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EUROPEAN TRADE UNION INSTITUTE

Info 35

The Trade Union Movement
in The Netherlands

The European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) is the research, information/documentation and educational instrument of the European trade union movement.

It was established in 1978 on the initiative of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) to deal with European aspects of economic, social and political developments with particular importance for the workers and their trade unions.

The following national trade union centres are members of the ETUC; at the same time they are also members of the ETUI, and as such constitute its governing bodies:

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BELGIUM	CSC/ACV FGTB/ABVV
CYPRUS	SEK TÜRK-SEN
DENMARK	LO FTF
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY	DGB
FINLAND	SAK TVK
FRANCE	CFDT CGT-FO
GREAT BRITAIN	TUC
GREECE	GGCL
ICELAND	ASI BSRB
IRELAND	ICTU
ITALY	CGIL CISL UIL
LUXEMBOURG	CGT-LUX LCGB
MALTA	GWU CMTU
NETHERLANDS	FNV CNV
NORWAY	LO
PORTUGAL	UGT-P
SPAIN	UGT STV-ELA
SWEDEN	LO TCO
SWITZERLAND	SGB CNG
TURKEY	DISK

FOREWORD

"ETUI" is a series of reports about the European Trade Union Institute which has been published in 1992.

THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN THE NETHERLANDS

Each report in the series contains a detailed report on a range of topics.

The "ETUI" series also represents an additional source of information provided by the ETUI and is the result of work as a support for trade union research work.

The present report, the "European report on a national trade union movement, describes the trade union movement in The Netherlands. It was compiled by Joost van den Broek, Assistant to the Director of the ETUI, with the collaboration of the Director of the ETUI, the ETUI and the ETUI.

Other publications in the series provide similar descriptions of trade union structures in countries with organisations affiliated to the European Trade Union Confederation. The reports are structured on the same basis as some comparison of the situation in different countries.

We hope that the "ETUI" series will contribute to your understanding of the European Trade Union Institute.

European Trade Union Institute

Brussels 1992

Brussels, February 1992

Director General
ETUI Office

The European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) is the research, information and training centre for the trade union movement of the European Community. It was established in 1974 and is based in Brussels. The Institute's main activities are to provide information and training to trade unionists in the Community, to conduct research into the conditions of work and the needs of workers, and to promote the development of trade union action.

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THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

IN THE NETHERLANDS

1. **GENERAL SITUATION**

The Netherlands has a long tradition of trade unionism. The first trade union was founded in 1817. Today there are over 10 million members in the Netherlands.

The main trade union confederations are the FNV, the CNV, and the ABN.

The FNV is the largest trade union confederation in the Netherlands, with over 5 million members.

The CNV is the second largest trade union confederation in the Netherlands, with over 3 million members.

The ABN is the third largest trade union confederation in the Netherlands, with over 2 million members.

The FNV, CNV, and ABN are all affiliated to the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI).

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The ETUI is based in Brussels, Belgium.

Brussels 1992

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The present report, the sixteenth report on a national trade union movement, describes the trade union movement in The Netherlands. It was compiled by Martin HUTSEBAUT, Assistant to the Director of the ETUI, with the collaboration of the University of Ghent, the FNV, the CNV and the MHP.

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Brussels, February 1992

*Günter KÖPKE
ETUI Director*

FORWARD

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We hope that the "INFO" series will continue to foster understanding of trade unions in Western Europe.

Günter RÖPKE
ETUI Director

Brussels, February 1982

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1. THE CONFEDERATIONS

There are three recognised trade union confederations in The Netherlands at the present time:

1. FNV - *De Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging* (Dutch Trade Union Confederation)

Address: Naritaweg 10
1043 BX Amsterdam
Postbus 8456
1005 AL Amsterdam

telephone: (31)20-5816300

telefax: (31)20-6844541

telex: 16660

President: Johan Stekelenburg

General Secretary: Louis Groen

2. CNV - *Het Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond* (Christian Trade Union Confederation)

Address: Ravellaan 1
3533 JE Utrecht
Postbus 2475
3500 GL Utrecht

telephone: (31)30-913911

telefax: (31)30-946544

telex: 40646

President: Henk Hofstede¹

General Secretary: Peter Cammaert

¹ Henk Hofstede will be succeeded by Anton Westerlaken on 1st July 1992.

3. MHP - *De vakcentrale voor Middelbaar en Hoger Personeel* (Confederation of Senior and Higher Managerial Employees' Unions)

Address: Randhoeve 223
3995 GA Houten
Postbus 400
3990 DK Houten

telephone: (31)3403-74792

telefax: (31)3403-78829

President: Gerard van Dalen

General Secretary: Cees Michielse

A fourth trade union confederation was founded on 1st June 1990, which is seeking, but has not yet achieved, recognition. This is the **AVC** (*Algemene Vakcentrale*) (General Trade Union Confederation).

Address: Laan van Meerdervoort 50
2517 AM Den Haag

telephone: (31)70-3561543

telefax: (31)70-3615681

President: J.C. van der Hoek

General Secretary: A.C. van der Vliet

In addition to these confederations there are several trade union organisations which are not affiliated to a confederation.

