eu ([European network of collective bargaining](#))

On 23 March 2009 the three organisations EMF, EMCEF and ETUF-TCL launched a joint website with focus on the Eucob@n Network and collective bargaining. The Eucob@n Network (European Network of Collective Bargaining) is both a tool to improve and enhance the coordination approach as well as a tool to strengthen national collective

bargaining across Europe by a structured and permanent information exchange and consultation process.

The heart of the Eucob@n Network is the Correspondents Network. This network consists of correspondents from the affiliated organisations. In order for the reporting in Eucob@n to be representative there is at least one correspondent per country. The means of communication is a structured and daily e-mail-exchange. The working language is English.

Since 7 December 2006 the EMF Eucob@n system has concluded a full cooperation agreement with EMCEF and ETUF-TCL. The three organisations are using from that day the same name – Eucob@n – and the same logo to make this cooperation more visible. In addition to this, Eucob@n also operates in cooperation and coordination with other European organisations (ETUC, ETUI) and International organisations (IMF).

A small working group was appointed at the end of 2007 to put together the new joint website and launch it in the beginning of 2008. While working on the structure and contents of the new website the very important issue of dissemination has also been put into focus. It is vital that the website has clear target groups and that it will achieve an impact on decision makers and influence the employers as well as creating better awareness with the workers.

The website was launched to people in the organisations mailing lists as well as affiliated organisations, and also to specially prepared lists assembled with reference to collective bargaining. The signature that is automatically put on every e-mail sent by anyone in the three organisations was used to draw attention to the new website. The effect of the link can then be tracked and evaluated.

8.2 Online campaigning

Case study: McJobs -- we all know what those are

One online source defines a McJob as "a low-paying, low-prestige job that requires few skills and offers very little chance of intra-company advancement". McDonald's was never very happy about the use of this term. In fact, the company bought the domain name "mcjobs.com" just to make sure that no one could use it. But they forget to acquire "mcjobs.org" -- and the global union federation for food workers, the IUF, together with LabourStart, bought the name and launched McJobs.org, the website for McDonald's workers around the world.

9. Solidarity work

Introduction

Solidarity is a word that dates back to 1841, the height of European industrialisation. It means unity (as of a group or class) that produces or is based on a community of interests, objectives, and standards. Many years have passed since the word was first used, but never before has the need for solidarity been greater than today.

The EMF sees an increase on calls for solidarity within its member organisations and also with metalworkers around the world. On average the EMF sends out 30 calls for solidarity every year. These calls often relate to transnational calls and generally do not include situations where only one workplace in one country is affected.

The EMF responds to affiliated organisations calls for European solidarity by approaching governments and companies that exploit workers and violate labour standards. European institutions are informed of the violations and on occasion meeting with EU officials take place. Information about the cases is published on the EMF website and is circulated to the communicators at affiliated organisations, who publish the information in online and printed media and increases attention further. In certain cases, such as Sinter Metal in Turkey, the EMF also works together with the International Metalworkers Federation (IMF), and thus puts a global focus on the case.

Case study: EMF and IMF launch solidarity campaign for financial support to Turkish Sinter Metal workers

On December 19th 2008, the Turkish company Sinter Metal dismissed 38 workers for being members of Birlesik Metal-IS (affiliated to EMF and IMF). It was followed by the dismissal of an additional 312 workers, most of whom are trade union members.

The Labour Ministry in Turkey concluded these dismissals are the result of workers being trade union members, which is a blatant violation of ILO Conventions 87 and 98. In spite of that, the company announced that it would continue production through subcontracting. Birlesik Metal strongly resists, and has been holding protest actions in front of company gates for over one year now. The Turkish workers started a court case for reinstatement, but the court has postponed its decision, affecting greatly the lives of 350 Sinter metalworkers and their families. The next court session will take place in August 2010. Under Turkish labour law, these court cases should be resolved within two months. However, industrial disputes, such as the Sinter Metal case, are drawn out for years. The recent delay in the court ruling highlights the ongoing failure of the Turkish justice system to protect workers' rights. Three joint EMF and IMF letters sent to management of Sinter Metal requesting negotiations (with the representatives of EMF, IMF and Birlesik Metal-IS) did not lead to any response. Both EMF and IMF officers attended court sessions and protest actions in Istanbul. A joint EMF and IMF letter was sent to ILO offices in Ankara informing them of the violations and calling on them to support Sinter Metal workers. Additionally, Peter Scherrer, EMF General Secretary and representatives of Birlesik Metal-IS met with the members of the cabinet of EU Commissioner for Enlargement, Olli Rehn and presented this case, as well as discussing serious trade union problems in Turkey regarding exercising internationally recognised labour rights. The case, opened in December 2008, might become the longest drawn out reinstatement case in Turkey's history since no end seems to be in sight, even by December 2010. This week the company's legal team began by saying their witnesses had not shown up and requesting a new court date. Within 30 minutes of proceedings getting underway, the judge decided more witnesses were required and postponed the next hearing by 6 months (from August 4th), claiming she was too busy to hear the case any earlier. The delay came as a surprise to the union legal team, who believed a decision would be given within a few months.