

Report of the FERPA Executive Committee meetings held on 13 and 14 March 2018

(ITUH auditorium)

Present: Michel Devacht, President; Carla Cantone, General Secretary (13 March); ÖGB, Austria; FGTV-ABVV and CSC-ACV, Belgium; SUH, Croatia; PA.SY.DY and PESYS-SEK, Cyprus; FEJP-CC.OO, UJP-UGT and USO, Spain; UCR-CFDT, UCR-CGT, UCR-FO, UNIR-CFE-CGC and UNSA-Retraitéés, France; OSTOE, Greece; MASZSZ and SZEF, Hungary; ICTU, Ireland; FNP-CISL, UILP-UIL and SPI-CGIL, Italy; LCGB, Luxembourg; GWU, Malta; FNV, Netherlands; CGTP-IN, Portugal; FNSPR, Romania; FNP-CDLS and FUPS-CSDL, San-Marino; ASRS, Serbia; Jacotey, UCR-FO, Chairwoman of the Financial Audit Committee; Ana Martinez Lopez, Chairwoman of the Women's Committee

Also in attendance at the meeting: Henri Lourdelle, Political Advisor of FERPA

Absent with excuses: FPEP, Bulgaria; ELA/STV, Spain; UNAR-CFTC, France; POPS, Greece; OGBL, Luxembourg; SOLIDARNOSC, Poland; TUC, United Kingdom; CNSLR "Fratia", Romania; SUS, Slovenia; UNIA, Switzerland; Emekli-Sen, Turkey, Jessica Montiel, Project Coordinator of FERPA

The President of FERPA, Michel Devacht, began the meeting by welcoming all those in attendance and briefly handed the floor to the representative of the Financial Audit Committee who came, once again, to explain to the members of the Executive Committee the new procedure implemented with the AGM system for refunds. She emphasised three main points:

- The need to click to confirm attendance at the meeting
- Signing the attendance sheet
- Returning the financial form to the Committee **within 30 days**.

After conclusion of this intervention, the President next handed the floor to **Carla Cantone**, General Secretary.

Due to her election to the Italian parliament, in early March, she submitted her resignation as General Secretary of FERPA to the President and the Executive Committee.

She firstly thanked Agostino Siciliano for having deputised for her at the start of 2017, then the President, the two Chairwomen of the Women's Committee and the Financial Audit Committee, the Coordinator of the Working Group on the Constitution and the secretariat of FERPA, for the work completed under Agostino's mandate while she was absent.

She explained the reasons for her new political role:

- Her partner's health, which prevented her from spending too long far away from Rome
- The rise of populist movements and the need to help with combating extremism.

While she will be sitting on the opposition benches (since her party suffered a severe defeat in the recent elections) she will dedicate herself to defending

- The rights of young people
- The rights of elderly and retired people
- The establishment of decent healthcare.

She recalled the unanimous adoption (with one abstention) of the Declaration by the Mid-Term General Meeting in Rome last October which should serve as the basis for a policy document for the 8th Ordinary Congress of FERPA which she proposed, subject to the agreement of the Executive Committee, bringing forward to 16 and 17 October 2018 and holding in Brussels.

She apologised to the organisations from 3 or 4 countries that she had not had the time to visit.

Adding that, “today I am bringing my involvement in the trade union movement to an end, which I began 52 years ago, for another of an entirely different nature.”

In the **discussion** that followed this opening speech, with some parties noting their surprise upon learning of the different pieces of information, everyone strove to thank Carla for the work accomplished during the much too short period during which she held her post and congratulated her on her election. Several emphasised the difficulties being experienced by FERPA and the “extraordinary” aspect of the circumstances that necessitated a response to the situation. There was a need to be pragmatic and to focus on the Congress which will have to update the “FERPA roadmap” and elect a new General Secretary. It was therefore necessary to move forwards, to continue the work undertaken by the Working Group on the Constitution and the Women’s Committee, in order to make FERPA the reference organisation at European level.

Carla thanked the organisations that spoke for their kind words and encouragement. She concluded by reminding them that another battle remained to be fought: securing the right to vote in ETUC bodies. Every organisation in FERPA had to get involved and work within their confederation towards this goal.

The following organisations participated in the discussion: UCR-CGT; FNP-CISL; UCR-FO; ASRS; FNV; SPI-CGIL; SUH; SZEFG; ICTU; UNIR-CFE-CGC

The following item on the agenda concerned **the consequences** of the General Secretary’s resignation and the action to be taken.

The President of FERPA, Michel Devacht, firstly read the proposals developed by the Steering committee during its meeting on the afternoon of 12 March.

These proposals mainly related to:

- First of all, the earlier date for the 8th FERPA Congress which was initially due to be held in April 2019 and which would now be held on 16 and 17 October 2018 in Brussels (instead of the meeting of FERPA’s Executive Committee which was scheduled for this date)
- The establishment of a select working group to draft the Policy Document that will be put forward for adoption by the 8th Congress
- The mandate of the General Secretary of FERPA which is currently entrusted to the President who will therefore handle day-to-day business with the Steering Committee
- The postponement of the Day of Action planned for May 2018

In the **discussion** that followed this presentation, several speakers asked for clarifications on the proposals, emphasising that the Day of Action had been “postponed” and not abandoned or lamenting the fact that the 8th Congress was to be held in Brussels, which would reduce its media boosting impact for the teams that would be organising it. However, the speakers acknowledged that “desperate times call for desperate measures” and therefore approved the proposals from the Steering Committee.

It was also pointed out that the Congress would have to decide on any amendments to the Constitution and certain speakers suggested bringing it forward to the afternoon of the 15th: this meeting would be devoted to discussing the Constitution. The feasibility of this proposal will be examined by the Steering Committee.

