



TRADE UNION ACTIVITIES ON LIFE-LONG LEARNING

SHAPING THE FUTURE OF WORK IN A DIGITALIZED SERVICES INDUSTRY

Final report for UNI Europa

Margreet Simons, Lennart van Loenen and Jan Willem van Gelder

11 July 2020

"This report has been commissioned by UNI Europa and written by Profundo in the framework of the EU project
"Shaping the future of work in a digitalised services industry through social dialogue".



Graphic Design by *Vertigo Creative Studio*

"This project receives support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views of the authors only and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein."



About this report

This report has been commissioned by UNI Europa, the European services workers union, headquartered in Brussels, representing 272 national trade unions in 50 countries. The report presents current policies and approaches on continuous skills development and life-long learning that are relevant for social dialogue and collective bargaining at national and European level. The report is based on data collection through an online survey among UNI Europa affiliates, interviews with trade union representatives and a literature study. Furthermore, the results of a workshop on skills, organised by UNI Europa (November 12, 2019 in Prague) are integrated in the report.

About Profundo

With profound research and advice, Profundo aims to make a practical contribution to a sustainable world and social justice. Quality comes first, aiming at the needs of our clients. Thematically we focus on commodity chains, the financial sector and corporate social responsibility. More information on Profundo can be found at www.profundo.nl.

Authorship

This report was researched and written by Margreet Simons, Lennart van Loenen and Jan Willem van Gelder. Correct citation of this document: Simons, M., L. van Loenen and JW van Gelder (2020, July), *Trade Union Activities on Life-Long Learning - Shaping the Future of Work in a Digitalized Services Industry*, Amsterdam, The Netherlands: Profundo.

Front page cover photograph from the following article: Donaldson, D. (2019, October 28), "Digitalisation at work 'could widen existing inequalities'", *The Mandarin*, online: <https://www.themandarin.com.au/108420-digitalisation-at-work-could-widen-existing-inequalities/>, viewed in October 2019.

Disclaimer

Profundo observes the greatest possible care in collecting information and drafting publications but cannot guarantee that this report is complete. Profundo assumes no responsibility for errors in the sources used, nor for changes after the date of publication. The report is provided for informational purposes and is not to be read as providing endorsements, representations or warranties of any kind whatsoever. Profundo will not accept any liability for damage arising from the use of this publication.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Summary.....	6
Abbreviations.....	9
Introduction.....	10
Chapter 1 Methodology	11
1.1 Research questions	11
1.2 Research activities	11
1.2.1 Online survey.....	11
1.2.2 Literature study.....	12
1.2.3 Interviews.....	13
1.2.4 Workshops	13
1.3 Report.....	13
Chapter 2 How trade unions deal with life-long learning	14
2.1 Role of social partners in the facilitation of life-long learning	14
2.2 Policy strategies of trade unions on life-long learning	16
2.2.1 Netherlands.....	16
2.2.2 Romania.....	16
2.2.3 Spain	17
2.3 Life-long learning as fourth pillar of education system	18
2.4 Life-long learning in collective labour agreements (CLAs).....	19
2.4.1 Belgium.....	21
2.4.2 Cyprus.....	22
2.4.3 Czech Republic	22
2.4.4 Germany	22
2.4.5 Italy.....	23
2.4.6 Finland	24
2.4.7 Netherlands.....	24
2.4.8 Portugal	24
2.4.9 Romania.....	25
2.4.10 Sweden	26
2.4.11 Switzerland	26
2.5 Obstacles for involving social partners in life-long learning	26
2.6 Cutting-edge practices/thinking beyond collective bargaining	27
2.6.1 Denmark	27
2.6.2 Sweden	27
2.6.3 Norway.....	28
2.7 Legal requirements and regulations on life-long learning.....	29
2.7.1 Belgium.....	30

2.7.2	France	31
2.7.3	Germany	31
2.7.4	Netherlands.....	32
2.7.5	Portugal	32
2.7.6	Switzerland	32
Chapter 3	Options for trade unions and UNI Europa	34
3.1	Overview of key results.....	34
3.2	Options for trade unions.....	35
3.2.1	Defining different forms of life-long learning.....	35
3.2.2	Promote life-long learning through collective labour agreements	36
3.2.3	Promote life-long learning through collaborative initiatives of social partners	37
3.2.4	Promote life-long learning through government laws and regulations	38
3.3	Options for UNI Europa	39
3.3.1	Social dialogue at the European level.....	39
3.3.2	Lobbying for EU policy initiatives	39
3.3.3	Certification of skills	40
3.3.4	Communications, information exchange and support	40
Reference	41
Appendix 1	Survey questionnaire	45
Appendix 2	List of trade unions that participated in the survey	48

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 - Background of survey respondents (N=50)	12
Figure 2 - Preferred level of involvement of social partners (N=50)	14
Figure 3 - Life-long learning in collective labour agreements (N=50)	19
Figure 4 - Cutting-edge practices/thinking in collective bargaining (N=49).....	20
Figure 5 - Life-long learning topics discussed in CLAs	20
Figure 6 - Cutting-edge practices/thinking beyond collective bargaining (N=49)	27

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 - Respondents to online survey	12
Table 2 - Preferences involvement of social partners at multiple levels (N=15).....	15
Table 3 - Legislation on life-long learning.....	30

SUMMARY

The age of globalisation and digitalisation poses major challenges for society in general and for workers and trade unions in particular. The era of digitalisation should not be dominated by technological innovation alone but also takes into account the interests of workers and society as a whole, creating high-quality jobs and employment across the services sector and fair distribution of benefits and opportunities. To cope with these developments, life-long learning and continuous skills development should be added as a fourth pillar to national education systems, to maintain the employability of workers and to increase their productivity. Thereby, this fourth pillar would contribute to the competitiveness of companies, sectors and economies.

UNI Europa, the European services workers union headquartered in Brussels, is striving for the integration of the impact of digitalisation in social dialogue and collective bargaining. In this respect, UNI Europa commissioned to Profundo to execute a research project on the trends, best practices and barriers in skills development and life-long learning concepts and on the role of trade unions and of UNI Europa in shaping these developments in companies and industries.

To research these questions, an online survey was sent out to trade union affiliates of UNI Europa in and outside Europe. In total, fifty respondents participated in the online survey, from 32 different countries. The findings of this survey were complemented by literature review and by a small number of interview with trade union representatives from different European countries. The preliminary findings were discussed in three workshops on the topic of life-long learning, which were held during a meeting of UNI Europa in Prague in November 2019.

The information and viewpoints collected during these workshops were integrated in this final report, which first presents an overview of trade union activities on life-long learning in Europe and then lists options for further activities for both the national trade unions and for UNI Europa.

Trade union activities on life-long learning

There is a large consensus among UNI Europa affiliates that the facilitation and funding of life-long learning and continuous skills requirements for workers is in the first place a responsibility of employers, and to a lesser extent of governments. However, for most respondents, training of the unemployed is regarded in the first place as a responsibility of governments, with support from sectors and companies.

According to 90% of the respondents, life-long learning should be part of collective labour agreements. Eleven trade unions indicated that they have successfully integrated life-long learning in collective labour agreements. At the same time, sixteen respondents reported that they have put life-long learning on the agenda in dialogue with social partners but, facing resistance from employers, have not been successful in integrating life-long learning in CLAs with employer organisations.

Respondents indicated that there are legal requirements on life-long learning in 16 countries. In two countries, legislation is under development and in 15 countries there are no legal requirements on life-long learning yet. Existing legislations set legal minimum requirements for training for all workers, in terms of the number of training days per year, training budgets and funding sources.

Options for trade unions

From this research project four main options and insights emerged, which the different national trade unions could use to gain more structural support for life-long learning and continuous skills development in their countries:

Defining different forms of life-long learning: Trade unions should clearly define the different forms of life-long learning they deem important, including the different groups of workers they are intended for, to avoid misunderstandings in discussions with employers and governments.

Promote life-long learning through collective labour agreements: Trade unions could use the lessons learned from this research on how to integrate life-long learning provisions in collective labour agreements. These lessons concern:

- Definition of the contents of trainings
- Define the hours available for training: and specify that a specific amount of hours have to be given during working hours.
- Agreements on funding life-long learning, preferably by the employers
- Making skills development easy to attend: for instance through e-learning training at home, with paid leave during working hours,
- Sanctions for companies, which is especially important given the several examples of weak enforcement of CLA requirements on training

Promote life-long learning through collaborative initiatives of social partners: Collective labour agreements are usually not able to self-employed people, zero-hour contractors and employees of SMEs. To make sure that all workers have access to, and use their rights to life-long learning, trade unions could learn from innovative approaches in the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden.

Promote life-long learning through government laws and regulations: Trade unions could also lobby for national legislation which would set legal minimum requirement for the training of workers, as is the case in 16 countries already. A key lesson from these experiences is that the success of such frameworks is dependent on proper enforcement and oversight. Also, it is important that trade unions are involved in managing training budgets and monitoring the contents of training, even if providing and paying for training is the legal responsibility of employers.

Options for UNI Europa

The research results show that UNI Europa can play various roles in promoting life-long learning and continuous skills development in Europe and providing support to the affiliated trade unions:

Social dialogue at the European level: Over the years, UNI Europa has already signed joint declarations with European social partners in the financial and ICT sectors on the importance of life-long learning and continuous skills development. It would be useful if UNI Europa could continue with social dialogues on this topic at the European level.

Lobbying for EU policy initiatives: UNI Europa could lobby for the recognition of life-long learning as a labour right embedded in an EU Directive on Life-long Learning. This directive should oblige EU member states to integrate life-long learning in national labour laws, complemented by agreements negotiated at sector level. UNI Europa could also lobby at the European level to increase co-funding for life-long learning programmes in EU countries

Certification of skills: UNI Europa could help to enhance and harmonise the tools for the definition, recognition, validation and certification of skills acquired through informal and non-formal education.

Communications, information exchange and support: UNI Europa can collect and share among its affiliates the best practices. UNI Europa can serve as a discussion platform and an information and training centre on life-long learning through the collection and exchange of best practices regarding CLAs, social dialogues and legislation on national and sectoral level.

ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Description
CBA	Collective Bargaining Agreement
CET	Continuing Education and Training
CLA	Collective Labour Agreement
FSC-CCOO	Federación de Construcción y Servicios - Confederación Sindical de Comisiones Obreras
FSAB	Federația Sindicatelor din Asigurări și Bănci
Fte	Full-time equivalent
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
LLL	Life-long learning
NITO	Norges Ingeniør- og Teknologorganisasjon
SME	Small or medium enterprise
STAD	Sindicato dos Trabalhadores de Serviços de Portaria, Vigilância, Limpeza, Domésticas e Atividades Diversas
TV-L	Tarifvertrag für den Öffentlichen Dienst der Länder (Collective Bargaining Agreement for the Public Sector of German States)
TVöD	Tarifvertrag für den Öffentlichen Dienst (Collective Bargaining Agreement for the Public Sector)
UGT	Unión General de Trabajadores

INTRODUCTION

The age of globalisation and digitalisation poses major challenges for society in general and for workers and trade unions in particular. Digital technologies offer opportunities for job creation as well as self-employed ways of working. At the same time, digitalisation also creates work-related challenges, for instance loss of administrative jobs, restructuring and worldwide relocation of work due to accelerated digitalisation, and fragmentation of workforces through the increase of flexible jobs. Furthermore, digitalisation leads to new forms of low-paid and precarious work on digital platforms.

Trade unions play a crucial role in ensuring that the era of digitalisation is not dominated by technological innovation alone but also takes into account the interests of workers and society as a whole, creating high-quality jobs and employment across the services sector and fair distribution of benefits and opportunities. To cope with rapid technological innovation and related job transitions and job requirements, life-long learning and continuous skills development should be added as a fourth pillar to national education systems alongside primary, secondary, and tertiary education, to maintain the employability of workers, in order to increase their productivity, and to contribute to the competitiveness of companies.

UNI Europa, the European services workers union headquartered in Brussels, is striving for the integration of the impact of digitalisation in social dialogue and collective bargaining. The project 'Shaping Industrial Relations in a Digitalising Services Industry – Challenges and Opportunities for Social Partners', carried out in 2017-2018, aimed to identify and analyse change factors and explore new approaches for social partners on the challenges of maintaining effective industrial relations systems in a digitalising services industry.

As a follow-up of the previous project, UNI Europa is interested in an in-depth analysis of three topics that have been identified as highly relevant for social dialogue and collective bargaining at national and European level: 1. self-employment; 2. skills; and 3. restructuring processes.

This report is focused on the second topic, "skills", in particular on the following questions: What are the trends, best practices and barriers in skills development and life-long learning concepts and what is the role of trade unions and of UNI Europa in shaping these developments in companies and industries?

The report is structured as follows: Chapter 1 explains the methodology used, as well as the background of respondents to the online survey. Chapter 2 provides a detailed overview of the current state of affairs regarding involvement of trade unions in processes of skills development in companies and industries, specifically focusing on experiences with integrating life-long learning in collective bargaining and legal frameworks. Chapter 3 discusses possible options for trade unions and UNI Europa.

A summary of the findings of this report can be found on the first pages of this report.

CHAPTER 1 METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the methodology used to answer the main research question. Section 1.1 lays out the main research questions, while section 1.2 discusses the research activities and methods involved. Section 1.3 provides an overview of how this report is structured.