2. HISTORY

GENERAL

Industrialisation was late in coming to The Netherlands. In 1850 almost half of the population was still employed in agriculture, and it was not until the last quarter of the nineteenth century that what can really be termed an industrialisation process took place. It was only then that the population began to drift from the rural areas to the cities in the hope of finding employment. It was largely due to these factors that trade unionism itself was slow to develop in The Netherlands.

THE FIRST TRADE UNIONS

As in many other Western European countries, friendly societies were the precursors of trade unions in The Netherlands. These friendly societies were set up in order to offer workers protection against sickness, old age, accident and destitution. In The Netherlands, welfare funds of this nature were first set up in the mid nineteenth century. The printers were the first occupational group to begin to discuss working conditions in their social clubs, and it is therefore not surprising that they were also the first to set up local and national trade unions. They were followed by the Amsterdam diamond cutters, who soon formed their own association, after which other trades in Amsterdam gradually followed suit. It was mainly skilled workers who were involved in this organisational process, and the establishment of these trade unions was soon followed by the creation of "steering committees" in the cities - central organisations, whose members were the leaders of the local trade unions.

THE FIRST GENERAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

A national federation was set up soon after the founding of the central organisations. This was the **General Dutch Workers' Union (Algemeen Nederlands Werklieden Verbond - ANWV)**, founded in 1871 following a congress held by the central organisations. The ANWV's chief concerns were the extension of civil rights to workers, the development of the education system, and the introduction of a 10-hour working day. The ANWV was moderate in its approach, advocating cooperation with employers.

THE PROTESTANT TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

Despite its moderate approach, the ANWV was not long-lived. There was one group of Protestant² workers in particular who held a special place within the organisation. From 1871 onwards they collaborated closely through the **Patriotic Workers' Association (Vaderlandsche Werkmansvereniging)**, an association of Protestant workers and employers which aimed specifically to promote awareness of Christian principles amongst workers. When the ANWV eventually opted in favour of secular public education, the association called on its members to resign, and it was thus that the **Patrimonium Dutch Workers' Union (Nederlands Werkliedenverbond Patrimonium)** came into being in 1877.

Klaas Kater was the initiator of this move. Patrimonium was against collective action for higher wages, upholding the paternalistic bonds between workers and employers. It was not until about 1890 that the organisation became what could be termed a trade union, since membership was originally also open

² In the Netherlands, Protestants are referred to as "Protestant-Christians". The term of Protestant will be used in the following text.

to employers. But it was certainly an organisation through which Calvinists were able to express their disapproval of the major changes that were taking place in society, such as the advent of socialism and capitalism.

Although Patrimonium maintained close contacts with the Anti-Revolutionary Party (ARP) (which was a Protestant leaning Parliamentary group) during that period, workers were becoming increasingly dissatisfied with their own organisation and with the fact that there was no worker representation in the ARP parliamentary group; nor did developments in the social and economic field meet their expectations. It was in this climate that the Christian Social Congress was held in 1891, at which the social questions of the day were debated. The outcome was not the immediate creation of independent trade unions, but the Congress did lead to the establishment of individual unions as sub-sections of Patrimonium. In 1900, Patrimonium set up the **Christian Workers Secretariat (Christelijk Arbeiderssecretariaat)**, an organisation which, although becoming officially independent in 1905, still did not fully satisfy the needs of the trade unions in their struggle for independence.

In the years following the railway workers' strikes in 1903, internal disputes developed amongst Protestant workers over the question of whether Protestants should be free to set up independent trade unions, and the whole issue of whether there should be Protestant or interdenominational trade unions was also thrashed out. The disputes ended in 1908-9, mainly as the result of the founding of the Confederation of Trade Unions in the Netherlands (Nederland Verbond van Vakverenigingen NVV) with its moderate programme, followed by the **Christian National Trade Union Confederation (Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond CNV)** in 1909. The CNV based its philosophy on Christian principles, a central maxim being the rejection of class warfare.

Patrimonium rejected the founding of the CNV in 1909 on two grounds: first and foremost on account of the interdenominational approach of the CNV, which addressed both Protestants and Catholics, but also because of its objection in principle to the independence of the trade union movement. What Patrimonium wanted was a labour organisation for both employers and workers.

The interdenominational nature of the CNV reflected the structure of several unions such as the **Textile Workers' Union, Unitas**, whose members were both Protestant and Catholic. But this interdenominationalism came to an end in 1912, when the Catholic bishops issued a decree prohibiting Catholics from joining Unitas, the textile workers' union. The CNV thus became a de facto Protestant trade union confederation.

THE SOCIALIST TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

The socialists also left the ANWV and endeavoured to set up socialist trade union organisations in several towns. These local organisations amalgamated in 1881 to form the **Social Democratic Federation (Sociaal Democratische Bond - SDB)**, which was led by a former clergyman, Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis. Around 1900 the SDB opted for anti-parliamentarianism and anarcho-syndicalism, while continuing nevertheless to fight for universal suffrage.

Meanwhile, at the international level, the relationship between the party and the trade union movement was the subject of debate in the Second International, and at the International Socialist Congress in 1891 the decision was taken to set up national workers' secretariats, which were to serve as a central coordinating body for the socialist unions and parties. This decision was followed up in The Netherlands with the founding of the **National Labour Secretariat (Nationaal Arbeids Secretariaat**

-NAS) in 1893, its affiliates being the SDB and several national and local unions.

