

n°6 . APRIL . 2010

GLOBAL

Bulletin

UNI temp & agency workers is the Global Union for temporary employment.

We work to improve the conditions for temporary workers and agency staff worldwide.

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An initiative launched to improve conditions for agency workers

UNI's British affiliate Unite the union announced the launch of a new joint initiative with ASDA supermarket chain. The main goal of the process is to end discrimination and unfair treatment across the supermarket's 29 meat and poultry suppliers, employing 6,000 workers.

The initiative is especially important to agency workers. According to the union, many supermarkets abuse the situation when cutting costs and employing agency workers, overwhelmingly migrant, on poorer conditions of employment and the directly-employed workers, overwhelmingly indigenous, on better conditions of employment.

Unite's deputy general secretary, Jack Dromey said: "We warmly welcome ASDA's pioneering initiative which sends a clear message that one of Britain's biggest supermarkets is determined to put ethical principles into practice. ASDA's customers can be confident that there really is no place like ASDA. For years, supermarkets have driven down costs along their supply chain with tens of thousands of workers paying the price with discriminatory and unfair practices. It is wrong to exploit migrant agency workers on poorer conditions of employment and it is wrong to undercut directly employed workers on better conditions of employment. That divides workforces and damages social cohesion in local communities."

Read a complete report on Unite's website here:

http://www.unitetheunion.com/news_events/latest_news/unite_and_asda_launch_ground_b.aspx?lang=en-gb

Germany: after long debates, unions reach the agreement with temp employment agencies

In the beginning of 2010, the agreement on temp employment was negotiated by the Association of Temporary Employers (BZA) and the German Confederation of Trade Unions (DGB). The two parties had agreed to raise wages for temporary employees by 2.55% since 1 May.

One of UNI's biggest affiliates ver.di and another German union IG Metall disagreed with the negotiated outcome. It is a rare case affiliated organisations do not ratify minimum wage agreements negotiated by the national trade union confederations.

Negotiations were re-started in March and the agreement finally reached.

For the text of the agreement (in German), please click here: <http://www.labournet.de/diskussion/arbeit/realpolitik/psa/bzadgb2010b.pdf>

Two ratifications of the ILO Convention No. 181

In the beginning of 2010, Slovakia and Bosnia and Herzegovina ratified ILO Convention No. 181 on Private Employment Agencies. Now there are 23 countries which ratified the convention.

For the full text of the convention and ratifications, please click here:

<http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/convdisp1.htm>

The UK: battle lines drawn on agency exploitation

The UK Communication Workers Union (CWU) has warmly welcomed the tabling of Government legislation to give Britain's 1.3 million agency workers important new rights to equal treatment.

Tabled before Parliament under a "statutory instrument" that results in binding legislation if it is not challenged and annulled during a 40-day period, the Agency Workers Regulations 2010 will belatedly implement the EU Directive, giving agency workers the right to the same pay, holiday and other basic working conditions as directly recruited staff after 12 weeks in a given job. Stemming from a tripartite agreement reached in 2008 between the TUC, the CBI and the Government, the move is the culmination of a long-standing campaign by the CWU and various other unions for "Justice for Agency Workers." That campaign received strong backing throughout from the Labour Party backbenches-pressure which ultimately persuaded the Government that continued inaction on agency exploitation was untenable. Welcoming the "long overdue" announcement of legislation, CWU general secretary Billy Hayes turned his fire on the Tories who, even now, appear likely to try to derail the legislation which aims to prevent low-paid workers being exploited. "Make no mistake, this is landmark legislation," said Billy. "While it is long overdue, the fact that it is being promoted by a Labour Government and looks likely to be opposed by the Tories places the starkest possible spotlight on the parties' respective positions on vulnerable workers. This legislation stands to benefit thousands of comparatively low paid and disadvantaged workers in every constituency and demonstrates that only a Labour Government can be trusted to protect the low paid."

Turkey: agencies demand to legalize temporary work

Turkish private employment agencies are asking the government to pass a law regulating temporary employment.

It's been long lasting discussions in Turkey if the private employment industry should be legalised and regulated. Despite a lack of legislation, there are around 270 private employment agencies in Turkey, the majority of which operates in Istanbul. These are both big international firms (such as Adecco, Manpower, Randstad) as well as many local companies.