1.1 Research questions

The central question of this research is:

what are the trends, best practices and barriers in skills development and life-long learning concepts and what is the role of trade unions and of UNI Europa in shaping these developments in companies and industries?

The central question is broken down in the following research questions:

1. How are trade unions involved in processes of skills development in companies and industries?
2. Which trade union instruments, such as collective bargaining, can be used for shaping the process of skills development in companies and industries?
3. How can trade unions at the national levels and at the European level:
 1. influence/shape the process of skills development in companies and industries;
 2. address barriers experienced by trade unions through collective bargaining when influencing the process of skills development; and
 3. facilitate exchange of information and best practices among affiliates?

1.2 Research activities

These questions were investigated in cooperation with UNI Europa and its affiliates, using a mix of different research activities. The activities are described in the following sub-sections:

1.2.1 Online survey

A survey among social partners was developed to gain insight in current cutting-edge and innovative practices, ideas, debates and views on managing continuous skills development and life-long learning concepts to cope with the job transitions and related job requirements due to digitalisation in the services sector. The questionnaire was prepared in consultation with the Steering Group Committee of UNI Europa, and was sent to 268 UNI Europa affiliates across Europe and a selection of UNI Global affiliates around the world. Appendix 1 lists all the questions included in the online survey.

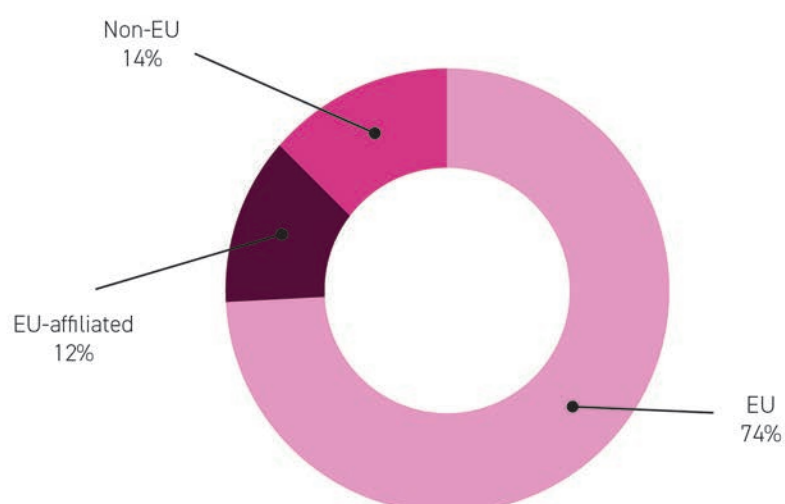
In total, fifty respondents participated in the online survey, from 32 different countries. Table 1 lists all respondents and indicates the number of respondents from countries with more than one respondent.

Table I - Respondents to online survey

No.	Country	No.	Country	No.	Country
1	Belgium (2)	12	Hungary	23	Portugal (3)
2	Bermuda	13	Iceland	24	Romania (2)
3	Brazil	14	India	25	Serbia
4	Croatia (3)	15	Ireland	26	Spain (4)
5	Czech Republic	16	Italy	27	Sri Lanka
6	Cyprus	17	Kenya	28	Sweden (2)
7	Denmark (2)	18	Lithuania	29	Switzerland (2)
8	Finland	19	Malta	30	Turkey
9	France	20	The Netherlands	31	Uganda
10	Germany	21	Norway	32	United Kingdom
11	Ghana	22	Poland		

Figure 1 shows the geographical backgrounds of the respondents to the survey. The large majority of the respondents represent trade unions in EU member states (38 or 74%) or countries affiliated with the EU, either as part of the European Free Trade Association – EFTA (Norway and Switzerland), the EU customs union (Turkey), being a candidate EU member state (Serbia) or intending to leave the EU (United Kingdom). Fourteen percent of the respondents represent trade unions in seven countries outside Europe. For a full list of trade unions that participated in the survey, as well as the sectors covered, see Appendix 2.

Figure 1 - Background of survey respondents (N=50)



1.2.2 Literature study

Industrial relations literature, declarations and agreements reached by European sectoral social dialogues for the services sectors on the topic were reviewed. Both sector-specific and cross-sectoral structures of UNI Europa were covered.

1.2.3 Interviews

Based on the format and outcomes of the survey, more in-depth interviews were conducted with representatives of some selected UNI Europa affiliates. In total, four interviews were held, with members of trade unions in Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, and Sweden.

1.2.4 Workshops

Three workshops on the topic of life-long learning were held during a meeting of UNI Europa in Prague (Czech Republic) in November 2019, at which preliminary findings of this research and a draft report were presented and discussed. Participants from different trade union members of UNI Europa were invited to exchange views and experiences relating to the following three questions:

- How can workers access upskilling and life-long learning?
- How can trade unions influence the content of training, including for future job profiles?
- How can be ensured that all life-long learning is accessible to all workers, regardless of employment status?

1.3 Report

The data and opinions collected with the research activities described in section 1.2 were analysed and summarized in this report. The report follows as much as possible the structure of the research questions. The first question on how trade unions are involved in processes of skills development in companies and industries is discussed in Chapter 2.

Chapter 3 draws conclusions from the findings summarized in Chapter 2. Section 3.1 first summarizes the main trends identified in Chapter 2. Sections 3.2 and 3.3 focus on the third question, on how trade unions can influence/ shape the process of skills development in companies and industries, address barriers experienced by trade unions through collective bargaining when influencing the process of skills development and facilitate exchange of information and best practices among affiliates. Section 3.2 tries to answer this question for the national trade unions, while section 3.3 deals with this question at the level of UNI Europa.

CHAPTER 2 HOW TRADE UNIONS DEAL WITH LIFE-LONG LEARNING

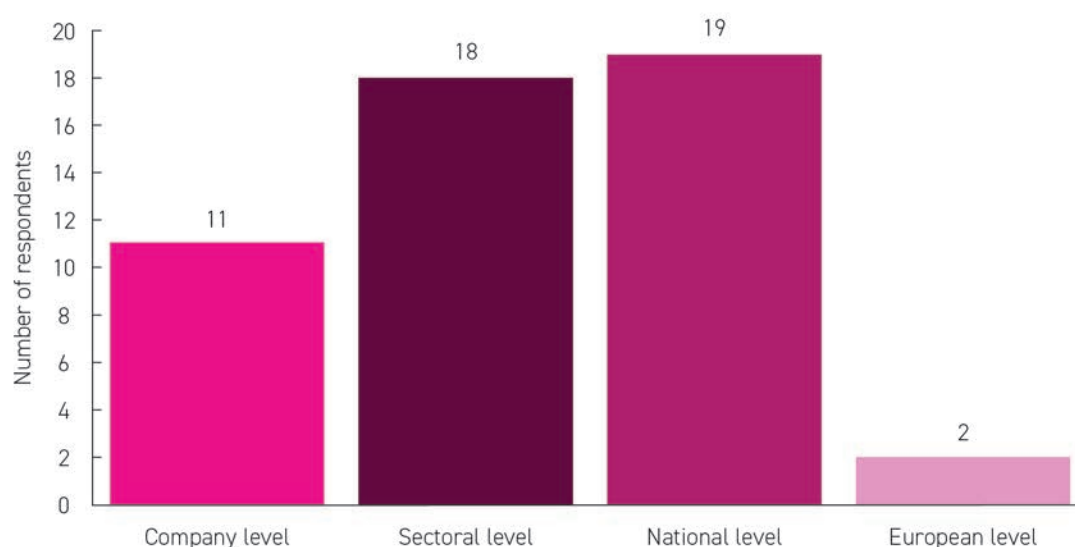
This chapter discusses the current state of affairs regarding trade union involvement in processes of skills development in companies and industries. It presents the results of the online survey that was conducted among UNI Europa affiliates to gain insight into current cutting-edge practices and in social dialogues on managing continuous skills development and life-long learning at the national and European levels. The structure of the chapter follows the structure of the questions in the survey, with each section addressing a different question. In addition, the discussion of the responses to the questionnaire is complemented by data and opinions derived from the interviews and the results of the literature study, which provide both more depth and context to the analysis.

2.1 Role of social partners in the facilitation of life-long learning

Respondents to the survey were asked what the role of social partners should be in facilitating life-long learning and continuous skills development and at what level they should be involved (company, sectoral, national and/or European level). All respondents answered this question.

Most of the respondents have the opinion that life-long learning should firstly be organised and facilitated at national level (38%), secondly at sectoral level (36%), followed by company level (22%) and European level (4%), see Figure 2.

Figure 2 - Preferred level of involvement of social partners (N=50)



In addition, fifteen respondents indicated that the management and development of life-long learning should be organised at more than one level. Table 2 shows the distribution of preferences for different levels of respondents favouring a multi-level approach.

Table 2 - Preferences involvement of social partners at multiple levels (N=15)

Company	Sectoral	National	European	# of Respondents
X	X	X	X	7
X	X	X	-	4
-	X	X	-	3
X	-	X	-	1
				15

According to seven respondents, social partners should be involved at all levels (company, sectoral, national and European) in the management and facilitation of life-long learning and continuous skills development. As trade unions in European countries already interact with social partners on all levels, that should also be the case regarding the topic of life-long learning. Each level deals with specific issues regarding life-long learning and the roles of social partners on different levels are complimentary.

Involvement of social partners at the European and national levels can create an enabling environment for life-long learning, to drive and assist companies. Furthermore, at the European and national levels, life-long learning programmes developed at sectoral and company level can be evaluated, initiatives can be taken for further improvement, and best practices can be disseminated and exchanged among social partners. Because of the common European market, involvement of social partners at the European level is also important to create a level playing field and guarantee equal treatment of employees.

However, as one of the respondents from an EU member state pointed out, European level solutions can be difficult, because of unwieldy decision-making in the Union's internal institutions, as well as limited competences in this field at the European level, and therefore, for strategic reasons, social dialogue on specific policies and measures could focus on national and cross-sectoral level. For instance, one of the key issues identified by the respondents is funding and equal access to life-long learning, which needs involvement of social partners on a national level, to ensure equal treatment of employees among different sectors.

According to four respondents, social partners should be involved at company, sectoral and national levels, which can be partly explained by the fact that some of these respondents represent trade unions outside Europe and therefore, involvement at the European level is not relevant. A tripartite approach, involving governments, employers organisations and trade unions, is considered important in order to develop policy frameworks on life-long learning and continuous skills development on national levels, and if possible, on sectoral levels, which can cascade to lower levels and be applied in individual companies. Moreover, tripartite strategies on life-long learning should be inclusive, and cover the whole life cycle of people, from vocational and professional training, to further training of unemployed people and re-entry on the labour market, and to training for (older) workers to maintain and improve their position on the labour market.

However, the actual implementation of European and national policies takes place at regional, sectoral and company levels, such as the definition of sector or company-specific skills requirements, development of sectoral/company training plans and standard setting, and incorporating life-long learning in collective labour negotiations,

collective agreements and individual employment contracts, including clauses on funding of life-long learning. As one of the respondents pointed out, depending on the labour relations in individual countries, sometimes negotiations on a company level will be more effective, in case a constructive social dialogue on sectoral level is absent.

2.2 Policy strategies of trade unions on life-long learning

Trade unions were asked whether they have developed a policy strategy on life-long learning (LLL). All respondents answered this question. 66% of the respondents (33) indicated that there are policies in place, while 34% (17) of the respondents do not have policies or strategies on life-long learning.

Top priority in the policies of trade unions is structural integration of life-long learning in collective labour agreements (CLAs), as well as establishing a statutory training leave, (re)training for unemployed people and trainings in the event of major job transitions. Furthermore, they lobby on more public spending on life-long learning and continuous skills development. Trade unions also organise trainings to enhance the employability of their members, such as improvement of ICT skills.

Part of the policies of trade unions is also the investment in strategic development, research and capacity building on life-long learning. For example, the Irish trade union for employees in the financial sector (FSU) is involved in a research project with regard to LLL in partnership with the University of Limerick. The results will be used for future campaigns on skills.

In the following sub-sections, some best practices are highlighted with regard to trade union strategies on life-long learning, and the cooperation with social partners.

2.2.1 Netherlands

The Dutch trade union FNV provides an interesting example with regard to a social dialogue about life-long learning and continuous skills development between social partners, employers, trade unions and national advisory boards, taking place in the so-called Labour Foundation ('Stichting van de Arbeid'). According to the Foundation, all employees should have access to new knowledge and skills, for career development and to improve their employability within and outside the sector they are employed.

Employers should encourage further training and skills development of their employees by providing an individual training budget, which could be spent on courses, workshops, traineeships and professional/vocational education, deploying a career coach or recording experience gained at the workplace in qualification certificates or other validation instruments. Furthermore, employers are recommended to specify the knowledge and skills required for job positions and offer facilities to employees to acquire knowledge and skills and ensure that these are accessible to all employees.¹

2.2.2 Romania

At the end of 2019, the Romanian trade union for workers in banking and insurance (FSAB) signed an agreement with its social partners, clearly describing the content of trainings at the workplace, including:

1. Digital Skills - aimed at improving the skills of using IT systems and infrastructure, so that employees can more easily adapt to such tools, regardless of their present employer (e.g. PC Literacy and reporting skills, Analytical and Numerical skills, Digital Awareness);
2. Collaboration through digital channels - aiming at acquiring / improving the skills of using remote work / collaboration tools such as video conferencing, messaging, management of remote project teams, etc;
3. Customer satisfaction and approach in the context of digitalization - aiming at employees to acquire skills / competences for easier use of the tools / operations made available by the employer from the digital perspective.