In 1894 a second³ workers' party was established in The Netherlands: the **Social Democratic Workers' Party (Social Democratische Arbeiders Partij - SDAP)**. It was dissatisfaction with the line of policy followed by the SDB, and rejection of its anti-parliamentarianism in particular, that led to the decision to set up this party. The SDAP was also affiliated to the NAS from the outset.

The following decade was marked by the struggle for power within the NAS. Although the SDB predominated initially, due to internal conflict it was unable to maintain that position. As of 1896 a change in the constitution made it impossible for political parties to continue their affiliation in the NAS, a move which led to a formal split between the socialist parties and the trade union movement. Thus the NAS became a true trade union confederation.

In 1903 there was a major crisis in the socialist trade union movement. The railway workers' strikes in January and April proved a complete failure and thousands of strikers subsequently lost their jobs. The NAS was unable to offer any form of resistance whatsoever; the army was called in to occupy stations and railway lines, and the denominational trade unions launched anti-strike propaganda. The strike was eventually called off without achieving its aim - namely the defeat by parliament of the anti-strike bills.

³ The first workers' party in the Netherlands was the SDB.

For the opponents of the NAS within the trade union movement, the outcome of the strikes proved that the trade union movement needed to be organised more efficiently. In the early months of 1905, the **General Dutch Diamondworkers' Union (Algemeen Nederlandse Diamantbewerkerbond - ANDB)**, which had been founded in 1894 and was led by Henri Polak, called on workers to engage in organised and efficient cooperation. This resulted in the creation of the **Confederation of Trade Unions in The Netherlands (Nederland Verbond van Vakverenigingen - NVV)** on 1 January 1906, with Polak as the first President. The NVV's aim was to look after and promote the industrial and social interests of its members. No positions were to be adopted on political issues; only economic interests were to be promoted. The main instrument with which the NVV planned to achieve this goal was no longer strike but negotiation with employers or public authorities. Strike was only to be used as the ultimate weapon and only when the executive board had so decided. Many wildcat strikes were to be called without the recognition or support of the NVV.

Despite these "neutral" NVV goals, its links with the SDAP proved to be very close in actual practice. So strong in fact that NVV leaders were not allowed to belong to any party other than the SDAP.

When the NVV was founded, the trade union organisations adopted three basic organisational principles: national trade unions were to have strong leadership provided by paid leaders; membership dues were to be high; and substantial action support funds were to be established.

The consistent application of these principles and the firm stand adopted by the leaders evidently had their effect, for more and more workers turned away from the NAS. By the outbreak of

World War I, the NVV had 80 000 members and the NAS just under 10 000. Although NAS membership figures picked up again after 1918, topping 50 000 by 1920, the role of the National Labour Secretariat was clearly over, and after the 1940-45 Occupation the organisation petered out completely.

THE CATHOLIC TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

Catholicism was the last current from which trade union organisations emerged. It was not until 1888 that a broad-based organisation, the **Roman Catholic People's Federation (Roomsche-Katholieke Volksbond - RKVB)**, came into being. This organisation is to be seen primarily as a defence against the socialist attacks on the Church and the socialist overtures to Catholic workers.

The *Rerum Novarum* encyclical (1891) was of great significance for the Catholic labour movement. It was under the influence of this encyclical that the first trade union with a membership including Catholics was set up - in the town of Twente, where textile workers joined forces with the Protestants to found Unitas. The question now arose within the Catholic Church of how Catholic workers were to be organised. Although certain levels of the hierarchy were prepared to allow Catholic trade union organisations, interdenominational organisations were still taboo. The lower clergy considered that interdenominational trade union organisations should be allowed, but the bishops decreed in 1906 that "Catholics should be united and kept united in Catholic organisations". This marked the beginning of the end of Unitas as an interdenominational trade union movement.

In the early 20th century there were two types of Catholic organisation that defended workers' interests. First, there were the diocesan associations, which were concerned more specifically

with the moral and religious well-being of working people. In addition to these associations, Catholic trade union organisations came into being during the first decade of the 20th century, and this dual setup eventually led to the establishment of the **Office of Roman Catholic Trade Union Organisation (Bureau voor de Rooms-Katholieke Vakorganisatie)** in 1908, with the approval of the bishops. Relations between the two organisations remained difficult. The Church decreed in 1916 that trade unions could only deal with workers' interests inasmuch as these had a direct bearing on work and that all other matters were to be left to the diocesan associations. Workers who wanted to join a Catholic trade union organisation were at the same time required to be members of a diocesan association.

In 1925, the diocesan federations and the Catholic trade union organisations amalgamated to become the **Roman Catholic Workers' Confederation in The Netherlands (Rooms-Katholiek Werkliedenverbond in Nederland - RKVW)**. There was thus now an umbrella organisation for both institutions, and Catholic workers in the Roman Catholic State Party (Rooms-Katholieke Staatspartij - RKSP) also began to exert growing influence. And since the party was endeavouring to promote the interests of every group in social and economic life, the workers demanded a place in parliament.

THE INTER-WAR YEARS : PAINFUL COOPERATION

With the establishment of the NVV, the CNV and the RKVW, the foundations were laid for the three trade union confederations which played the main role in the labour history of The Netherlands.