The government seems to be willing to regulate the current legislative grey zone in which private employment agencies operate. In 2009, there was an attempt to pass a bill on the employment law, which would give employment agencies the right to hire workers out to employers for temporary terms, but it was vetoed by the President.



Trade unions opposed this initiative stressing that it would allow the exploitation of workers and cause unrest in the workplace. UNI europa TAW is in discussions with its affiliates in Turkey on how trade unions could be a part of the regulation process.

Poland: plans to amend the law on temporary work

These amendments are aimed at protecting permanent workers from the growing trend to replace them by temporary workers. The bill was

sent to the parliament which would have to decide if to adopt the proposed amendments. The proposed amendments include an increase of the period during which it isn't possible to replace permanent workers with temporary workers (from three to six months) as well as provide for a wider range of user companies' offences to legislation on temporary work (e.g. replacing a striking worker by a temporary worker or asking a temporary worker to perform a particularly dangerous task).

There are around 2.000 temp employment agencies in Poland employing about 60 thousand workers per day.

Temp agency workers get the same rights to parental leave in the EU

EU social partners last year reached an agreement to increase minimum parental leave from three to four months, in rules that would be applicable to all employees across Europe.

In the meeting on March 9, the Council of Ministers adopted a directive designed to improve work-life balance and encourage fathers to take leave after the birth of a child. Parents will be allowed take four months each and transfer months between them to allow one parent to take up to seven months off. At least one month cannot be transferred to the other parent, a move seen as a boost to gender equality. Other new elements include the clarification that people with fixed-term contracts, part-time workers and temporary agency contractors are also covered.

The text of the agreement here;
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=2999&langId=en>

EC initiative on the posting of workers directive to be rounded within a year

During a conference on posting of workers organized by the Spanish Presidency of the EU on March 17, László Andor (EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion) stressed that each year at least one and a half million workers in the EU were affected by the posting of workers.

He told posting of workers was vital for the cross-border provision of services in a number of sectors (such as construction, agriculture and transport) as well as temporary work agencies and that it was very important to protect rights of posted workers and to avoid social dumping.

To read his full speech, click here:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/10/100&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Czech Republic: TAW Directive to reduce unfair competition

Temporary agency work was intended to address the insufficient flexibility of the Czech labour market. However, it became a means of exploitation of foreign workers in particular.

Read more here:

<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2010/02/articles/cz1002029i.htm>

A new publication: statistics on the agency work

Ciett has published a new survey on the agency work industry around the world.

To access the research, please click here:

http://www.flexworkresearch.org/uploaded_files/publications/CIETT_2009.pdf

A New Publication on International Employment Agencies

The survey focuses on international employment agencies and migrant flexiwork in an enlarged European Union. The paper looks into the circular labour migration between Poland and the Netherlands in particular.

To download the document, please click here:

<http://www.flexworkresearch.org/publication/4028>

Survey on Contract and Agency Labour

International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Unions (ICEM) and International Metalworkers' Federation (IMF) did a survey on Contract and Agency Labour.

Access the results of the survey here: <http://www.icem.org/>

Olympia Flexgroup sells business in a few European countries

Starting from January 2010, Olympia Flexgroup announced it would sell a few of its subsidiaries.

In January, the company sold its subsidiary OLYMPIA EMPLEO ETT in Spain to the French temporary agency SYNERGIE. In February, OLYMPIA ITALIA S.r.l. was sold to the Italian staffing company Uno-Holding S.p.A. as well as its Polish subsidiary to the Dutch temporary work agency Otto Work Force.

In March, the company sold its business in the Netherlands to the Dutch bank NIBC.

Olympia Flexgroup is a German based European temporary work company with around 140 branches and over 8,000 employees. It is a corporate member of Ciett and one of the companies covered by the UNI-Ciett Memorandum of Understanding.

Forthcoming UNI TAW Events:

27.04.2010

TAW European Observatory meeting, Brussels;

17.05.2010

TAW European Social Dialogue, Brussels

26-28.05.2010

Ciett Annual Meeting, Sao Paulo, Brazil

08.10.2010

TAW European Social Dialogue, Brussels

9-12.11. 2010

3rd UNI Global Union World Congress, Nagasaki, Japan

30.11.2010 (tbc)

TAW European Social Dialogue, Brussels

February, 2011 (tbc)

UNI TAW Global Meeting, Nyon

10-11.04. 2011

ILO Global Dialogue Forum on Private Employment Agencies, Geneva

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