2.2.3 Spain

The General Union of Workers (UGT) in Spain has invested in internal capacity development and building expertise on the topic, strategic development, research and social dialogue as well as offering training to its members. UGT has been a forerunner in discussions on continuous education in Spain since 1992, participating in the Foundation for Continuous Education, with participation from unions, employers and the government.

In October 2018, UGT presented the study “Impact of automation on employment in Spain”. According to the UGT, digitalisation is a “disruptive factor” in the labour market, especially due to the emergence of digital platforms and the negative impacts on workers’ rights and labour conditions. On the one hand, the ICT revolution will result in a million jobs in Spain. However, the downside of this development is a loss of jobs due to automation, a loss in the quality of labour, and an increase of inequalities and increasing polarization, UGT warned at the launch of the report.²

According to UGT, regulation is needed to ensure that the opportunities offered by new technologies lead to an increase in productivity and competitiveness and that the negative impacts on employment are softened. In the short term, it is essential that social partners develop a “National Technology Inclusion Plan”, which should include adapting formal education to the current demands of the labour market, training workers in new technologies and digital skills, analysing and integrating the impact of digitalisation on employment in collective bargaining, including the right to continuous training at the workplace. In the medium term, the standard working week should be reduced to 32 hours and promote employment in those sectors that would directly benefit from the reduction of working hours, such as those related to health and care, leisure or ecology. On the long run, there should be a tax reform, imposing tax on new technologies, in order to redistribute the wealth and profits generated due to new technologies, and launch new income systems for workers who cannot adapt to the digital revolution.³

Two months later, in December 2018, social partners, namely the employers’ organisation representing ICT companies (AMATIC) together with trade unions in Spain, launched a manifest calling for a digital transformation of the Spanish economy towards Spain 4.0. The digital transformation should be centred on people, by means of an adequate introduction of ICT technology at the workplace. The parties agreed that key focus points are:⁴

- Communication between the company, workers and their representatives should be based on the intention that the company does not replace workers with machines, as well as ensure data protection;
- Training is seen as fundamental for an adequate use of technology and for employability; and
- Developing a Technology Implementation Action Plan, which allows, if appropriate, the creation of complementary jobs before the incorporation of new technologies.

Similar to the recommendations of the UGT study mentioned before, the manifest recommends the formalisation of a pilot programme to assess the impact of digitalisation at the workplace. The programme should focus on the impacts on process improvements, productivity, employment and on physical and mental wellbeing. In case the pilot assessment results in the conclusion that certain activities or jobs will disappear or transform, recommendations should be made on job creation and training activities to fit workers in newly created jobs. After completing the assessment, the management of the company needs to report the results to its employees. AMETIC, CCOO and UGT has established a committee to follow-up the recommendations from the manifest.⁵

The manifest also includes recommendations that go beyond cooperation and communications between employees and employee representatives. In order to give a boost to the Spanish economy and close the (gender) gap of digital competences, the acquisition of digital skills needs to be incorporated from primary education onwards, and from a young age, girls and women need to be encouraged to choose so-called STEM vocations (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). Acquiring (basic) digital skills as well as more advanced vocational and professional ICT technology should be further increased in the catalogue of vocational and university degrees.⁶

2.3 Life-long learning as fourth pillar of education system

Trade unions were asked whether current formal education systems - primary, secondary and tertiary education - need a fourth pillar: life-long learning. All respondents (N=50) answered this question. 84% (42) of the respondents agreed that the education system needs a fourth pillar: life-long learning, while 16% (8) of the respondents did not agree.

Formal education may provide an entry to the labour market. However, rapid technological innovations, along with changing customer preferences and tastes, impact the supply and demand of products and services, and lead to job transitions and fast changes in skills requirements. Therefore, in the long run, formal education does not guarantee employability and job security in the labour market. As the French trade union for telecommunications pointed out, fifty years ago formal education was relevant for most of the professional life, but nowadays, formal education is obsolete in 3.5 to ten years. Therefore, life-long learning is crucial for employees to be able to keep a job and pursue a career.

According to most respondents, funding of life-long learning and continuous skills development is in the first place the responsibility of employers. Governments could encourage investments in training by providing tax exemptions to employers or direct contributions from tax revenues, like income and corporation tax. Furthermore, respondents suggested that, just like the establishment of occupational pension schemes, employers could facilitate life-long learning through contributions to a skills fund, either at the sectoral or the company level.

Life-long learning arrangements should be inclusive and accessible not only for employees, but also for unemployed people and those excluded from the labour market entirely. This requires involvement of all social partners, but also requires contributions from the state and funding from unemployment insurance arrangements funded by employers and employees.

Giving employers the primary role in facilitating life-long learning also has a downside. If employers finance training, they may also want to determine which training is in their best interest. This could limit the training options for employees to company- or sector-specific skills requirements. The establishment of training funds

on an European or national level, funded by contributions from all social partners, could guarantee that counselling and decision making is focused on the needs and potential of individual workers, in combination with knowledge about current and future gaps in supply and demand at the labour market. One of the respondents suggested that funding for life-long learning programs should come from the European Union through co-financing by the European Social Fund, the Erasmus program, and national resources.

A few respondents shared the view that life-long learning should be the primary responsibility of the national governments and added as a fourth pillar to other forms of education. This means that, just like primary, secondary and tertiary training, it should be funded from government budgets. However, whether this is feasible can be doubted as in most (European) countries, only primary and secondary education is completely free of charge, whereas tertiary education requires financial contributions from students as well. This would make it likely that fourth pillar education should be funded partially by contributions from employees themselves, in combination with support from the state. Leaving out the responsibility of employers in facilitating life-long learning would impose an unfair financial burden on employees.

2.4 Life-long learning in collective labour agreements (CLAs)

Figure 3 shows the respondents' answer to the question whether life-long learning should be part of collective labour agreements (CLAs). According to 90% of the respondents, life-long learning should be part of collective labour agreements. 58% of the respondents fully agree with this approach and 32% agrees. 4% of the respondents do not agree and 6% of the respondents have no opinion about it.

Figure 3 - Life-long learning in collective labour agreements (N=50)

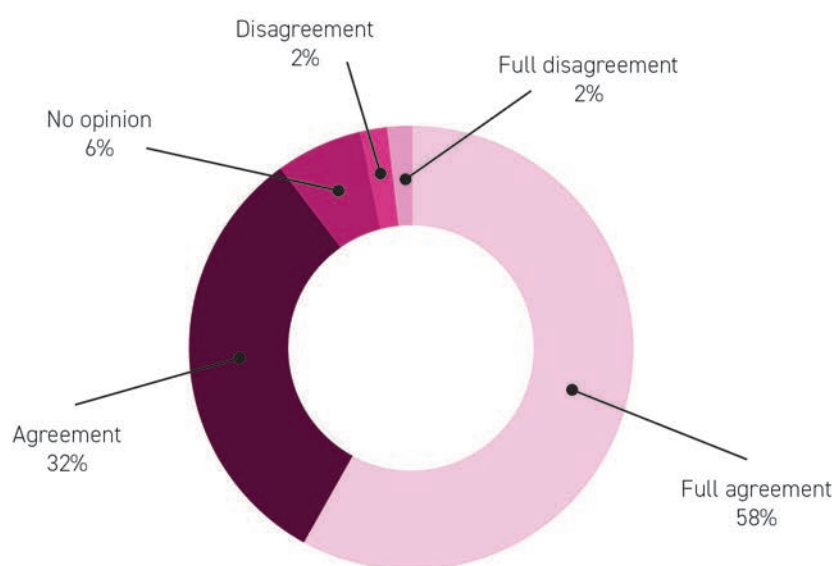
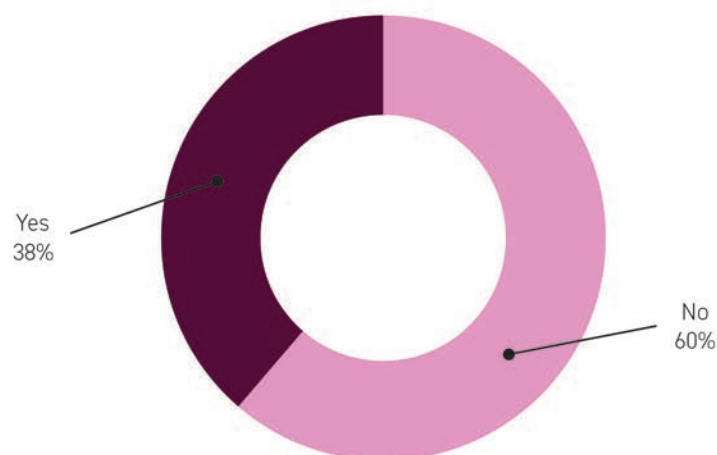


Figure 4 shows that most respondents (60%) are not aware of any cutting-edge practices or thinking in collective bargaining in relation to lifelong learning, whereas 38% have experience with integrating lifelong learning in collective bargaining processes.

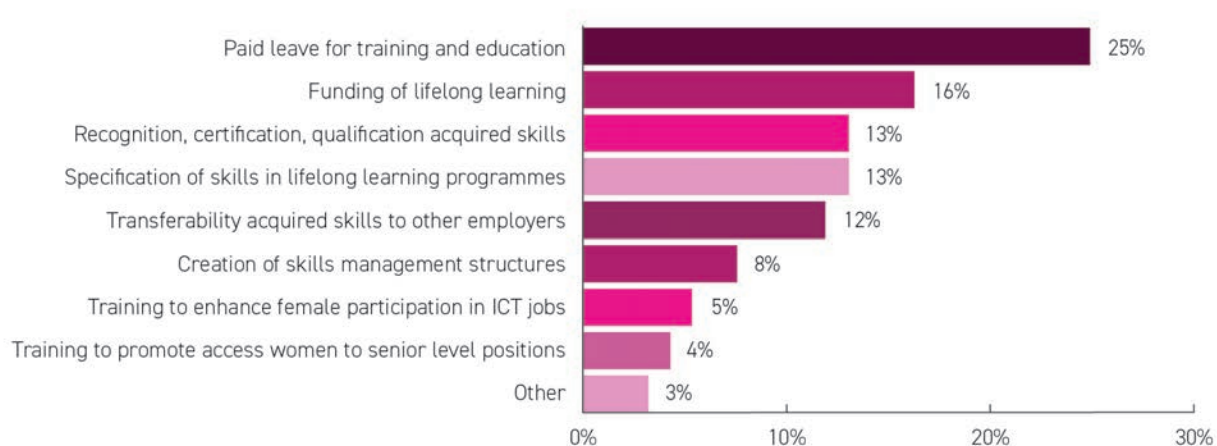
Figure 4 - Cutting-edge practices/thinking in collective bargaining (N=49)



Key issues in collective bargaining processes about life-long learning and continuous skills development are paid leave for employees to participate in trainings and the funding of trainings costs, see Figure 5. Some of the trade unions have been successful in integrating clauses on life-long learning in collective labour agreements, which will be discussed in subsections 2.4.1 to 2.4.11. However, almost one third of the respondents faced resistance by employers in facilitating training for their employees, primarily due to the costs involved (see section 2.5).

A major topic is also the specification of skills that need to be acquired to meet and maintain job requirements, and to increase employability of employees on the labour market. Furthermore, of major concern is recognition, certification and qualification of acquired skills through informal and non-formal education. Validation of acquired knowledge and skills is in the interest of employees in relation to career planning and career opportunities within and outside the company they work. Best practices in this field are discussed further in section 2.6.

Figure 5 - Life-long learning topics discussed in CLAs



Eleven trade unions indicated that they have successfully integrated life-long learning in collective labour agreements, of which nine shared the contents of the agreement. Furthermore, in Sweden the funding of outplacement trajectories in case of redundancies is part of CLAs (Swedish Engineers).

Another seven respondents referred to CLAs in place, but it was not fully clear whether these CLAs also include clauses on life-long learning and continuous skills development. According to the Norwegian trade union NITO, “all sectors have the opportunity to education, but the CLAs do not give the workers any concrete rights to education”. Thirty respondents did not answer this question.

The following sub-sections describe the experiences with the integration of life-long learning in CLAs in different countries.

2.4.1 Belgium

In Belgium, as part of the collective labour agreement for the private sector, social partners (employers' organisations and trade unions) agreed on clauses with regard to training of employees. This follows from the legal obligation to implement the “Flexible and Workable Work” (FWW) act, which entered into force on 1 February 2017.

