



Industrial relations in multilingual environments at work (IR – Multiling)

3rd international Project-Meeting

Erlangen, 4-5 of February 2016

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German Division Case Studies

„Fair Mobility Project (DGB)“ (Michael Whittall)

**„ Multilinguality and representation of interests in the metal industry “
(Ingrid Artus)**



**„Integration and representation in interactive social services –
Institutionalized Care “ (Ronald Staples)**

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Work in Progress

- | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|--|
| Case I | Fair Mobility | - Interviews held in Munich (representative of fair mobility, interviews 6 planned in Berlin)
Main target of research → Institutional Level |
| Case II | Aluminium Foundry | - 2 Interviews held with Union representatives
- 5 Interviews held with members of the works council
Main target of research → Company |
| Case III | Care | Interviews held with union representatives, member of the federal employment office, HR-officer, three Spanish care workers and a Spanish activist
Main target of research → Sector |

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Case I – Provisional Findings



Arbeiterfreizügigkeit
sozial, gerecht und aktiv

Faire Mobilität

Arbeiterfreizügigkeit
sozial, gerecht und aktiv

Welcome
добре дошли
Willkommen
Bun venit
Witamy

„Projekt Fair Mobility (DGB)“

- Sector** → *Multi-Sector*
- Place** → *6 advice centers throughout Germany (Berlin, Hamburg, München, Frankfurt, Dortmund, Stuttgart)*
- Plant size** → *2 – 3 advice workers with specific areas of expertise and foreign language competence*

Findings/focus →



*What are the main problems in connection to language, branch/ regional specific issues, employees' experience ?
Service provided.*



fair DGB
Arbeitnehmerfreizügigkeit
sozial, gerecht und aktiv

Faire Mobilität
Arbeitnehmerfreizügigkeit
sozial, gerecht und aktiv

Welcome
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Faire Mobilität (DGB)(Michael Whittall)

1. Founded /launched 2011
2. 6 advice centres
3. Tasks
4. Sector differences
5. Future prospects



Case II – Provisional Findings



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Case II: *Multilinguality and representation of interests in the metal industry*– Methods and Design

The company:

- aluminium foundry producing parts of gearing boxes
- around. 1000 employees
- 3% women
- around 20% non-German, mainly Turkish workers
- 14-15 nationalities working mainly as un-skilled or semi-skilled workers
- „long migration history“ of the 15 works council members : 3 Turkish, 1 Romanian, 1 Yugoslavian

The interviews:

- Works council chair (2)
- Turkish works council member
- Yugoslavian works council member
- Turkish assistant works council member (,right wing‘)

Planned:

- (Turkish contract worker ?)
- Manager

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Case II – Provisional Findings

- Decline of multilinguality since the 1990s because of an improved competence in German.
- German as ‚official company language‘ is widely accepted and also backed by the works council („*because otherwise Germans feel discriminated against*“; communication is necessary for the coordination of work, health & safety – as well as for company and social integration)
- German is not always the „the day-day language“ (especially in un-skilled or semiskilled areas non-German workers dominate);

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Case II – Provisional Findings

- Learning (a bit of) Turkish (and other languages) and finding „*small interpreters*“ is important for production supervisors
- The „*second official company language*“ is Turkish.
- Works council: „*This is a kind of ghettoization*“
- 2003/04: works council initiated German language lessons
- Despite all-day-,translation services‘, the works council insists that German is the official language of representation “ -

„We are against separations and cleavages and feel obligated to treat everybody equally: younger, elder, German, Turkish people. (...) The common language is bundling also the political interests.“

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Case III – Provisional Findings



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Case III Integration and representation in the health care sector. Institutionalized Care

- Focus is the Sector

Employers

Hospital	(tbd)
Geriatric Home	(tbd)
Radiological Network	HR
Service Union	Union Sec.
Interest Group	Initiator
Workers	

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Case III Provisional Findings

- Sector is highly diverse – Few big health companies (hospitals and care corporations – elderly care)
- Organizational Level is very low – many small companies, in most cases no works council.
- Biggest German Service Union is not really engaged in language issues.
- Certification of Language is mandatory for qualified jobs – but skill level (B2) is not sufficient for qualified work (clinical sector)
- Language courses are an opportunity for exploitation. Workers have to pay illegitimate fines, if certification isn't completed within a year.
- A qualified worker is a cheap worker before language skills are officially certified

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Case III Provisional Findings

- New buzzword 'circular mobility' for *enforced* temporary migration episodes
- Best practice for integrating new workers – Tandem-model (Radiology- Competence Network, Hospital)
- Integration needs Time! If not a downward spiral of disregards will be set off – workers cannot understand what to do - Locals do not have time to show and explain standardized working practices (hospital, elderly care is highly taylorized work). Immigrant workers are dumped to inferior jobs (cleaning rails)
- Semiprivate Sector is widely blind spot – language skills by TV
- Language Issues in work practice are often metaphors for Culture and cultural issues (behavior, mentalities)
- Language is a twofolded instrument of exclusion (Interest Group has no integration Efforts, focus on Spanish issues, unions are too conservative)