For quite some time there was no question of cooperation amongst the three trends, but rather of mistrust and animosity. The NVV in particular was to see the strikes it called miscarry again and again, because non-strikers from the denominational confederations took over the strikers' work.

It gradually came to be realised that the NVV and the interdenominational trade union movements were having to solve the same problems, which meant that the need for contacts and collaboration was steadily growing. Thus it came that in 1933 joint action was carried out for the improvement of job creation, and in 1938 joint negotiations were held between the NVV unions and the Catholic and Christian unions on the elaboration of collective agreements.

The 1930's were particularly difficult years for the trade union movement in The Netherlands. The economic crisis which shook the world and which The Netherlands were not spared caused mass unemployment, which at its peak plunged 500 000 workers and their families into poverty.

However, recognition of the trade union movement as the representative of workers' interests grew steadily. It was partly due to trade union influence that laws were passed which were of tremendous importance for the status of workers in society. Workers were gradually gaining recognition as people and as citizens.

WORLD WAR II AND THE POST-WAR YEARS

During the occupation, from 1943 onwards, meetings were held in secret by the leaders of the confederations (which had been dissolved) to discuss how the trade union movement should be built up again once the war was over. The representatives of the

confederations were convinced that rivalry between them could only be detrimental to the representation of workers' interests, and in their secret deliberations they came to the conclusion that there would have to be more far-reaching cooperation after the war.

On Liberation Day, 5th May 1945, the **Council of Trade Union Confederations (Raad van Vakcentrales)**, which was the consultation body of the three confederations, came out into the open and the Roman Catholic trade union movement, RKWV, had meanwhile renamed itself the **Catholic Workers' Movement (Katholieke Arbeidersbeweging - KAB)**.

There was also a fourth trade union confederation which came into being immediately after the Second World War, the **United Trade Union Confederation (Eenheidsvakcentrale - EVC)**, whose members believed that they could thus achieve one single trade union movement in the Netherlands. However, an attempt to amalgamate with the NVV was unsuccessful. The EVC came increasingly under communist leadership and was eventually dissolved in 1964.

Relations between the three trade union confederations were good until 1954, but collaboration within the Council of Trade Union Confederations came to an end that year after publication of an Instruction by the Dutch bishops forbidding Catholics from joining a union affiliated to the socialist NVV. In January 1958, however, the decision was taken to restore cooperation through the establishment of the **Consultation Council (Raad van Overleg)**. This time the consultations were to relate only to the three trade union confederations and not to their affiliated unions and sections. This consultation body was henceforth to arrive at common positions on all important problems in the social and socio-economic field.

In the sixties, major changes came about in the Catholic Church with regard to its attitude to social questions, examples being the approval in 1963 of a joint action programme of the Catholic Workers' Movement (KAB) and the socialist NVV and the revocation of the Instruction in 1965. The KAB adapted its organisational structure in 1964 and was renamed the **Dutch Catholic Trade Union Confederation (Nederlands Katholiek Vakverbond -NKV)**. This was a central organisation, to which trade union organisations were affiliated. It no longer had individual members, as had been the case with the KAB.

In 1964 the three trade union confederations also published a joint report on "Asset formation through participation in capital gains", and in February 1967 they drew up a joint action programme for the first time, which served as a basis for the first joint trade union action against government wage and employment policy (1968). The steadily growing cooperation between the three trade union confederations NVV, NKV and CNV took the form of discussions, beginning in 1969, on what was referred to as a "central confederation" of the three organisations. A joint action programme was also drawn up for the 1971-75 period containing a large number of social aims in the fields of wages and working conditions, labour market policy and social security.

Towards the end of 1973, however, it became apparent that the three trade union confederations did not have the same views on the central confederation to be set up. In January 1974 the CNV decided that it would no longer collaborate on the establishment of a central confederation, since it felt that its identity would be jeopardised. The NVV and NKV, however, were anxious to form this central confederation and decided to continue working towards that goal.

THE F.N.V.

On 18th December 1975, practically all of the unions affiliated to the NVV and NKV decided to set up the **Confederation of Dutch Trade Unions (Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging - FNV)**, which became operational on **1st January 1976**. At the FNV Congress in 1978 it was decided that collaboration would be continued, and the governing bodies were given the mandate of investigating whether full amalgamation of the two confederations could be achieved by the end of 1981. In September 1981, the NVV and NKV Congresses decided unanimously to amalgamate the two trade union confederations completely as of 1st January 1982. The NVV and NKV were thus officially dissolved. And by the end of 1981 the NVV and NKV affiliates had launched or even successfully concluded the federation or amalgamation process in all sectors of industry.

The links with the CNV were severed immediately after the establishment of the FNV. There was no longer any form of official FNV/CNV consultations. Several unions had already left the NKV previously and thus did not participate in the establishment of the new confederation. Others - Catholic organisations which were not affiliated to a confederation - sought membership in the CNV. Thus the CNV became once again what it had always aimed to be - an interdenominational trade union organisation.

Collaboration between the CNV and the FNV proved very difficult in the first few years after 1976, and it was not until the late 1980's that any appreciable improvement was achieved.

THE M.H.P.