As a supplement to the existing CLA, during 2019 employers must grant a minimum of two days training per employee, per fulltime equivalent. On top of that, employees are entitled to minimum one day professional training in 2019 outside working hours, during the evening or in weekends. The training needs to be aimed at improving the skills of employees and provided by or recognized by Cevora, a training institute specified in the CLA. Workers are granted paid leave to participate in the training plus compensation for travel costs.⁷

In the CLA for the coming years, employers with 20 or more employees, need to grant a minimum of on average five days per full time equivalent in the two-year period 2020-2021 and six days per fte in 2022-2023. Similar to the previous CLA, employees have the right to one day of additional professional training outside working hours. Companies with less than 20 employees need to grant a maximum of 4 training days per two years. Employers need to provide paid training during working hours or compensate the time spent in case of training outside working hours. Also travel costs need to be compensated. The training arrangements do not apply to employees with a temporary contract of 1 year or less.⁸

The CLAs also include provisions with regard to trade union consultation, differentiating between companies with and without trade union representation. Training and education plans per company need to be approved by the majority of trade union representatives with the company and deposited at the social fund. In case no agreement is reached, four of the training days will be individual training days. For companies without a trade union representation, two up to three training days need to be individual training days. For companies with less than 20 employees two days need to be individual training days.⁹

Pedro Maes, cash in transit driver and member of FGTB-CG, present at the workshop in Prague and interviewed for this research, however emphasized that in reality, employers do not meet the legally required growth path from minimum two up to five training days per year.¹⁰

Employees working in security, like Pedro himself, are legally required to perform a shooting test, every six to twelve months, in order to maintain their license. Some employers mix up these required shooting tests with the

legal right of two to five days of training which follows from the FWW. However, required shooting trainings and the right to life-long learning are two different things. Employers tend to abuse the required professional shooting training for not granting other paid leave for life-long learning. Some employers make it even a showcase during roadshows and manipulate training statistics, pretending they facilitate life-long learning and implement the FWW, but in fact, the statistics (only or also) reflect legally required professional training, needed to refresh or extend the professional certification.

According to Pedro, there is a lack of control mechanisms to monitor whether employers meet the legal requirements of facilitating life-long learning. The social fund is responsible for the enforcement of the FFW act, but in reality, enforcement is weak. Trade unions will continue monitoring the implementation of the FWW, and report cases of abuse, and, based on the monitoring results, will exert pressure to impose sanctions on companies that do not (sufficiently) comply with the FWW.

2.4.2 Cyprus

In the banking and insurance sector in Cyprus, a right to two days of training per year is part of the sectoral CLA. As part of negotiations on renewal of the CLA, the trade union requests for an expansion to ten days annually. The CLA also includes clauses on gender equality in education. Furthermore, financial institutions in Cyprus offer seminars to their employees, primarily aimed at adapting knowledge and skills related to new legislation or the introduction of new systems and not on improvement of individual skills development or increasing the future prospects of employees in their organisation.

2.4.3 Czech Republic

The collective agreement (2019) for Czech Radio workers includes clauses on employee training and development. As an employer, Czech Radio is required to create the proper conditions for maintaining, renewing, deepening and extending the qualifications of its employees by preparing appropriate educational programs and reimburses the costs involved. As part of the annual performance review and evaluation interviews with employees, an individual training plan and training budget is discussed. Compulsory training and employees' examinations take place during working hours, also for employees with irregular working hours. As part of the CLA, Czech Radio is committed to financial support for employees in 2019 and beyond and has increased the budget for education for 2019.¹¹

2.4.4 Germany

According to Roman Jaich, a representative from German trade union Ver.di who was interviewed for this research, attempts to integrate skills development into collective bargaining in Germany started in the 1990s, when the printing business underwent rapid digitalisation of printing and typesetting.¹² The first CLAs with skills development provisions were process oriented and did not provide details such as a minimum number of days of workers' right to training. Workers did have the right to periodic qualification evaluations, which could result in training.

Other Ver.di programmes for enhancing worker access to training and education have included the "further education" initiative, which was part of a federal initiative to promote the equality of women in the economy, and the programme "secure skilled workers", which has promoted further education and equal access to the labour market.

For employees in the public sector in Germany (local governments, states and federal government), the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) also includes a paragraph (§ 5) on qualification and life-long learning.¹³

The agreement stipulates that there needs to be a periodic, preferably annual, qualification interview with workers, to review and discuss whether there is a need for further qualification and which training would be appropriate.

A difference is made between various forms of training:¹⁴

- Maintenance training - development of professional, methodological and social competences;
- Further education - the acquisition of additional qualifications;
- Retraining - qualification for another job (job security); and
- Re-entry qualification - training during or after a long absence.

All training costs are borne by the employer, including paid leave to participate in training, but in individual cases this may involve an own contribution from the employee, in money or in time.¹⁵

The CBA does not specify a minimum of days or hours per year an employee is entitled to participate in trainings.

2.4.5 Italy

In Italy, the social partners in various sectors have concluded collective labour agreements with clauses on life-long learning and continuous education. The collective labour agreement for the government sector, closed in February 2014, includes provisions on:

- Basic training: Training in basic skills such as IT skills, language skills and job application skills;
- "On the job" training: Linking the basic professional qualification of the worker with specific job requirements in the production or organisational context;
- Professional training: Vocational training aimed at the acquisition of new professional qualifications following from an analysis of the need of new or specific skills.
- Continuous education and life-long learning: These are initiatives aimed primarily at adapting the qualifications of workers to changing job requirements and tasks, by skills development and the acquisition of indispensable qualifications to strengthen the competitiveness and productivity of companies and their staff. Continuous education is open for workers who have worked at least two months during the last year; they can request for a period of paid leave to participate in a training course during or outside working hours. Life-long learning is aimed at unemployed.¹⁶

Social partners in the government sector have established a professional training fund to finance training initiatives aimed at increasing the employability of workers and adaptation to changing job requirements due to changes within the organisational structure or production processes within the companies that fall under the agreement.¹⁷ Employers in the sector are obliged to facilitate training to at least 10 to 35% of the employees per year.¹⁸

Provisions for life-long learning are also included in the collective labour agreement for employees in the financial sector, closed in March 2015. Employees with a permanent contract are entitled to a minimum of 24 hours per year, during working hours. On top of that, they have the right to 26 hours of training outside offices hours, of which eight hours are paid. Female workers are encouraged to use the training hours to get access to senior management

positions. Any training hours not used by the workers within the period set, may be used in the nine months after expiry.¹⁹

The social partners in the financial sector have established a central education fund (2012), managed by the sector organisation Encicredito, to carry out the obligation regarding training and education that follow from the CLA. The fund is fuelled by contributions from employees of companies in the financial sector with permanent contracts. The contributions are due, on an experimental basis, for the years 2012-2016, and currently subject of extension, as part of current negotiations on renewal of the CLA.²⁰

The employee contribution is set at the rate of one working day per employee per year, which is compensated by time reduction clauses that are part of the CLA or waiving one of the bank holidays that are part of employment contracts. The financial contribution to the fund is calculated as 1/360 of the annual salary. For management staff, a further contribution of 4% of their fixed salary is allocated to the fund, which is guaranteed by the company.²¹

In return, for a period of 3 years the fund provides companies a yearly amount of EUR 2,500 for each worker with a permanent contract under the following conditions:²²

- Young unemployed up to 32 years of age;
- Long-term unemployed people of any age;
- Women in disadvantaged geographical areas;
- Disabled;
- Workers in southern regions with higher unemployment rates, especially juvenile workers.

With regard to the latter two categories, the aforementioned annual amount is increased by 20%.

2.4.6 Finland

In Finland, the Service Union United (PAM) has concluded a Collective Agreement for the Facilities Services Sector with Real Estate Employers which also includes clauses on training facilities. Employees that have completed an approved training listed in the CLA will get an education or training supplement on top of their salary as from the beginning of the pay period immediately following the achievement of an approved certificate. The qualification increment is calculated on the basis of the job-specific pay, and it is a separate component of the pay structure in addition to the job-specific pay component. The amount of qualification increment is 2% for an upper secondary vocational qualification, 3% for a further vocational qualification and 5% for a specialist vocational qualification relevant to the field. The increment is payable according to the highest qualification completed by the employee.²³

2.4.7 Netherlands

In the Netherlands, arrangements on training facilities are part of a large number of collective labour agreements in different sectors and industries.

2.4.8 Portugal

In Portugal, the employers' organisation of (private) security companies (AES) and the trade union for security, housekeeping and cleaning employees (STAD), signed a collective labour agreement in December 2018, which also

includes a clause on (vocational) training.²⁴

On top of legally required training hours, namely the necessary training for the renewal of the professional card (certificate), the employers are obliged to facilitate the further development and adequacy of their workers' qualifications, to improve their employability and increasing the productivity and competitiveness of companies. Employers need to bear the costs of the training (training costs, paid leave and transport costs). Furthermore, they need to issue documents or certificates proving that employees have attended and successfully completed the training (course). When filling vacancies, employers need to take (recently) acquired qualifications of their employees into consideration and give preference to their own employees, provided that they meet the job requirements.²⁵

The CLA does not stipulate minimum requirements on the number of training hours employees are entitled to.

2.4.9 Romania

In December 2018, social partners in the Romanian financial sector (banking and insurance) signed their first sectoral collective labour agreement.²⁶ The signatories - the Federation of Financial Services of Romania (FinBan Federation) and the Federation of Insurance and Banking Unions (FSAB), also agreed on facilitating life-long learning and continuous education, differentiated in vocational training and continuous professional training.²⁷

Vocational training (for development) is defined as a training process to acquire new theoretical and/or practical knowledge that is not closely related to the job requirements and position of the employee. Participation in such a training can take place on the initiative of the employer or on the initiative of the employee. In the first case all costs incurred by this participation will be borne by the employer. In the latter case, the costs will be either for the employee or shared 50-50 by the employer and the employee, in case the employer considers that the training requested by the employee is related to his or her job profile and there is sufficient budget available from the side of the employer. In case the employer bears all or part of the costs, the employee will get paid leave to participate in the training.²⁸ The CLA does not specify the minimum hours of training an employee is entitled to.

Continuous professional training (specialization) is the acquisition or updating of knowledge and skills directly related to the job profile, position and organisational unit of the employee. Employers have the obligation to ensure that employees participate at least once a year in a continuous professional training course. The expenses will be borne by the employer. Furthermore, each year employers need to develop a professional training plan, in consultation with union representatives, which specifies the organisational units and/or field of activities of employees attending the courses, the estimated number of hours per employee to participate in the training programmes, broken down in classroom training and e-learning, and the type of professional training courses and programmes. In principle, all continuous professional training courses will take place during working hours. In case the courses are organised outside working hours, an allowance will be paid.²⁹

Finally, the social partners that signed the agreement will meet at least twice a year, to discuss and identify necessary and useful programs for employees, including retraining programs, to ensure that the knowledge and skills of employees within the sector will be kept up to date.³⁰

2.4.10 Sweden

In Sweden, training and skills development is covered by many collective agreements. However, as participants in the November 2019 workshop mentioned, high workloads mean that there is often only limited time for workers to focus on training. To ameliorate this, the participants suggested that training needs should be part of the overall strategy of a company and be integrated into its business planning.³¹

2.4.11 Switzerland

The social partners in the telecom sector, Syndicom (the union of media and communication) and Transfair (the trade union for public service), have included clauses on life-long learning and continuous skills development in the collective labour agreement for Swisscom Ltd., the largest telecom provider in Switzerland. As part of the standards conditions of employment, the CLA sets conditions for career development, vocational training and skills training, formulated as follows:³²

“Swisscom accepts its social responsibility as an employer and ICT company and aims to provide its employees with the best possible support on their way into the digitalised world of work. The aim of career development is to maintain and increase the individual’s employable skills. This presumes a general willingness to learn and personal commitment on the part of the employee with the company requirements, which are based on the corporate strategy and company goals”.

Career development at Swisscom consists of internal and external training offers, differentiated in ‘off-the-job’, ‘near-the-job’ and ‘on-the-job’ training, aimed at maintaining existing capabilities and developing potential capabilities. From 2019, each employee is entitled to a minimum of five working days per calendar year for training and further education, in accordance with the Swiss “Entitlement to 5 Days’ Continuous Training” regulations (see section 2.7.6). Employees control their own career path and are prepared to make their own contribution and to strengthen their employability. Career development plans and required training measures are discussed and recorded on an individual level, during employee dialogues and appraisals which are conducted on a regular basis.³³

2.5 Obstacles for involving social partners in life-long learning

Sixteen trade unions responded that they have not been successful in integrating life-long learning in social dialogues and collective bargaining agreements because of resistance from the side of employers.

According to some of the respondents, employers lack the resources to invest in training or perceive investments in training only as costs and not as beneficial for the company, especially since continuation of an employee with the company is not guaranteed. Furthermore, social dialogue about life-long learning depends on a general openness from the side of employers towards the involvement of trade unions in setting the labour standards of their employees, which is not always the case. The Romanian trade union for the ICT sector (ANTIC) experiences that multinationals in Romania “do not want the involvement of the unions”.

