



Examining Old and New Europe

by Peter Niedergesäss

In the context of the project "old and new europe" at the beginning of July 2007 over 60 work councils and union representatives from six European countries met. From the so called "old Europe" representatives arrived from France, Italy and Germany, including a significant number of KAB and ACLI representatives. "New Europe" was represented by delegations from the Czech Republic, Croatia and Slovenia.

Central for the Seminar was the exchange about the practice of minimum wages and the rise of precarious forms of occupation. Within the two days a working group "Airbus Industries" linking participants from Toulouse and Laupheim has been established as well as a "Kaufland" group focusing on retail trade, composed by representatives from Croatia, Slovenia, the Czech Republic and Germany.

A French participant underlined the significance of the crossborder meeting of people involved. Only if you know each other personally, he stressed, you are prepared to a mutual share of real authentic and internal information. The Croatian representative appealed at ver.di in Germany to increase the pressure on "Kaufland" in a way that existence-securing wages will be paid in all European countries.

For Peter Niedergesäss of the Catholic Workers' Movement (KAB) of Rottenburg-Stuttgart the conference was a good beginning to promote cross-boarder solidarity. The project is carried in Germany by the Italian Training Institute ENAIP, the University of Tübingen, ACLI, Betriebsseelsorge, KAB, Evangelic Academy Bad Boll, DGB and ver.di. In order to improve communication, an international platform was established.

Further information for people interested to join the online platform:

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