The MHP (**Vakcentrale voor Middelbaar en Hoger Personeel - Confederation of Senior and Higher Managerial Employees' Unions**) was set up on 10th April 1974 as a cooperative organisation grouping three trade union organisations which had already been operating. These were:

- the Union of Employees, Managerial and Higher Executive Staff (Unie BLHP);
- the General Union of Senior and Higher Civil Servants (CMHA);
- the Dutch General Union of Higher Managerial Staff (NCHP).

The MHP organises senior and higher managerial staff in the private sector and public services. The various unions within the MHP have their own specific target groups; the Unie BLHP, for example, organises senior managerial employees in the commercial sector, whereas the General Union of Senior and Higher Public Servants (CMHA - now known as the CMHF) concentrates exclusively on persons employed in the public sector - public authorities, education, undertakings and institutions. The NCHP, now called the VHP, organises higher managerial staff in the public sector. Due to the specificity of the affiliated organisations, cooperative links within the MHP have remained fairly weak. The main outcome of the establishment of the confederation has been to enable it to participate in the Labour Foundation (Stichting van de Arbeid - STAR)⁴ and in the Social and Economic Council

⁴ The Labour Foundation is a joint institution under civil law, in which representatives of central management and labour organisations meet for discussions. Its task is to deliberate and advise on social and economic aspects of economic life, and it is also an important advisory body in the field of wage formation and labour law.

(Sociaal-Economische Raad - SER)⁵ and thus to be recognised nationally as a representative organisation.

THE A.V.C.

A fourth trade union confederation, the **General Trade Union Confederation (Algemene Vakcentrale - AVC)**, was set up on 1st June 1990. The AVC groups a number of existing organisations including what was formerly the independent General Civil Servants' Union. It has a membership of over 100 000 at the present time and has applied - as yet unsuccessfully - for official recognition. It therefore is not yet entitled to participate in the Labour Foundation (STAR) or in the Social and Economic Council (SER).

⁵ The Social and Economic Council is a tripartite national advisory organ which was set up by the public authorities in 1950 and whose task is to issue opinions to the government on important social and economic issues.

3. PURPOSE AND TASKS OF THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

The objectives of the FNV and CNV are practically identical: collective representation of interests, services to individual members and social change. The two organisations differ, however, in the procedures they employ, the principles on which they base their action and the scope of that action.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives laid down in the FNV constitution include the following:

- the FNV aims to maintain and promote a democratic society in which the bargaining freedom of the trade union movement of working people is guaranteed;
- the FNV seeks in general to protect the material and other interests of working people, including those who do not or who no longer take part in active working life, and of their families or comparable social units.

According to the policy statement of the CNV, the organisation aims to achieve two goals. On the one hand it is an interest group which wants to improve the circumstances of working people, and on the other hand it wants to combat social injustice and contribute to the establishment of a more just society.

The MHP focuses mainly on economic and social policy, its principle objective being to defend the position of senior and higher managerial employees. With this in view, the MHP has opted specifically for the consultative rather than the conflictual model. Strike is alien to the principles of the organisation.

PRINCIPLES

The FNV has included the following basic principles in its constitution:

- the confederation bases its objectives and activities on the fundamental values of equality of all individuals, freedom, justice and solidarity;
- its points of departure are the democratic principles and fundamental rights laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- the confederation recognises the importance of creed and philosophy of life as a source of inspiration for trade union activities.

In the CNV policy statement, responsibility is a central concept. The philosophy of the organisation is based on four fundamental principles:

- responsibility;
- justice;
- neighbourly love and solidarity;
- freedom.

Both the FNV and the CNV consider that it is not only up to people as individuals to accept responsibility, but also to the organisations in which those people are united. Justice is a precondition for enabling people to live in equality. In the CNV and FNV's view, this justice must be expressed in the laws and regulations of both the Dutch and the European authorities. Neighbourly love, or solidarity, implies that people must work together to build up a society which aims to achieve the well-being of all. Freedom requires the general recognition of the fundamental freedoms which must be respected and upheld throughout the world.

TASKS OF THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

The tasks of the trade union movement include cooperation and the sharing of responsibility between unions and their confederations. Thus a trade union confederation does not conclude collective labour agreements. It can be said in general that the trade union confederations act as coordinators and defend intersectoral interests. An example of this are the contacts they have with the public authorities on general socio-economic policy. In addition to this, the confederations are responsible for regulations pertaining, for example, to social security and employee participation. Negotiations on working conditions in the sectors and regulations pertaining to specific sectors fall within the purview of the individual unions. This also applies to negotiations with individual undertakings.

Tasks have not always been distributed in this way between unions and confederations. The confederations held a much stronger position in the fifties and sixties, due mainly to the wage policy followed at that time. This meant that there were no autonomous decentralised wage negotiations; it was in the Labour Foundation that agreement was reached on wage increases for a certain period. Since it was the confederations and not the individual unions that sat in the Foundation, the confederations had tremendous influence on socio-economic policy. But this all changed in the seventies, when the unions demanded more influence and autonomous wage negotiations. This meant the end of the wage policy that had been followed hitherto, and it also meant that the major role played by the confederations in the field of working conditions had come to an end.

4. TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP

Let us first examine some basic statistics on employment in The Netherlands.