In other cases, secondary labour conditions like life-long learning are not considered a priority if primary employment conditions are insufficient. Two unions explained that there are more pressing issues that require their attention. The Hungarian Trade Union of Commerce Employees clarified that “first we try to solve the biggest

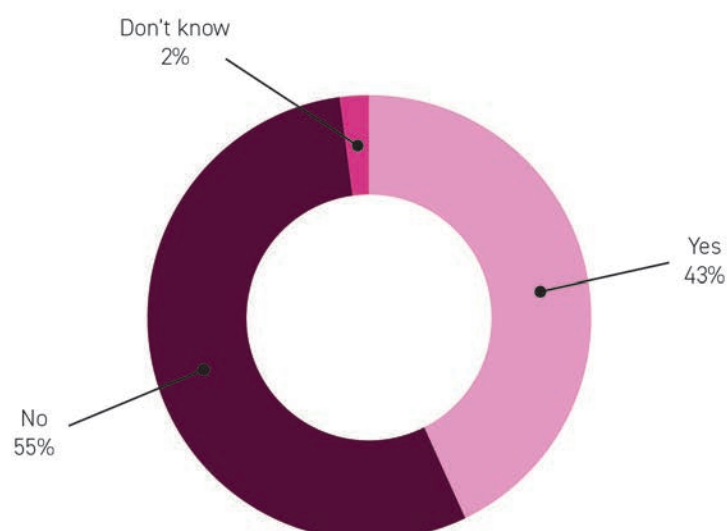
problems which are the low wages and the poor working conditions. If we will achieve to solve these, we will start to think about it". The Turkish trade union for employees in the financial sector (Basisen) focuses CBA negotiations mostly on job security and pay rises due to economic conditions.

Furthermore, trade union members may prefer higher wages over access to training, as the Swedish Transport Workers Union explained. An education fund was part of the CBA, but it was negotiated away because the union members preferred to get a higher basic salary over funding for skills development.

2.6 Cutting-edge practices/thinking beyond collective bargaining

Figure 6 shows that most respondents (55%) are not aware of any cutting-edge practices or thinking beyond collective bargaining in relation to long life learning, whereas 43% have experience with integrating life-long learning in research projects and lobbying activities.

Figure 6 - Cutting-edge practices/thinking beyond collective bargaining (N=49)



Possible cutting-edge practices beyond collective bargaining that were mentioned in the responses to the online survey are focused on recognition, certification and qualification of skills acquired by non-formal and informal training. The following subsections present some examples of cutting-edge practices from different countries.

2.6.1 Denmark

The Danish trade union HK/Privat lobbies the government to create possibilities for people to shift to other jobs in other sectors. This could be achieved by funding two years of paid leave for moving to jobs in sectors that have a shortage of (skilled) workers.

2.6.2 Sweden

In Sweden, many sectors have 'branch validation' systems in place, which establish and validate sector-wide skills

standards and qualifications, including those acquired at the workplace.³⁴ Anette Andersson, a representative for the Swedish trade union Unionen, was interviewed in this context. Anette was a member of the board of the organisation for the trade sector (shops, retail, hotels, restaurants) which was involved in developing a system of branch validations, including sector-wide objectives and comparable qualifications, which could serve as a basis for life-long learning tools, standards and certification.

However, several barriers to the effective development of such systems exist. Barriers to the development of such systems may depend on specific aspects of the sector itself. According to Anette, there is for instance a large variety of qualifications, tasks and responsibilities for many different jobs in the hotels and restaurants branch. In addition, qualifications change very fast, which makes it difficult to set up a sector-wide set of qualifications that can last for a certain period of time without losing its relevancy. This problem applies to some extent to the private sector at large, where the constantly changing job requirements make it difficult to develop a flexible, dynamic model that can be applied to specific and multiple professions.

2.6.3 Norway

Norway is a frontrunner in the establishment of a national, multi-year strategy on skills development and projects aimed at the qualification of skills acquired at the workplace. The tripartite 'Norwegian Strategy for Skills Policy' (2017-2021) has been developed by the Norwegian government in cooperation with social partners (employers' associations, trade unions and education associations). The skills policy provides an overall strategy covering formal (professional and vocational) education as well as informal learning and continuous skills development at the workplace. Furthermore, the policy seeks to provide strategies for a more inclusive labour market by addressing specific challenges and needs of social groups like the Sami population in Norway, refugees and immigrants, and people that lack the basic education and skills to access the labour market.³⁵

The strategy includes measures aimed at more coordination of education and training at local, regional and national level. This was also recommended by the OECD that observed lack of coordination between stakeholders in education, the labour market, the national as well as regional/local governments. The OECD advised Norway to set up a skills strategy incorporating a whole-of-government approach and strong stakeholder involvement.³⁶

One of the measures is the establishment of a Securing Future Skills Needs Committee consisting of researchers, analysts and representatives of all the main social partners and ministries.³⁷ The Committee is to compile and analyse sources of knowledge about in order to provide a comprehensive overview of future skills needs, and project future labour shortage in several sectors, including shortages in vocational education and training (VET).³⁸ Such insights are a prerequisite for better coordinated national and regional policy development and planning. Knowledge about future skills needs can also be of use in career guidance services and could be made available to people who are about to make choices relating to education and employment.³⁹

Another measure is the further development of career guidance services aimed at strengthening individuals' ability and opportunity to make informed choices. Career guidance early in the educational pathway may prevent and reduce dropout rates and poor choices in secondary education and later studies, as well as counteract traditional gender choices. Career guidance may also help seniors to better meet changing skills demands in the labour market. It can promote their mobility so they can remain longer in employment.⁴⁰

The policy acknowledges that the need for new skills in the labour market cannot be covered only by the influx of new graduates and promotes learning in the workplace: “More senior workers, rapid changes in the labour market and the need for people to keep working longer mean that life-long learning will be of great importance in the future”.⁴¹ The strategy also calls for more research into the return on value of learning in the workplace, both for the company or organisation, the employees and the community. The policy emphasizes the need for more knowledge about how businesses can facilitate targeted learning as well as the importance of good cooperation between employer organisations and trade unions and which skills developments provide the best return on investment.⁴²

In order to make better use of skills acquired in a learning-intensive labour market, the policy also stresses the importance of further development and improvement of systems for documentation of skills: “Many employees may have long work experience, but little documentation of the skills they have acquired. In pursuing a new education or continuing education, prior learning should be recognised and validated for admission to an education, or recognition of a part of a degree, leading to faster educational progress”. The recognition of skills acquired while working can also be valuable when changing jobs or having to perform new work tasks. Finally, a method for documenting skills can be useful for human resources management within a company as it “may make it easier to obtain an overview of a company’s skills profile, development potential and thereby improve services or productivity”.⁴³

One of the measures proposed in the Norwegian Skills Policy Strategy is to simplify the process by which skills acquired in the workplace are documented, so that they can be utilised effectively.⁴⁴ One of the partners to the policy, the Norwegian federation of employers in the private sector (VIRKE), has developed a method and model for describing skills acquired in the workplace. The project aimed to define skills standards in the workplace in the same way as standards are defined in the formal education system.⁴⁵ The project focused on skills development in the retail sector, in close cooperation with three Norwegian retail chains (Kiwi, Meny and IKEA), but, according to the authors, can be transferred to any workplace including the services sector.⁴⁶

The report distinguishes between describing skills and validating skills. The first step towards a fair appraisal of skills is to start with the best possible description of the skills acquired. An accurate appraisal of those skills is the next natural step in the process.⁴⁷

The report recommends the development of a new national standard for learning outcomes, to bridge the gap between the education system and the workplace. Common criteria for qualifications should be established and used both in the education system and in the workplace. This will make it possible to compare skills standards in the workplace and qualifications in the formal education system. This can be negotiated in collaborative dialogue within the Norwegian tri-partite model between government, employers and employees with involvement of other relevant stakeholders.⁴⁸

2.7 Legal requirements and regulations on life-long learning

A total of 22 trade unions indicated that there are legal requirements on life-long learning in their respective countries, 16 in total. In two countries, legislation is under development and in 15 countries there are no legal requirements on life-long learning yet (see Table 3).

Table 3 - Legislation on life-long learning

	Legislation LLL	Under development	No legislation LLL
1.	Belgium	Czech Republic	Bermuda
2.	Croatia	Sri Lanka	Brazil
3.	Denmark		Cyprus
4.	Finland		France
5.	Germany		Hungary
6.	Ghana		India
7.	Iceland		Ireland
8.	Italy		Lithuania
9.	Kenya		Poland
10.	Malta		Serbia
11.	Norway		Switzerland
12.	Portugal		the Netherlands
13.	Romania		Turkey
14.	Spain		United Kingdom
15.	Sweden		
16.	Uganda		

The following subsections provide further details on legislation regarding life-long learning for a number of specific countries.

2.7.1 Belgium

In Belgium, the “Flexible and Workable Work” (FWW) act entered into force in February 2017. This law provides a legal framework for flexible working hours and training of employees and replaces previous regulation on training facilities.⁴⁹

The new law provides for the organization of training in collective labour agreements (CLAs), either at sectoral or at company level, by creating an individual training account which gives employees the right to on average two to five days of training per year, per full-time equivalent. The law provides some flexibility in the implementation thereof, depending on the situation.⁵⁰

- **New CLA**

In case of the establishment of a new collective labour agreement, it should provide for a training effort of on average two days a year, per full-time equivalent, and a time frame to achieve the average of five training days per year, per full-time equivalent.

- **Existing CLA**

In case of extending an existing collective agreement, the collective agreement should include clauses on training that is at least equivalent to the existing training facilities for the sector or industry concerned, and a time frame to achieve the average of five training days per year, per full-time equivalent.

- **No CLA**

In case of absence of a collective agreement at sectoral or company level, an employee should be able to claim an average of two days of training per year, per full-time equivalent. This only applies to SMEs or employers with more than 10 employees.

The law aims at both formal and informal training (which is directly related to work). It clarifies that the training offer can relate on welfare matters, as referred to in the law of 4 August 1996 on the welfare of employees in the performance of their work. The social partners are obliged to submit new or extended CLAs to the Federal Public Service Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue.⁵¹

2.7.2 France

In France, the legal framework establishes that 1.68% of total gross salaries of companies employing more than eleven employees should be put aside for training. The training funds are managed jointly by unions and employers. This gives unions some influence over the content of training. In addition, a part of the fund can be used for the training of choice of the employee. Every employee is moreover required to have an interview to evaluate needs in terms of training.⁵²

2.7.3 Germany

Roman Jaich, representative from the German trade union Ver.di, was interviewed on the role of life-long learning regulation in Germany. Until now, federal and state strategies on life-long learning in Germany have been mostly based on voluntary, collective agreements between employers' organisations and trade unions. In fourteen of the sixteen German states, workers have the legal right of five training days per year. Depending on the state, education leave is either paid by the government or by the employer.⁵³

At the same time, there is government regulation about the funding of further education. Workers can get funding for further education, partly as a scholarship and partly as a loan ('BAföG). Low-income groups can also get paid education leave. Ver.di campaigns for the right that employers need to employ workers that temporarily quit their jobs to continue their education.

There is also a central fund as well as sector funds for further education, for instance to enhance skills and qualifications of workers at risk of employment, which can be part of a social plan between employers and employees.

Ver.di also provides training to its members to empower workers in negotiating about LLL with their employees, either on sector or company level. Trade union members can also get individual advice to improve their qualifications or participate in classical training programmes organised by Ver.di.

According to Ver.di, only 5% of the workers make use of education leave. Major barriers that inhibit workers' ability to use their right to training and (paid) leave for education include:⁵⁴

- It is up to the employer to decide when an employee can take education leave;
- Employers may give permission for education leave but threaten workers that they will be the first out in case of redundancies; and

- Because of increasing productivity levels and demands, in reality workers do not find the time to take education leave.

2.7.4 Netherlands

Since 1 July 2015, employers in the Netherlands are legally obliged to offer courses and training to their employees which are necessary to meet the job requirements of their function and to improve their employability within the company, for example in case the position of the employee is cancelled or if the employee is no longer able to perform the position. This applies to both workers with a permanent and temporary labour contract.⁵⁵

The law does not provide further details on minimum requirements and conditions, such as minimum hours an employee can spent on training and compensation of costs involved. According to Dutch trade union FNV, there is lack of enforcement of this law. Employees will not easily file a court case if they do not receive sufficient training as they may risk losing their job. However, in the event of dismissal, the court will assess whether the employer has invested sufficiently in training and development of the employee, if lack of skills and competencies is cited as the reason for dismissal. When asked, FNV responded that legislation on life-long learning could be improved by stipulating that employers should give paid leave to their employees for life-long learning. However, improving current legislation is not the first priority among FNV trade union executives, but instead, further improvement of career development counselling to further life-long learning.

2.7.5 Portugal

Life-long learning is integrated in Portuguese labour law as well. Workers are entitled to a minimum of 35 paid training hours per year. The training may be developed by the employer, by a certified training entity or by an educational institution recognized by the competent ministry. The content of the training is determined in agreement with the employer, such as the acquirement of ICT skills, occupational health and safety training or learning a foreign language. After completing the training, workers get a certificate which is registered in the Individual Competences Booklet under the terms of the legal regime of the National Qualifications System. Each year, employers must provide continuous training to at least 10% of the employees of a company.⁵⁶ Upon termination of the employment contract, the employee is entitled to compensation for the credit of hours not been used on the date of termination.⁵⁷

2.7.6 Switzerland

In Switzerland, continuous education and life-long learning is primarily funded and organised by private partners and regulated by the Swiss Federal Act on Continuing Education and Training, which entered into force in 2017.⁵⁸ From 2019, each employee is entitled to a minimum of five working days per calendar year for training and further education, in accordance with the Swiss “Entitlement to 5 Days’ Continuous Training” regulation.

