



REFLECTIONS ON THE STRUCTURE OF USB

GENERAL MEETING 2021

SUBMITTED BY THE COUNCIL SECTION TO THE USB GA ON 24 JUNE 2021



This paper aims to generate an open discussion among the USB bodies about possible changes to the USB structures. Its purpose is not to present solutions or to request their adoption, but to raise a number of questions to promote a constructive debate.

The Council section has noted various problems with recruitment to, and the functioning of the union's statutory bodies: it was no longer possible to organise elections for the Financial Control Committee or the Disputes Committee owing to a lack of candidates. For the Executive Committee, there were not enough candidates or none at all in some sections, whilst in others the required number of candidates was only achieved thanks to great efforts in convincing and persuading potential candidates. All sections send only a small number of members to the meetings and discussions of the Executive Committee, which always involve the same people.

If the union is to function properly, in the interests of all its members, and democratically, it is important to find a solution to these problems. Firstly, there is a need to mobilise more members to stand as candidates in the elections to the various bodies. Secondly, it is important that these bodies should function well so as to retain the interest and commitment of the elected members. After several unsuccessful attempts to improve the functioning of the Executive Committee, we have come to the conclusion that changes to the overall structure of the union are probably needed.

It is clear that one of the problems lies in the structure of the USF - USB - sections, since in most institutions the section is responsible for negotiating with the administration, whilst in the Commission it is USF that does so. So the members identify either/first with their section, or else with USF, when addressing inter-institutional issues. Until the time comes for reforming the entire structure, we should limit the discussion to the functioning of USB and its sections.

The digitalisation of trade union life will make it easier to coordinate and take joint decisions at federal level, regardless of where our organisations are based.

Some ideas for developing our structures:

- Drastically reduce the size of the Executive Committee, whilst restricting its competences to administrative and financial management of the union, to specific 'Brussels-related' issues of common interest and to the organisation of common services at the Maison Syndicale.
- To create an informal platform for political exchange between sections that enables activists to discuss issues of importance to all staff without having to deal with the administrative and financial issues of the union.
- To create a virtual informal platform for the USF 'community', enabling the official adoption by the federal bodies (without much debate) of shared positions on all community-related inter-institutional issues.

Solidarity Is Our Business.