Total population	14 893 000
Labour force: men	4 249 000
women	2 743 000
total	6 992 000
Total non-active population	636 000 ⁶
Number of persons employed	
in Agriculture and the fishing industry	289 000
Mining, manufacturing and public utilities	1 245 000
Construction	409 000
Commerce and Horeca (hotel and catering trade)	1 199 000
Transport and communications	379 000
Banks and insurances etc.	651 000
Other services	2 135 000
Total active labour force	6 307 000
no. of wage earners included in this total	5 626 000

⁶ These figures are based on the potential labour force between 18 and 64 years of age (source: CBS 1989). In the above table the sum of the active and non-active labour force does not tally exactly with the figure quoted for the total labour force since the figures have been rounded off.

The table below shows the number of organised workers in the various sectors. The first four columns show union density per sector. These figures thus also include the members of the MHP, AVC and occupational unions in addition to the FNV and CNV members. The 1989 figures differ somewhat from those quoted for the other years, due partly to the fact that a different calculation method was used from that year onwards. The growth in the labour force was at all events greater than the growth in union membership.

UNION DENSITY PER SECTOR (IN %)

Sectors	Union density per sector				% of these members affiliated to FNV				% of these members affiliated to CNV			
	'83	'85	'87	89	'83	'85	'87	89	'83	'85	'87	'89
A	35	32	33	24	22	22	22	18	11	7	5	5
B	35	31	30	25	25	22	21	18	6	4	4	4
C	49	43	47	45	39	31	36	33	7	8	9	9
D	52	42	47	45	40	32	35	30	9	8	9	8
E	15	11	11	8	13	9	9	7	1	1	1	1
F	49	41	38	33	35	31	27	24	8	6	6	5
G	9	8	8	9	5	4	3	4	1	1	1	1
H	45	41	40	30	19	17	17	13	9	8	7	5
I	68	56	50	38	21	18	17	14	27	21	18	12
TOTAL	32	29	29	24	19	17	17	14	6	6	5	4

A = Agriculture and fishing industry

B = Manufacturing

C = Public utilities

D = Construction industry and building firms

E = Commerce, hotel and catering trade and repair undertakings

F = Transport, storage and communications undertakings

G = Banking and insurance, commercial services

H = Other services (excluding education)

I = Education

Note: Overall union density dropped from 39 % in 1980 to 24 % in 1989.

The table below gives an overview of membership development per organisation.

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PER ORGANISATION

(In absolute figures)

Year	FNV	CNV	MHP	Other confederations	Total confederations	Occupational unions
1980	1077800	304300	118500	289100	1789600	872800
1985	898500	300000	108100	234300	1540900	776100
1988	906000	291700	116600	256500	1570700	784500
1989	937400	295000	121800	260300	1614500	811500
1990	1014747	305032	127038***
1991	1059339	316814	133167***

* No figures available

5. STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION

The three Dutch trade union organisations affiliated to the ETUC, i.e. the FNV, CNV and MHP, are composed of affiliated organisations, which are their direct members. Although the membership figures vary, the membership structures in the three organisations are virtually identical. The member organisations, i.e. the unions, organise their members according to branch of industry, which means that in principle only one union from each confederation negotiates any individual collective agreement.

The member unions often subdivide their own organisations into occupational groups so that their members can identify them more easily. This is certainly typical of large unions which organise a number of different sectors.

As stated in the previous chapter, tasks are distributed between the unions and their confederations. The confederations cannot conclude collective agreements; only the unions are authorised to do so.

**Membership figures of unions affiliated to the FNV
(as of 1.10.1991)**

Public sector

Abva/Kabo (public service employees)	289 578
General Teachers' Union	43 729
Dutch Police Force Union	18 130
Servicemen's Union	12 370
Total	363 807

Private sector

FNV Industrial Workers' Union	227 978
FNV Building and Wood Workers' Union	160 281
FNV Services Union	82 346
FNV Transport Workers' Union	67 252
FNV Food Workers' Union	60 097
FNV Printers and Paperworkers' Union	49 121
FNV Hotel and Catering Workers' Union	15 582
FNV Women's Union	8 855
Seamen's Union	6 137
Dutch Journalists' Association	5 370
FNV Artists' Union	5 624
Hairdressers' Union	5 281
Association of Actors under Contract	580
Professional Sportsmen's Union	616
FNV Youth ⁷
Total	695 532

Total FNV membership 1 059 339

⁷ FNV Youth covers the some 50 000 young trade unionists who are members of the various FNV unions.