On top of upper-secondary level vocational education and training and tertiary-level professional education, the Act also applies to job-related continuing education and training (CET) and non-formal learning: “By structuring the learning process, job-related CET enables learners to refresh, deepen and broaden existing professional competences or acquire new professional competences, and to remain professionally flexible”.⁵⁹ The Swiss confederation also provides funding for job-related CET in case workers have been made (partly) redundant, or if

they have become unemployed.⁶⁰ The Act does not stipulate any minimum requirements to employers on paid leave for continuous skills development and covering training fees. It is only binding for subsidised continuing education and training. Courses that are not organised and/or funded by the state or cantons are not covered by the legislation.⁶¹

CHAPTER 3 OPTIONS FOR TRADE UNIONS AND UNI EUROPA

This chapter builds on the topics and best practices discussed in the previous chapter and presents possible courses of action for how trade unions and UNI Europa can promote life-long learning on skills. Section 3.1 provides a short summary of the key findings described in Chapter 2. Section 3.2 suggests possible courses of action for unions at the national, sectoral and company level. Section 3.3 lays out possible courses of action for UNI Europa.

3.1 Overview of key results

The survey, interview rounds and discussions at the November 2019 workshop show there is broad consensus among trade unions that life-long learning (LLL) and continuous skills development are crucial for enhancing competitiveness and productivity on sector and company level, and to maintain and improve the employability of individual workers as well as promoting employee satisfaction. On a macrolevel, life-long learning contributes to maintaining and improving the competitiveness of the European Union and its member states at the global market, and the supply of products and services based on the latest technological innovations.

It has become increasingly clear that formal education may provide the necessary qualifications to enter the labour market, but it does not guarantee employability and job security in the long run. Within UNI Europa, digitalisation of the economy and labour market is used as a point of departure in the discussion on life-long learning and skills development. For its affiliates on the ground, engaged in social dialogues and collective bargaining, the focus is not only on digital skills but also on other skills and competencies. Rapid technological innovations, along with changing customer preferences and tastes, impact both the supply and demand of products and services. In turn, these supply and demand changes, lead to redefinitions of job contents and fast changing skills requirements.

This development does not only concern digital skills but also other skills and competencies. In most sectors, knowledge and skills acquired during formal training, will get obsolete gradually or, when new technologies or business models are introduced, in a short period of time. Therefore, life-long learning is crucial to keep a job and to pursue a career.

The need for life-long learning and continuous skills development is not new. In many professions (medical, legal, education, etc.), further education is compulsory to refresh job qualifications and to keep the professional certificate and registration. This type of training was also mentioned in the response to the survey, i.e. legally required training hours for the renewal of the professional card (certificate) for security workers, as part of the CLA for the security sector in Portugal. Also, in other professions and jobs, employees are obliged or encouraged by their employers to follow necessary training to cope with changing job requirements, to develop or improve soft skills (e.g. communication skills). Furthermore, employees have always followed training and education on their own initiative, either encouraged or (partly) paid by their employer.

What is new in the discussion about life-long learning initiated by UNI Europa and other social partners is the broader context and awareness of the need of life-long learning, linked with transitions impacting society and the labour market as a whole. This requires a more structural approach regarding, among others, differentiating

responsibilities and roles of social partners, funding and embedding life-long learning as a labour right in labour laws, collective labour agreements and individual employment contracts.

There is a large consensus among UNI Europa affiliates that the facilitation and funding of life-long learning and continuous skills requirements for workers is in the first place a responsibility of employers, and to a lesser extent of governments. However, for most respondents, training of the unemployed is regarded in the first place as a responsibility of governments, with support from sectors and companies.

Around one fifth of the respondents could provide examples of collective labour agreements that include clauses on life-long learning. At the same time, a third of the respondents reported that they have put life-long learning on the agenda in dialogue with social partners but, facing resistance from employers, have not been successful in integrating life-long learning in CLAs with employer organisations.

The participants in the survey, interview round and workshop shared valuable insights about the prerequisites, and conditions needed for adding life-long learning (LLL) and continuous skills education as a fourth pillar to existing (primary, secondary and tertiary) education, and how to guarantee equal access, affordability, quality and effectivity of LLL, as well as the transferability of acquired skills.

3.2 Options for trade unions

Based on experiences with existing integration of skills development provisions into CLAs in different countries, as well as with common barriers to effective access of workers to trainings, a number of options and insights emerged from this research project. In the following subsections, the different options and insights are summarized, to support the different trade union members of UNI Europa to gain more structural support for life-long learning and continuous skills development in their countries.

Obviously, the political situation and options to collaborate and negotiate with employers are different in each country. It is beyond the scope of this study to zoom in on these differences, this study just brings together experiences from different countries which could be beneficial to other trade unions. It is up to the individual trade unions to decide which options could be feasible and effective in the context in which they operate.

3.2.1 Defining different forms of life-long learning

The concept of life-long learning encompasses different forms of training and learning, which can be relevant for different groups of workers. Some of these forms of life-long learning are already institutionalized and recognized as important by employers and governments. Examples are the refreshment courses in medical, legal, educational and other professions, which are often compulsory to refresh job qualifications and to keep the professional certificate and registration. Another example are the regular shooting tests required for security workers, as mentioned by interviewee Pedro Maes from Belgium (see section 2.4.1).

It is therefore useful for trade unions to clearly define the different forms of life-long learning they deem important, including the different groups of workers they are intended for, to avoid misunderstandings in discussions with employers and governments. New agreements and initiatives on life-long learning should indeed be additional and broaden the opportunities for workers, instead of letting employers re-label their existing refreshment courses as life-long learning, as Maes noted was happening in Belgium (see section 2.4.1).

Examples of useful definitions of the different forms of life-long learning and their different audiences, come from Germany (section 2.4.4) and Italy (section 2.4.5) among others. In the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) for the public sector in Germany, a distinction is for instance made between:

- Maintenance training - development of professional, methodological and social competences;
- Further education - the acquisition of additional qualifications;
- Retraining - qualification for another job (job security); and
- Re-entry qualification - training during or after a long absence.

While the first two forms of training will be mostly relevant for workers employed at present, the third form is important for workers who are likely to lose their present job and the fourth form of training is relevant for unemployed and workers on a long-term leave.

3.2.2 Promote life-long learning through collective labour agreements

According to 90% of the respondents to the survey, life-long learning should be part of collective labour agreements concluded on company or sector levels. This is not an easy objective to achieve in every country, partly because of an unwillingness of employers to negotiate CLs in general or to discuss more specifically on the integration of LLL in CLAs. Also, for some trade unions (for instance in Hungary and Turkey) it is not a priority yet, as long as so much improvement is still needed in the field of primary labour conditions (see section 2.5).

For the trade unions who are willing and able to put the topic of LLL on the negotiation table, section 2.4 provides examples from 11 countries described on how life-long learning is integrated in CLAs. Important points lessons learned from these examples are:

- **Definition of the contents of trainings:** as discussed already in section 3.2.1, it is important to define well the different forms of life-long learning and the contents of trainings. An example comes from Romania, where the CLA for the banking sector differentiates between trainings on Digital Skills, Collaboration through digital channels and Customer satisfaction and approach in the context of digitalization (see section 2.2.2).

Sector CLA can leave the further details of the training contents to negotiations between the company and the trade union, or leave it to the discretion of the individual workers.

- **Hours available for training:** CLAs will usually specify how much hours of training are offered by the companies to their employees per year. In the private sector CLA in Belgium for instance, the number of training days per employees is raised from two to five, between 2019 and 2023 (see section 2.4.1).

During the workshop discussion in November 2019 it was noted that, to promote access to training in general, CLAs could also specify that a specific amount of hours have to be given during working hours. This would make it easier for companies to facilitate training, and would allow unions to monitor compliance of companies with the CLAs' provisions on training, as well as the quality of training itself.⁶²

- **Funding:** Most CLAs will require the companies to pay the lion's share of the training costs, but employees can also be asked to contribute to the training costs. The Portuguese CLA for the security sector specifies that employers need to bear all costs of the training, including paid leave and transport costs (see section 2.4.8).

The German public sector CBA also specifies that all training costs are borne by the employer, including paid leave to participate in training, but in individual cases this may involve an own contribution from the employee, in money or in time (see section 2.4.4).

The CLA for the financial sector in Italy has established a central education fund fuelled by contributions from employees with permanent contracts (see section 2.4.5). And the Romanian CLA for the banking sector makes a difference between training on the initiative of the employer or on the initiative of the employee. In the first case all costs incurred by this participation will be borne by the employer. In the latter case, the costs will be either for the employee or shared 50-50 by the employer and the employee (see section 2.4.9).

- **Making it easy to attend:** A common barrier to real access to skills development is the risk that workers do not have time for their training because of high workloads and because when they are at work, they are often working with clients. This risk was reported as for instance by the Swedish trade union forth during the workshop in November 2019. To address this risk, it was suggested that training needs should be part of the overall strategy of a company and be integrated into its business planning (see section 2.4.10).

During the workshop in November 2019, it was also suggested to make it possible for workers to follow their e-learning training at home, with paid leave during working hours, instead of at work. This is a practice drawn from the Italian banking sector. In addition, specifying in CLAs a minimum of hours dedicated to classroom learning could help in making sure that workers attend training.⁶³

- **Sanctions for companies:** During the workshop discussion in November 2019 it was suggested that specifying sanctions in the CLA for companies that do not comply with relevant requirements on training and life-long learning would be important to ensure that employees are given access to training in practice.⁶⁴ This is especially important given the several examples of weak enforcement of CLA requirements on training discussed in this report.

3.2.3 Promote life-long learning through collaborative initiatives of social partners

While collective labour agreements (CLAs) can play an important role in providing access to continuous skills development and life-long learning for large groups of workers, they usually are not able to reach all workers. Especially underrepresented are self-employed people and zero-hour contractors. In addition, employees of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), in certain sectors, or with lower formal education may have less access to life-long learning provisions. In addition, even if provisions on life-long learning are included in a CLA, many employees do not use their rights.

To make sure that all employees have access to, and use their rights to life-long learning, advice on life-long learning needs to target both individual employees and companies. Given the lower access to life-long learning of employees of SMEs, the workshop discussion in November 2019 suggested there is a strong need for advice to SMEs on how they can best support the life-long learning of their employees.

One solution to let employees use the rights on life-learning they have, was suggested by workshop participants from the Netherlands. There the trade unions have so-called “learning ambassadors” that advise union members about their right to life-long learning. In the Netherlands, too, an agreement in the metal workers branch has given unions the opportunity to provide professional training themselves.⁶⁵

Section 2.6 lists a few examples of how trade unions can take initiatives, as part of the social dialogue with employers, to promote life-long learning. The Swedish example of branch validation shows that engaging with employers' organisations to define sector-wide qualification standards can improve the relevance of trainings for workers in the context of a rapidly changing environment due to digitalisation, as the recognition of their qualifications would apply to an entire industry (see section 2.6.2).

The 'Norwegian Strategy for Skills Policy' (2017-2021) has been developed by the Norwegian government in cooperation with the social partners (employers' associations, trade unions and education associations). The skills policy provides an overall strategy covering formal (professional and vocational) education as well as informal learning and continuous skills development at the workplace. Furthermore, the policy is also addressing specific challenges and needs of social groups like the Sami population in Norway, refugees and immigrants, and people that lack the basic education and skills to access the labour market.

One of the measures is the establishment of a Securing Future Skills Needs Committee which aims to provide a comprehensive overview of future skills needs, and project future labour shortage in several sectors, including shortages in vocational education and training. Another measure is the further development of career guidance services aimed at strengthening individuals' ability and opportunity to make informed choices. For a more elaborate discussion see section 2.6.3

3.2.4 Promote life-long learning through government laws and regulations

Depending on the political context in different countries, promoting life-long learning through government laws and regulations could be an option for trade unions as well. Governments could recognize that life-long learning and continuous skills education contributes to maintaining and improving the competitiveness of their economies in the global market. Based on this recognition, it makes sense to add life-long learning as a fourth pillar to the three existing education pillars.

More and more governments are recognizing this, section 2.7 list examples from legal requirements and regulations in six countries. One of the most important requirements in these laws is setting a legal minimum requirement for training for all workers, also workers not covered by CLAs. The Flexible and Workable Work" act in Belgium for instance requires employers to provide at least five training days per year to all employees (see section 2.7.1). In Portugal a minimum of 35 paid training hours per years is legally required (see section 2.7.5) and in Switzerland the legal minimum is five days per year (see section 2.7.6).

In other countries, legislation does not specify the minimum number of training days per year for each worker, but deals with training budgets and funding. In France, the legal framework establishes that 1.68% of total gross salaries of companies employing more than eleven employees should be put aside for training. The training funds are managed jointly by unions and employers (see section 2.7.2). Roman Jaich, representative from the German trade union Ver.di, told during the interview that in Germany workers can get funding for further education, partly as a scholarship and partly as a loan. Low-income groups can also get paid education leave (see sector 2.7.3).

A key lesson from these experiences is that while these minimum legal requirements are important, the success of such frameworks is dependent on proper enforcement and oversight. For this it is crucial that sanctions are included for companies that do not comply with the requirements relating to training. German trade union representative Roman Jaich, for instance explained during the interview that only 5% of the workers make use of

their legal right to education leave, because employers need to give permission (and could hold education leave against a worker in case of redundancies) and because of high productivity demands (see section 2.7.3).

