



www.eurofedop.org



Workers Trade Union of Croatia (RSRH)

21.02.2012

The Workers Trade Union of Croatia (RSRH) is one of the largest trade unions in Croatia. Despite its short existence (it was founded on 15 November 1990), it has a lot of experience in the protection of workers' rights and the development of social dialogue, for which we have to thank our rich international cooperation. RSRH consists of four organization units (industries): post, telecommunications, security and other industries. RSRH has over 11,000 members.



Jadranko Vehar, President RSRH

At this moment, RSRH is Croatia's most representative trade union in the services segment – it covers all from „gynaecologists to undertakers“ in 154 companies. Such wide scope of work requires extremely good staff. RSRH has ten employees today, even more than some representative trade union centres in Croatia. Our competitors often use our type of organization as an argument against our trade union, because trade unions in Croatia are organized in companies or by industries.

We were one of the first trade unions admitted to an international trade union federation – EUROFEDOP; we have been participating in its activities since 1993. RSRH is a founding member of Croatia's largest trade union centre – the Independent Trade Unions of Croatia, which has over 100,000 members.

The fact that we have signed 14 collective agreements, both industry-wide and individual ones, makes us one of the most representative trade unions in Croatia. RSRH is well-known as a trade union that promotes social dialogue and is a founding member of the Alliance for Social Dialogue. We were among the

first ones to accept the idea of forming works' councils and we have held elections in most companies in which we are active.

RSRH puts special focus on multinational companies (Deutsche Telekom, Coca Cola, Erste Steierische Bank, Securitas, ...) and the implementation of the International Labour Organization declaration on multinational companies. Multinational companies, especially Deutsche Telekom, treat the employees of the companies they own as second-class workers. It is difficult to fight this if you are not actively included in the work of a European trade union federation. The great assistance that we receive from EUROFEDOP through seminars and working groups has resulted in our preparedness for the fight to keep jobs. Experiences of other trade unions that have been confronted with job cuts implemented by Deutsche Telekom, as well as two protest actions we set up in Bonn, have provided us with arguments which greatly helped us alleviate the pressure of job cuts in Croatian Telecom. Our activity has even also contributed to our signing a „Year of Peace Agreement” with the employer two years ago; it was an agreement which lasted a year, in which there were no layoffs.

A special challenge for the functioning of our trade union is the evolution of the postal market. While the restructuring of public postal operators in most EU countries has been completed or is close to its completion, this process has just begun in Croatia. Croatian Post is faced with the restructuring process, which also means job cuts. We can only pass this test well with the support of our international trade union federation EUROFEDOP.

In its activities, RSRH puts special emphasis on the dissemination of gathered knowledge to trade unions in those countries which are not EU members. This is why we have been organizing seminars in Croatia, Austria and Germany for colleagues from trade unions from Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska and Montenegro since many years. Our experiences, which have been enriched with experiences we received from EUROFEDOP members, can greatly help those trade unions be more efficient in solving problems regarding the implementation of liberalization and harmonization according to EU standards. We hope that our younger colleagues will continue such activities, but unfortunately, we don't have enough of those younger colleagues. In my opinion, the lack of younger people in trade unions is a great problem, and we must all work on bringing our work closer to younger people and convince them that their future work and social welfare will depend on that trade union involvement.

Jadranko Vehar
President RSRH