Membership figures of unions affiliated to the CNV (as of 1.10.1991)

Public sector

CFO (CNV union grouping public service, health and welfare services employees)	84 836
General Christian Police Union	19 753
General Christian Servicemen's Organisation	14 433
Protestant Teacher's Union	17 127
Catholic Teachers' Union	36 321
Total	<hr/> 172 470

Private sector

CNV Industrial Workers' Union	54 665
CNV Wood and Construction Workers' Union	42 013
CNV Transport Workers' Union	16 562
CNV Service Workers' Union	17 500
CNV Graphical Workers' Union	7 362
CNV Women's Union	995
CNV Sextons' Union	919
CNV Youth	791
Church Workers' Union	192
Christian Journalists' Centre	140
General Association of Christian Artists	132
Professional Divers' Union	273
Christian Artists	2 723
Total	<hr/> 144 267

Total CNV membership **316 814**

Membership figures of unions affiliated to the MHP (as of 1.4.1991)

Union of Employees, Managerial and Higher Executive Staff	58 949
General Union of Senior and Higher Civil Servants employed in the public authorities, education, undertakings and institutions	45 767
Union of Higher Managerial Staff	28 451
Total MHP membership	133 167

The FNV and CNV also have a number of secretariats in addition to the organisations organised according to branch of industry. These secretariats have been set up for specific target groups; they are part of the confederation but ensure that the interests of specific groups of workers are protected. The following secretariats have been set up in the FNV and CNV:

- the Women's Secretariat;
- the Secretariat for Migrant Workers;
- the Secretariat for Handicapped or unemployed workers and older workers.

The FNV has an additional secretariat - the Secretariat for Ideology and Trade Unionism, which provides the FNV members with a platform for expressing their personal views on trade union work.

The structure of the confederations

The internal organisation of the FNV and CNV is virtually identical except for the nomenclature of the organs, whereas the

structure of the MHP differs to some extent. The FNV and CNV are both composed of four principal organs:

- the **Congress (FNV) or General Assembly (CNV)**, which is the supreme decision-making organ but which only meets periodically. Its main tasks are to define policy and approve the policy carried out, to present financial reports and to appoint the members of the board. The distribution of votes at these sessions is proportionate to the number of members of the affiliated organisations, although the smaller organisations are guaranteed a certain number of votes.
- the **Confederal Council (FNV + CNV)**, which is the supreme decision-making organ of the confederations in the intervening period between congresses. This Council, which is composed of the Presidents or other representatives of the member organisations and the members of the Federal Board, is convened regularly (often once a fortnight).
- the **Confederal Board (FNV + CNV)**, which is responsible for implementing the decisions of the Council and for the day-to-day running of the confederation. In both confederations the Board has seven members.
- the **Advisory Committees (FNV) or Committees and Working Groups (CNV)**, which have been set up in various fields of policy. These bodies, whose members are representatives - often experts - from the affiliated organisations and from the confederation, discuss developments in the various fields of policy and advise the Confederal Council on the relevant positions to be adopted.

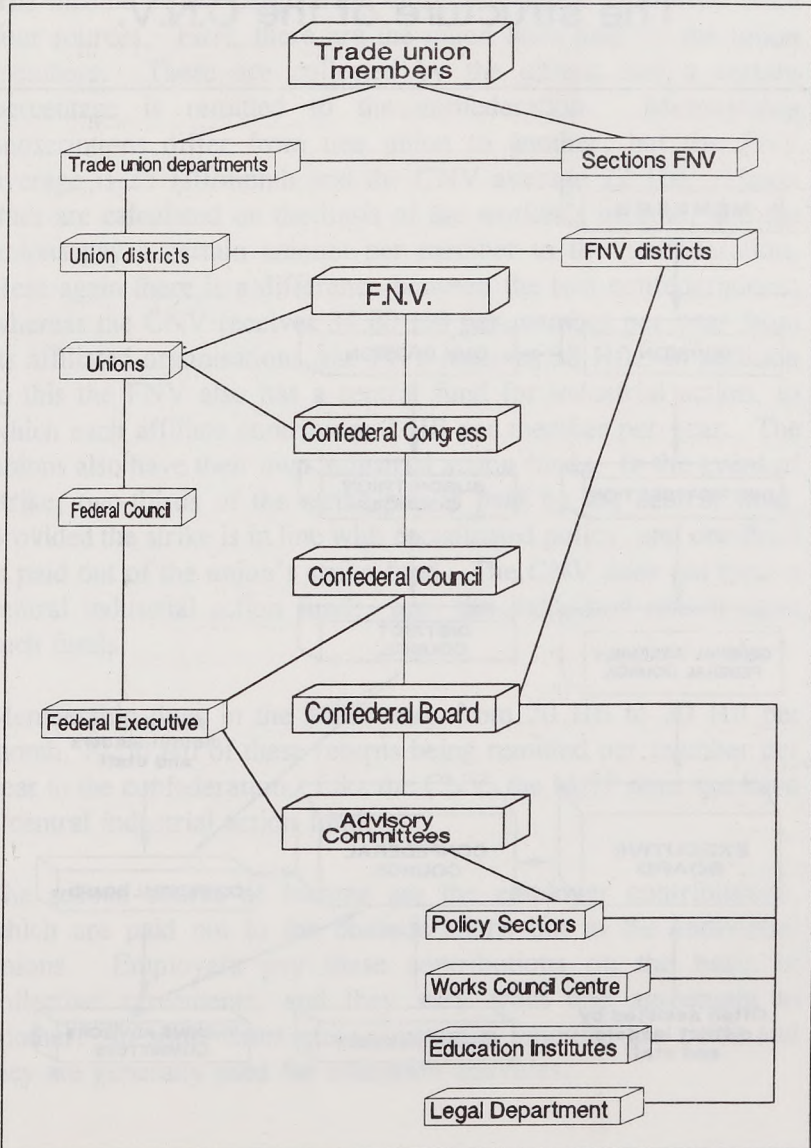
In addition to these organs the confederations have also created bodies providing assistance for members, legal aid being one of the major services provided. Members can obtain legal aid from their trade union free of charge in the event of labour disputes (in the broadest sense of the term). Furthermore, the two confederations

collaborate in the field of consumer affairs through an institution known as Consumer Contact (Konsumenten Kontakt - KK).

