



**28th ESCB Social Dialogue
18-19 September 2014
ESCB/SD TU closing remarks**

The ESCB staff representatives strongly manifest their disapproval on

- The absence of a Member of the Board of the ECB during the plenary session,
- The fact that the schedule of meetings agreed for 2014 was not followed
- The delivering of the documentation on the same day of the meeting seems more of a provocative rather than a positive attitude change.
- The lack of clear and concrete answers on our questions related to SSM-HR politics;
- The absence of any discussions about the new guidelines for EURO-printing. Guidelines who seems to be dangerous to In-house printing activities.

Taking into account the signature of the social dialogue addendum that took place on the eve we found that with this attitude the ECB has shown a profound disrespect towards NCBs staff.

In view of this situation, the staff representatives found it appropriate to react in accordance with the legitimate expectations of staff, by leaving the room prior to the presentation of the concluding remarks. The final document will be sent directly to the ECB's Executive Board and to the Governing Council.

The three trade union federations - SCECBU, UNI-Europa and EPSU – strongly demand a complete change of ECB's attitude towards trade unions in order to reach a real social dialogue.

NCBs are subjected to outsourcing with the consequent introduction of flexibility and precariousness within these stability-renowned institutions.

SSM is a perfect example of this deployed logic. Its implementation could bring destructive effects for national authorities that will become destabilized in their daily supervision tasks. Through the deterioration of their working conditions, staff are subjected to an uncertain environment that became the fifth wheel of the coach forced to operate the beautiful European mechanism.

We have also the impression that at national level the investments needed for SSM have a negative impact on traditional activities, even when SSM-costs were covered by the sector. At the same time we fear inappropriate working conditions within the ECB at a moment the SSM, and the ECB, needs a motivated staff facing the power of powerful institutions.

Banknote production and handling is also facing major upheavals. The few public printing works are put in competition not only against private sector but also among them in the interests of economic efficiency. There is a great tendency for NCBs to split these activities or externalize them for allowing policy makers to invest for the future. The same holds true for cash activities and their intensive automation. The project of the new cash centers (NCF) will considerably reduce jobs and local locations.

The Trade Unions strongly regret the poor level of information received during the different technical meetings held on banknotes. The relevance of the lack of information is especially important at this moment, if we consider the changes on the regulations on banknote production that will be taking place in the next weeks. These changes should have a strong impact on working conditions at in-house printings works in the near future.

In this sense, the Trade Unions recall the commitment of the President of the ECB to provide information before decisions be taken, as set out in the protocol of Social Dialogue signed by the ECB in 1999. They also stress the absence of someone in charge of Banknotes during the plenary meeting.

Today's decisions will have a considerable impact for tomorrow. The loss of jobs inside the NCBs will weaken the functioning of the ESCB in the years to come. In addition to the loss of knowledge and the non-transmission of skills, the ideology of outsourcing in parallel with excessive centralization of activities in the ECB and the SSM will generate empty institutions, without any autonomy. While central banks tasks are strengthening, there is the paradox of a disinterest regarding the quality of public service. The identified risks during systemic changes cannot be tackled by an employment policy in the NCBs according to the challenges. The ESCB must be an example and not lead to a levelling down. Doing more with less was never a good idea, but just a hollow political slogan.

The three federations - UNI, SCECBU and EPSU - would like to stress the historical participation of the first staff representative of the National Bank of Latvia on a SD meeting in Frankfurt. After 10 years of EU membership, it is important the recognition by the Board of the NCB of staff' rights.