Another important lesson that it is important that trade unions are involved in managing training budgets and monitoring the contents of training, even if providing and paying for training is the legal responsibility of employers. This is how it is organized by law in France (section 2.7.2). Evidence from both the workshops and interviews suggest that without (legally sanctioned) trade union involvement, employers will often prevent employees from effectively accessing training.

Another way of improving current regulations on skills development, suggested by workshop participants from Romania, would be to prohibit the firing of employees due to incompetence, if employers cannot prove they have provided adequate training.⁶⁶

3.3 Options for UNI Europa

The results of the online survey and the discussions during the November 2019 workshop show that UNI Europa can play various roles in promoting life-long learning and continuous skills development in Europe and providing support to the affiliated trade unions. The various options for UNI Europa which emerged from this research are discussed in the following sub-sections.

3.3.1 Social dialogue at the European level

Over the years, UNI Europa has already signed joint declarations with social partners on the European level to address the importance of life-long learning and continuous skills development. Such declarations were signed in the financial sector (banking and insurance) and the ICT sector. By developing the social dialogue on this topic at the European level, UNI Europa has been able to set standards on what can be expected from employers in the field of life-long learning and has succeeded in letting European employers' federations make important commitments.

Obviously, these joint declarations are voluntary standards instead of binding agreements, which leads to major differences in the actual implementation at the national levels. Referring to the commitments made on the European level, does not always help national trade unions enough to break through the resistance from the side of national employers' organisations against life-long learning arrangements. This was mentioned by some of the respondents to the survey, e.g. from Cyprus.

On the other hand, trade unions in Italy have been successful in implementing the recommendations in the "EU Bank Social Partners Joint Declaration on Life-long Learning in the Banking Sector" in the collective labour agreement for the banking sector (see section 2.4.5). This indicates that it would be useful if UNI Europa could continue with social dialogues on this topic at the European level.

3.3.2 Lobbying for EU policy initiatives

During the workshops in November 2019 it also became apparent that many trade union affiliates would like to see UNI Europa lobbying for the recognition of life-long learning as a labour right embedded in European legislation. It could take action to strengthen the position of its affiliates in collective bargaining on life-long learning by attempting to let the European Union adopt a EU Directive on Life-long Learning. This directive should oblige

EU member states to integrate life-long learning in national labour laws, complemented by agreements negotiated at sector level. Legislation at a European level should also include transparency and reporting standards on life-long learning within sectors and companies, such as number of participants, types of training, training hours, and evaluation.

In addition, a European directive could require the establishment of company-level cooperation committees, in which unions and companies together analyse and monitor educational plans on an annual basis, could increase union oversight of training provision by companies as well as address differences in life-long learning strategies between European countries.

UNI Europa could also lobby at the European level to increase co-funding for life-long learning programmes in EU countries from EU funds such as the Erasmus programme. Another possibility to make more funds available for life-long learning, suggested during the workshop in November 2019, would be a law or European directive determining that companies with a big digitalization impact should allocate resources for worker reorientation should help workers who lose their jobs due to digitalization.⁶⁷

3.3.3 Certification of skills

Another role UNI Europa could play is to develop a strategy to enhance the tools for the definition, recognition, validation and certification of skills acquired through informal and non-formal education, based on initiatives that are already taken in EU member states such as Finland (section 2.4.6), the Netherlands (section 2.2.1) and Norway (section 2.6.3). The role of UNI Europa could be collecting and exchanging best practices on national and sectoral levels as well as harmonisation of skills certification systems and standards.

3.3.4 Communications, information exchange and support

Finally, a very important role to be played by UNI Europa concerns collecting and sharing among its affiliates the best practices regarding CLAs, social dialogues and legislation on national and sectoral level. This research project is a step in that direction, but as a follow-up the participants at the workshops in November 2019 would like to see UNI Europa developing a strategy of forming strong alliances or synergies among their affiliates and improve their cognitive skills to adapt to the future of work. According to the workshop participants, UNI Europa can serve as a discussion platform, information and training centre on life-long learning through the collection and exchange of best practices, providing guidelines as well as organising seminars and providing training on integrating life-long learning in social dialogue and collective bargaining agreements.

REFERENCE

1. The Labour Foundation (Stichting van de Arbeid) (2019), "Beroepsonderwijs en Ontwikkeling", online: <https://www.stvda.nl/nl/thema/beroepsonderwijs-en-ontwikkeling>, viewed in October 2019.
2. UGT (2018, October 24), "Legislar para aprovechar las nuevas tecnologías sin dejar a nadie atrás", online: <http://www.ugt.es/legislar-para-aprovechar-las-nuevas-tecnologias-sin-dejar-nadie-atras>, viewed in October 2019;
 UGT (2018, October 24), *Impacto de la Automatización en el Empleo en España. Recopilación y traslación de los principales estudios*.
3. UGT (2018, October 24), "Legislar para aprovechar las nuevas tecnologías sin dejar a nadie atrás", online: <http://www.ugt.es/legislar-para-aprovechar-las-nuevas-tecnologias-sin-dejar-nadie-atras>, viewed in October 2019.
4. CEOE - Confederación Española de Organizaciones Empresariales (2018, December 18), "AMETIC, CCOO y UGT proponen recomendaciones laborales sobre el impacto de la tecnología en los centros de trabajo", online: <https://www.ceoe.es/es/contenido/actualidad/noticias/ametic-ccoo-y-ugt-proponen-recomendaciones-laborales-sobre-el-impacto-de-la-tecnologia-en-los-centros-de-trabajo>;
 AMETIC (n.d.), "Who we are", online: <https://ametic.es/en/who-we-are>, viewed in October 2019;
 CCOO (n.d.), "Confederación sindical de comisiones abreras", online: <https://www.ccoo.es/Inicio>, viewed in October 2019.
5. CEOE - Confederación Española de Organizaciones Empresariales (2018, December 18), "AMETIC, CCOO y UGT proponen recomendaciones laborales sobre el impacto de la tecnología en los centros de trabajo", online: <https://www.ceoe.es/es/contenido/actualidad/noticias/ametic-ccoo-y-ugt-proponen-recomendaciones-laborales-sobre-el-impacto-de-la-tecnologia-en-los-centros-de-trabajo>.
6. Ametic, CCOO, UGT (2019, April), *Manifiesto por el liderazgo de la transformación digital de la economía española mediante el desarrollo del talent*, p. 5.
7. Verbond van Belgische Ondernemingen, Unie van Zelfstandige Ondernemers, Union des Classes Moyennes National, Algemeen Belgisch Vakverbond, Algemeen Christelijk Vakverbond van België, Algemene Centrale der Liberale Vakbonden van België (2018, December 13), *Collectieve Arbeidsovereenkomst van 13 december 2018 gesloten in het aanvullend paritair comité voor bedienden inzake opleiding*, artikel 2, 3.
8. Aanvullend Paritair Comité voor Bedienden / Paritair Comité 200 (2019, July 1), *Collectieve Arbeidsovereenkomst van 1 Juli 2019 Gesloten in het Aanvullend Paritair Comité Voor Bedienden Inzake Opleiding*, artikel 1, 3, 4, 7.
9. Aanvullend Paritair Comité voor Bedienden / Paritair Comité 200 (2019, July 1), *Collectieve Arbeidsovereenkomst van 1 Juli 2019 Gesloten in het Aanvullend Paritair Comité Voor Bedienden Inzake Opleiding*, artikel 3;
 APCB (n.d.), "Sociaal Fonds van het APCB / Paritair Comité 200", online: <https://www.sfonds200.be/sociaal-fonds/sectorinformatie/cao-s>, viewed in October 2019.
10. Simons, M. (2019, November 12), *Interview with Pedro Maes*.
11. Czech Radio (2019, January), *Collective agreement Short-term - for 2019*, p. 7.
12. Simons, M. (2019, November 14), *Interview with Roman Jaich*.
13. Ver.di Gemeinden (n.d.), "Weiterbildung. Welche Weiterbildung ist angebracht?", online: <https://gemeinden.verdi.de/projekte/weiterbildung/++co++8c158818-cf8b-11e3-a034-52540059119e>, viewed in October 2019.
14. Ver.di Gemeinden (n.d.), "Weiterbildung. Welche Weiterbildung ist angebracht?", online: <https://gemeinden.verdi.de/projekte/weiterbildung/++co++8c158818-cf8b-11e3-a034-52540059119e>, viewed in October 2019.
15. Ver.di Gemeinden (n.d.), "Weiterbildung. Welche Weiterbildung ist angebracht?", online: <https://gemeinden.verdi.de/projekte/weiterbildung/++co++8c158818-cf8b-11e3-a034-52540059119e>, viewed in October 2019.
16. ASSOLAVORO; CGIL; CISL; UIL; FELSA-CISL; NIDIL-CGIL; UILTEMP (2014, February 27), *Contratto Collettivo Nazionale di Lavoro per la categoria delle Agenzie di Somministrazione di lavoro*, p. 18-21.
17. ASSOLAVORO; CGIL; CISL; UIL; FELSA-CISL; NIDIL-CGIL; UILTEMP (2014, February 27), *Contratto Collettivo Nazionale di Lavoro per la categoria delle Agenzie di Somministrazione di lavoro*, p. 18.
18. ASSOLAVORO; CGIL; CISL; UIL; FELSA-CISL; NIDIL-CGIL; UILTEMP (2014, February 27), *Contratto Collettivo Nazionale di*

Lavoro per la categoria delle Agenzie di Somministrazione di lavoro, p. 19.

19. Abiservizi (2015, March 31), *Contratto Collettivo Nazionale di Lavoro (CCNL)*, p. 81-82.
20. Abiservizi (2015, March 31), *Contratto Collettivo Nazionale di Lavoro (CCNL)*, p. 179 - 181.
21. Abiservizi (2015, March 31), *Contratto Collettivo Nazionale di Lavoro (CCNL)*, p. 181.
22. Abiservizi (2015, March 31), *Contratto Collettivo Nazionale di Lavoro (CCNL)*, p. 181;
23. PAM (2018, April), *Central Provisions of the Collective Agreement for the Facilities Services Sector. 1 February 2018 – 31 January 2020*, p. 18.
24. ASSP - Associação Sindical da Segurança Privada (2018, December 6), "Cláusula 13.^a Formação profissional", online: <https://www.assp.com.pt/index.php/81-legislacao/277-clausula-13-formacao-professional>, viewed in October 2019.
AES and STAD (2917, October 15), "Contrata coletivo entre a AES - Associação de Empresas de Segurança e outra e o Sindicato dos Trabalhadores de Serviços de Portaria, Vigilância, Limpeza, Domésticas e Atividades Diversas - STAD - Revisão global", *Boletim do Trabalho e Emprego*, no 38, p. 3735.
25. ASSP - Associação Sindical da Segurança Privada (2018, December 6), "Cláusula 13.^a Formação profissional", online: <https://www.assp.com.pt/index.php/81-legislacao/277-clausula-13-formacao-professional>, viewed in October 2019.
AES and STAD (2917, October 15), "Contrata coletivo entre a AES - Associação de Empresas de Segurança e outra e o Sindicato dos Trabalhadores de Serviços de Portaria, Vigilância, Limpeza, Domésticas e Atividades Diversas - STAD - Revisão global", *Boletim do Trabalho e Emprego*, no 38, p. 3735.
26. Osman, O. (2018, December 12), "Primul contract colectiv de muncă din sectorul financiar-bancar crește salariul minim brut la 2.500 de lei în instituțiile semnatare. BRD revine după doi ani în patronatul bancar", Profit, online: <https://www.profit.ro/povesti-cu-profit/financiar/banci/primul-contract-colectiv-de-munca-din-sectorul-financiar-bancar-creste-salariul-minim-brut-la-2-500-de-lei-in-institutiile-semnatare-brd-revine-dupa-doi-ani-in-patronatul-bancar-18697763>, viewed in October 2019.
27. Federation of Financial Services of Romania (FinBan) & Federation of Insurance and Banking Unions (FSAB), (2018, December 12), *Contract Colectiv de Munca la Nivelul Sectorului de Activitate "Activitate Financiare, Bancare si de Asigurari din Romania"*.
28. Federation of Financial Services of Romania (FinBan) & Federation of Insurance and Banking Unions (FSAB), (2018, December 12), *Contract Colectiv de Munca la Nivelul Sectorului de Activitate "Activitate Financiare, Bancare si de Asigurari din Romania"*, p. 18.
29. Federation of Financial Services of Romania (FinBan) & Federation of Insurance and Banking Unions (FSAB), (2018, December 12), *Contract Colectiv de Munca la Nivelul Sectorului de Activitate "Activitate Financiare, Bancare si de Asigurari din Romania"*, p. 19.
30. Federation of Financial Services of Romania (FinBan) & Federation of Insurance and Banking Unions (FSAB), (2018, December 12), *Contract Colectiv de Munca la Nivelul Sectorului de Activitate "Activitate Financiare, Bancare si de Asigurari din Romania"*, p. 19.
31. Maunier, W. (2019, November 19), *Notes workshop on skills: Group II*.
32. Swisscom Ltd; Syndicom; Transfair (2018, June), *Swisscom Collective Employment Agreement 2018*, p. 17-18.
33. Swisscom Ltd; Syndicom; Transfair (2018, June), *Swisscom Collective Employment Agreement 2018*, p. 17-18.
34. Skjerve, T. and E. Simeou (2018, March), *A Balancing Act. Describing skills acquired in the workplace*, Oslo: Virke – The Enterprise Federation of Norway, p. 34.
35. Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research (2017, June), *Norwegian Strategy for Skills Policy 2017-2021*.
36. Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research (2017, June), *Norwegian Strategy for Skills Policy 2017-2021*.
37. Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research (2017, June), *Norwegian Strategy for Skills Policy 2017-2021*, p. 17.
38. Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research (2017, June), *Norwegian Strategy for Skills Policy 2017-2021*, p. 12.
39. Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research (2017, June), *Norwegian Strategy for Skills Policy 2017-2021*, p. 15.
40. Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research (2017, June), *Norwegian Strategy for Skills Policy 2017-2021*, p. 16.

41. Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research (2017, June), *Norwegian Strategy for Skills Policy 2017-2021*, p. 17.
42. Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research (2017, June), *Norwegian Strategy for Skills Policy 2017-2021*, p. 17-18.
43. Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research (2017, June), *Norwegian Strategy for Skills Policy 2017-2021*, p. 19.
44. Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research (2017, June), *Norwegian Strategy for Skills Policy 2017-2021*, p. 19.
45. Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research (2017, June), *Norwegian Strategy for Skills Policy 2017-2021*, p. 5, 8;
Skjerve, T. and E. Simeou (2018, March), *A Balancing Act. Describing skills acquired in the workplace*, Oslo: Virke – The Enterprise Federation of Norway, p. 9.
46. Skjerve, T. and E. Simeou (2018, March), *A Balancing Act. Describing skills acquired in the workplace*, Oslo: Virke – The Enterprise Federation of Norway, p. 5.
47. Skjerve, T. and E. Simeou (2018, March), *A Balancing Act. Describing skills acquired in the workplace*, Oslo: Virke – The Enterprise Federation of Norway, p. 25.
48. Skjerve, T. and E. Simeou (2018, March), *A Balancing Act. Describing skills acquired in the workplace*, Oslo: Virke – The Enterprise Federation of Norway, p. 33.
49. Claeys & Engels (2017, March), *Newsletter: Workable and Agile Work (WAW)*;
DLA Piper (n.d.), "Labour law reforms in Belgium: flexible and workable work, re-integrating long-term sick employees and safeguarding competitiveness", online: <https://www.dlapiper.com/en/belgium/insights/publicationseries/labour-law-reforms-in-belgium-2017/>, viewed in October 2019.
Federale Overheidsdienst Werkgelegenheid, Arbeid en Sociaal Overleg (Belgian Federal Public Service Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue) (n.d.), "Opleiding", online: <http://www.werk.belgie.be/defaultTab.aspx?id=45772#>, viewed in October 2019.
50. Federale Overheidsdienst Werkgelegenheid, Arbeid en Sociaal Overleg (Belgian Federal Public Service Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue) (n.d.), "Opleiding", online: <http://www.werk.belgie.be/defaultTab.aspx?id=45772#>, viewed in October 2019;
Federale Overheidsdienst Werkgelegenheid, Arbeid en Sociaal Overleg (Belgian Federal Public Service Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue) (n.d.), "3 wetten: Werkbaar Wendbaar Werk - Hervorming Wet 1996 - E-Commerce", online: <http://www.werk.belgie.be/defaultNews.aspx?id=45370#>, viewed in October 2019.
51. Federale Overheidsdienst Werkgelegenheid, Arbeid en Sociaal Overleg (Belgian Federal Public Service Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue) (n.d.), "Opleiding", online: <http://www.werk.belgie.be/defaultTab.aspx?id=45772#>, viewed in October 2019.
52. Maunier, W. (2019, November 19), *Notes workshop on skills: Group II*.
53. Simons, M. (2019, November 14), *Interview with Roman Jaich*.
54. Simons, M. (2019, November 14), *Interview with Roman Jaich*.
55. Dutch government (n.d.), "Burgerlijk Wetboek Boek 7, Artikel 611a", online: <https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0005290/2019-09-14>, viewed in November 2019.
56. Government of Portugal (2017, July 24), "Código do Trabalho: Lei n.º 7/2009", *Diário da República* n.º 30/2009, Série I de 2009-02-12, Artigo 131.
57. Government of Portugal (2017, July 24), "Código do Trabalho: Lei n.º 7/2009", *Diário da República* n.º 30/2009, Série I de 2009-02-12, Artigo 130 - 134.
58. Swiss Federation for Adult Learning (n.d.), "Federal Act on Continuing Education and Training", online: <https://alice.ch/en/continuing-education-in-switzerland/federal-act-on-continuing-education-and-training/>, viewed in October 2019;
Federal Assembly of the Swiss Confederation (2019, January 1), *Federal Act on Vocational and Professional Education and Training (Vocational and Professional Education and Training Act, VPETA), of 13 December 2002 (Status as of 1 January 2019)*.
59. Federal Assembly of the Swiss Confederation (2019, January 1), *Federal Act on Vocational and Professional Education and Training (Vocational and Professional Education and Training Act, VPETA), of 13 December 2002 (Status as of 1 January 2019)*, article 2, 3, 9, 16, 30-32, 53.8.

60. Federal Assembly of the Swiss Confederation (2019, January 1), *Federal Act on Vocational and Professional Education and Training (Vocational and Professional Education and Training Act, VPETA), of 13 December 2002 (Status as of 1 January 2019)*, article 30.
61. Swiss Federation for Adult Learning (n.d.), "Federal Act on Continuing Education and Training", online: <https://alice.ch/en/continuing-education-in-switzerland/federal-act-on-continuing-education-and-training/>, viewed in October 2019;
62. Canton, C. (2019, November 19), *Notes workshop on skills: Group I.*
63. Canton, C. (2019, November 19), *Notes workshop on skills: Group I.*
64. Canton, C. (2019, November 19), *Notes workshop on skills: Group I.*
65. Beckmann, M. (2019, November 19), *Notes workshop on skills: Group III.*
66. Maunier, W. (2019, November 19), *Notes workshop on skills: Group II.*
67. Canton, C. (2019, November 19), *Notes workshop on skills: Group I.*

APPENDIX I SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

The following questionnaire has been sent as an online survey on skills to UNI Europa affiliates:

1. Background information of respondent

- Name of trade union
- Sector(s) represented by trade union
- Country

2. Contact details for further information

- Last name/ first name
- Position in organisation
- E-mail address
- Phone number

3. According to your trade union, which should be the role of social partners in developing and managing life-long learning schemes and at what level should they be involved?

Answer choices:

- Company level
- Sectoral level
- National level
- European level

4. Does your trade union have a policy strategy on life-long learning and continuous skills development? If so, which policy does it pursue? Are any other actors involved, e.g. employers or governments?

5. Current formal education systems funded entirely or partly by taxation are generally based on three pillars: primary, secondary and tertiary education. According to your trade union, do education systems need a fourth pillar for life-long learning?

Answer choices: yes/no

6. According to your trade union, should life-long learning be part of collective labour agreements?

Answer choices:

- Full disagreement
- Disagreement
- No opinion
- Agreement
- Full agreement

7. To what extent and how has your trade union been involved in collective bargaining processes on life-long learning and continuous skills development? Which of the following topics have been covered/ discussed?

- Creation of skills management structures
- Specification of skills that should be part of life-long learning programmes
- Recognition, certification and qualification of informal and non-formal acquired skills
- Transferability of acquired skills to other employers
- Funding of life-long learning
- Paid leave for training and education
- Training to enhance female participation in ICT jobs
- Training to promote equal access for women to senior level positions
- Other: please specify

8. Is your trade union aware of any cutting-edge practice and/or thinking in terms of collective bargaining in relation to the development and management of life-long learning schemes?

Answer choices: yes/no

9. Is your trade union aware of and/or involved in any cutting-edge practice and/or thinking beyond collective bargaining in relation to the development and management of life-long learning schemes?

Answer choices: yes/no

10. Have the negotiations resulted in a collective labour agreement (CLA)? If not, you can skip this question. If yes, please indicate:

- Year and duration of CLA
- Sectors covered
- Number of companies covered by the CLA
- Numbers of workers covered by the CLA
- Facilitation of life-long learning and continuous skills development

Please send weblink to the CLA and/or send an attachment to m.simons@profundo.nl

11. If your trade union has not been involved in collective bargaining negotiations about life-long learning and continuous skills development, what are the reasons? (multiple options possible)

- No interest from our trade union members
- No interest from the trade union board members
- Resistance from employers' organisations
- Other barriers: please specify

12. Is the role of social partners in skills development and life-long learning regulated by a general law in your country, that is complemented by agreements negotiated at sector-level?

Answer choices: yes/draft is under development/no

13. According to your trade union, what steps should UNI Europa - the secretariat and the collective of its affiliates - take in order to strengthen the position of its affiliates with regard to their role in collective bargaining on life-long learning?

APPENDIX 2 LIST OF TRADE UNIONS THAT PARTICIPATED IN THE SURVEY

#	Name of trade union	Sectors	Country
1	BBTK-SETCa	All sectors with white collar employees (Retail, Finance, Industry, ICT, Logistics and other (commercial) services; Health, Education, Social welfare)	Belgium
2	CNE	Information and Communication Technology, Airline companies, Logistics	Belgium
3	Bermuda Industrial Union	Hotels, Night clubs, Restaurants, Garages, Security, Construction, Communications, Supermarkets, Printers, Health & Welfare, Transportation, Rest homes, Medical, Courier Service, Stevedore Service, Government, Medical Services, Fire Fighters	Bermuda
4	FISENGE	Engineering	Brazil
5	Croatian Union of Bank and Financial Employees	Financial sector	Croatia
6	HST - Hrvatski Sindikat Telekomunikacija	Information and Communication Technology	Croatia
7	Trade Union in Printing and Publishing Industry of Croatia	Printing and Publishing Industry	Croatia
8	SEK (Cyprus Workers Confederation)	Private sector	Cyprus
9	ETKY (Cyprus Union Of Bank Employees)	Banking and Insurance Sector	Cyprus
10	OS Media	Public service media - radio, television	Czech Republic
11	PROSA	IT	Denmark
12	HK/Privat		Denmark
13	Service Union United PAM	Private service sector	Finland
14	FOCOM	Communications & Telecoms	France

#	Name of trade union	Sectors	Country
15	Ver.di	Service sector	Germany
16	Communication Workers Union of Trades Union Congress (Ghana)	Telecommunication and Courier Services	Ghana
17	Trade Union of Commerce Employees	Commerce	Hungary
18	SSF	Finance	Iceland
19	Indian Industrial Relations Association	All	India
20	Mandate Trade Union	Retail	Ireland
21	Communications Workers' Union	Postal and Telecoms	Ireland
22	FSU	Finance and Tech	Ireland
23	Federazione Autonoma Bancari Italiana	Banking	Italy
24	Filcams-CGIL Italy	Tourism, Retail, Commerce, Services	Italy
25	SLP CISL - Postal Workers Union CISL	Postal	Italy
26	NIDIL CGIL	Temporary Agency Workers, Self Employed	Italy
27	Kenya Union of Hair & Beauty Workers	Hair and Beauty Industry/Sector	Kenya
28	Lithuanian trade union of commercial and cooperative employees	Commerce	Lithuania
29	General Workers Union (GWU)	Professionals Finance and Services	Malta
30	NITO - Norwegian Society of Engineers and Technologists	Engineering and technology - Bachelor, Master or higher qualifications	Norway
31	NSZZ Solidarność Commerce	Commerce	Poland
32	SINTTAV - Sindicato Nacional dos Trabalhadores das Telecomunicações e Audiovis	Telecommunications and Audio-visuals	Portugal
33	STPT - Sindicato dos Trabalhadores do Grupo Altice em Portugal	Telecommunications	Portugal
34	STAD - Sindicato dos Trabalhadores de Serviços de Portaria, Vigilância, Limpeza, Domésticas e Actividades Diversas	Private Security and Industrial Cleaning	Portugal

#	Name of trade union	Sectors	Country
35	FSAB - Federația Sindicatelor din Asigurări și Bănci	Insurances and Banks	Romania
36	ANTIC	Information and Communication Technology	Romania
37	Common trade union Telenor	Information and Communication Technology	Serbia
38	FSC-CCOO	Gráficas y Embalaje	Spain
39	Unión General de Trabajadores	Financials, insurance and offices	Spain
40	Federación de Servicios de Comisiones Obreras	Financial, Administrative and Technical Services, Commerce and Hospitality industry	Spain
41	UGT Spain	Telecommunications	Spain
42	Telecommunication Officers Union	Postal and Telecommunication services	Sri Lanka
43	Swedish Engineers	Information and Telecommunication Technology	Sweden
44	Swedish Transport Workers Union	Security services	Sweden
45	SSFV - Schweizer Syndikat Film und Video	Film	Switzerland
46	Syndicom	Postal services, logistics, ICTS, graphical, media	Switzerland
47	FNV	Services industry	the Netherlands
48	Basisen	Finance	Turkey
49	Uganda Bottling Bakers and Millers	Commerce and ICTS	Uganda
50	Unite	IT	United Kingdom





"This project receives support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views of the authors only and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein."