



Portfolio of the Trade Council “Justice”

Who does the Trade Council represent?

The Trade council “Justice” (JUS) is composed of representatives from European trade unions whose members are employed exclusively or mainly in the Justice Sector in their respective Countries in particular Justice Departments, Court Services and Prison and Probation Services.

How does the Trade Council operate?

The Trade council operates in accordance with the structures of the overall organisation, a solid body that has been built over many years.

The Trades Council meets on an Annual basis with a pre-set Agenda to discuss and develop solutions to the many complex difficulties faced by Justice Workers across the European Union. The Trades Council gathers information from the affiliates regarding the problems that they face at a National level and by utilising experts to address meetings of the Trades Council, the participant’s debate the issues, seek solutions and draw up conclusions that can then be brought forward by CESI at the European level.

Within the context of trade union activities, representatives of the Trade council participate directly or indirectly in discussions and opinion-forming processes with and alongside European institutions (EU bodies, Council of Europe). The main aim in this context is to achieve a representative participation in the Sectoral social dialogue.

What tasks should the Trade Council perform?

The challenges faced by employees in the Justice Sector are constantly increasing. The Refugee crisis currently gripping the European Union will inevitably cause huge problems in the various European Justice Sectors as opportunistic criminal elements will utilise this crisis to further their aims and those of their criminal organisations. Criminals are very aware of the intelligence deficit that exist within Justice systems here while there is the huge threat now posed to the European Union by Islamic Fundamentalists. The extent of this huge challenge became sadly very evident following the horrific attacks that took place in Paris on the night of Friday 13th November 2015, when terrorist gunmen and suicide bombers left 130 people dead and hundreds

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wounded. These two problems on their own are huge challenges for employees in the Justice Sector before we even start to consider the other many difficulties that exist.

Employees in the Justice Sector across Europe are all faced with the problems caused by budgetary restrictions, increased levels of violence towards employees and the threats posed to Public Services by Privatisation. There are also restrictions on Trade Union rights, while terms and conditions of employment have come under serious attack as a result of the financial crisis. In European Prison systems, Prison overcrowding and drug problems remain daily issues for employees working at the ground floor level in many Countries. Comprehensive training programmes to equip Justice Employees across the Sector to deal with the many daily problems that they face, is not a major priority in many European Justice Sectors.

By meeting at the European Trade Council level, Trade Unions in the Justice Sector can share the experiences of our difficulties; provide valuable information to one another which can then assist us in our daily tasks at the National level. The Justice Trade Council can also use the expertise and experience available through the participants at Trade Council meetings to develop Resolutions at the European level for CESI so that CESI can then put the Justice worker and the problems that they face right at the centre of future European Initiatives.

The most important topics of the Trade Council are:

- Expertise from the various areas/levels of the Justice Sector
- Clear knowledge of the difficulties that exist for workers in the Sector
- The capability to develop long term solutions to most existing difficulties
- Understanding the importance of networking
- Capability to develop correct training programmes for workers across the Sector
- Knowledge of the correct employment terms that are required
- Willingness to shape and influence change through proper social dialogue
- Committed to keeping the Justice workers interests as the main priority

The latest important issues or main focal points of the Trade Council have been:

- The ongoing issue of the use of Privatization in areas of the Justice Sector must continue to be opposed by the Justice Trade Council. Ongoing work must continue in this regard.
- Having regard for the Decision of the European Committee of Social Rights in the case of EuroCOP v Ireland, work must continue at European level for the establishment of proper Industrial Relations dispute resolution machinery for Prison Officers in EU Countries, where prison staff are prohibited from taking any

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form of strike action. In EU Countries, where Prison Offices are prohibited from taking any form of strike action, this should be compensated for by having proper third party dispute resolution machinery, while the restriction remains in place.

- The Justice Trades Council must seek the introduction of appropriate training and revised security arrangements for workers in the Justice sector to equip them properly to deal with the threat posed to EU citizens by Islamic fundamentalist. Unfortunately we all witnessed with the horrendous attacks in Paris on Friday 13th November 2015.
- Safety measures regarding possible terrorist attacks in courthouses. Admission controls, architectural and technical dimensions and names for the protection of the court employees is required.
- Standardization of the education for court employees in the area of Office management with the aim of a university education ending in a bachelor and master degree.
- The court procedure without paper. Introduction of the act without paper in court procedure by using IT.
- Develop measures to assist Prison staff combat stress burnout that is brought about through the work environment.
- Have proper employee welfare programs introduced where they are not in existence.
- Work to ensure safe Prison regimes are introduced to ensure that criminals are not allowed to control the drug problem and presurise and dominate weaker inmates

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