Without this in any way changing the election procedure, applications for the position of General Secretary and President must be submitted before 10 September 2018.

The Steering Committee’s document, after the incorporation of some amendments, mainly relating to the composition of the select Working Group tasked with preparing the policy document for the 8th Congress, was unanimously adopted with 2 abstentions. It is enclosed with this report.

The following organisations participated in the discussion: UNIR-CFE-CGC; UNSA-Retraités; PESYS-SEK and PA-SY-DY; UJP-UGTE; SPI-CGIL; UCR-CGT; ASRS; FNV; UCR-FO; UCR-CFDT; CGTP-IN; OSTOE; UIL-UIL; FNP-CISL; CSC-ACV; SUH;

The President next gave the floor to **Ana Martinez Lopez**, Chairwoman of the Women’s Committee.

Ana referred, among other things, to the 25 November campaign, the postponement of the women’s meeting and the questionnaire.

She was planning a Women’s Committee working group to reach agreement on the positions to adopt at the next Congress.

In the **discussion** that followed this short presentation, two points were raised:

- O.K. for the actions on 8 March and 25 November, but it should not be limited to just this and it would be necessary to meet very soon to discuss the findings of the questionnaire.
- There was a feeling of “abandonment” due to the poor flow of communication.

In **response**, the Chairwoman of the Women’s Committee specified that

- The documents would be sent via e-mail and Facebook
- The February meeting of the Women’s Committee working group had indeed been cancelled but in light of the complicated circumstances being experienced there was a need to look at how to orientate and reposition ourselves
- Perhaps the women’s meeting should be organised?

The following organisations participated in the discussion: FNV and CGTP-IN

The President, Michel Devacht, then handed the floor to **Dick de Graaf**, the coordinator of the Working Group on the Constitution.

Dick pointed out that the group had not yet completed its work but he expected it would do so after this Executive Committee meeting as a final meeting was scheduled for that afternoon. He reiterated that certain points did not come within the Working Group's remit and would therefore be submitted to the 8th Congress.

He raised three specific points:

- The Chairwoman of the Financial Audit Committee was asked to prepare the budget. This did not really fall within its competence; it would be the role of the "treasurer", if there was one
- FERPA had experienced a vacancy in the role of General Secretary. To prepare for this eventuality, could provision not be made in advance for a Deputy General Secretary?
- And the same for the President?

A short **discussion** took place following this presentation but focusing on the question of the work completed on the Constitution.

However, firstly, insofar as reform of the Constitution was concerned, several agreed, subject to decisions by Congress, on the creation of a position of Treasurer and Deputy General Secretary.

However, some interventions returned to the question of:

- Communication and updating of the FERPA website which today seems to be at a "standstill".
- The "mobilisation" decided upon at the Mid-Term General Meeting in Rome, insisting on the fact that it should not be abandoned but merely "postponed", which meant that the conditions required for its success needed to be properly examined. It was necessary to move in the right direction in terms of efficiency. Since it would, logically, be postponed until after the 8th Congress, there was a need to examine how to tie it in with the European Parliament elections. All of the resources available to FERPA and its organisations would have to be used.
- Or the issue of the ECI: should it be revived or should another direction be taken? It will be up to the 8th Congress to decide this question.

The following organisations participated in the discussion: UNIR-CFE-CGC; UCR-CGT; FNV; FNP-CISL; UCR-FO; UNSA-Retraitéés; UILP-UIL

With there being no more items on the agenda, the President thanked the participants and interpreters and invited the Constitution Working Group to complete their work at the end of the Executive Committee meeting.

Henri

1 Enclosure: The Steering Committee's memo from 12 March as amended and adopted by the Executive Committee meeting of 13 and 14 March 2018

Steering Committee document adopted by the Executive Committee on the immediate management of FERPA

The Steering Committee of FERPA, following the resignation of the General Secretary, Carla Cantone, as a result of her election to the Italian parliament, proposed the following statement to the FERPA's Executive Committee, meeting on 13 and 14 March 2018 in the ETUC Auditorium in Brussels:

- It firstly thanked Carla Cantone for the work accomplished, assured that she would bring the same passion and commitment for the defence of retirees and elderly people to the Italian parliament.

- It proposed bringing forward the 8th Ordinary Congress of FERPA to 16 and 17 October 2018 and holding it in Brussels.

- The Executive Committee would meet on the morning of 16 October for the presentation of the Constitution submitted to a vote at the 8th Congress. Until this date, management of FERPA and the Congress and the position of General Secretary are being entrusted to the President who will be assisted by the Steering Committee.

Applications for General Secretary of FERPA, President of FERPA, Chairwoman of the Women's Committee and Chairperson of the Financial Audit Committee must be submitted before 10 September 2018, which does not change the election procedures provided for in the current Constitution.

A working group, derived from the Steering Committee, organised around the President of FERPA, Michel Devacht, composed of Jeannine Martin, Dick de Graaf, Livio Melgari, Ana Martinez Lopez and Henri Lourdelle, Political Advisor of FERPA, will draw up a preliminary draft of a policy document and of demands.

The Steering Committee of FERPA, which will meet on 29 May, will propose the priorities to be debated during the 8th Congress that will be submitted to the organisations, as well as the draft Constitution and By-Laws

The amendments and comments relating to this draft will be submitted no later than Wednesday 5 September 2018 and examined by the Steering Committee, which will meet on 12 September 2018

Until the 8th Congress of FERPA, the President and Management of FERPA will be responsible for anything not included in this agenda.

The Day of Action planned for spring 2018 has been postponed until after the 8th Congress. The Executive Committee was invited to approve these proposals

Proposals unanimously adopted on 14 March 2018 with two abstentions.