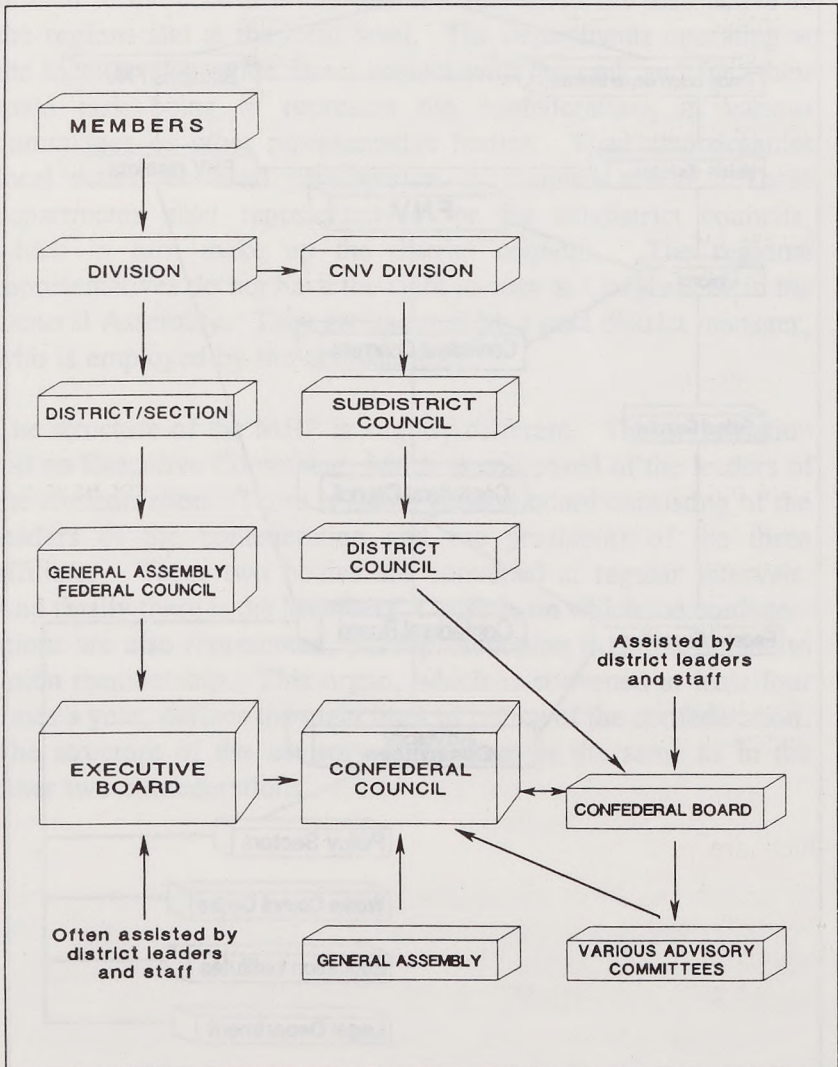
The activities of the confederations and their affiliates are not limited to the central level; the confederations are also active in the regions and at the local level. The departments operating at the local level provide direct contact with the rank and file, their main task being to represent the confederations in various committees or other representative bodies. They also organise local action or local participation in national action. These departments elect representatives for the subdistrict councils, which in turn make up the district councils. The regional representatives do not have the right to vote at Congress or in the General Assembly. They are assisted by a paid district manager, who is employed by the confederation.

The structure of the MHP is slightly different. The organisation has an Executive Committee, which is composed of the leaders of the confederation. There is also a general board consisting of the leaders of the confederation and the presidents of the three affiliates. These two bodies are convened at regular intervals. And finally there is the Members' Council, on which the confederations are also represented, but representation is proportionate to union membership. This organ, which is convened at least four times a year, defines the main lines of policy of the confederation. The structure of the advisory committees is the same as in the other two confederations.

The structure of the F.N.V.



The structure of the C.N.V.



6. DUES AND FINANCING

The income of the Dutch trade union movement is derived from four sources. First, there are the union dues paid by the union members. These are collected by the unions and a certain percentage is remitted to the confederation. Membership subscriptions differ from one union to another, but the FNV average is 25 Hfl/month and the CNV average 22 Hfl. Union dues are calculated on the basis of the worker's income, and the unions pay a certain amount per member to the confederation. Here again there is a difference between the two confederations; whereas the CNV receives 34,80 Hfl per member per year from its affiliated organisations, the FNV receives 38 Hfl. In addition to this the FNV also has a central fund for industrial action, to which each affiliate contributes 2 Hfl per member per year. The unions also have their own industrial action funds. In the event of strike, two-thirds of the strike pay is paid by the central fund, provided the strike is in line with coordinated policy, and one third is paid out of the union's strike fund. The CNV does not have a central industrial action fund; only the individual unions have such funds.

Membership dues in the MHP vary from 20 Hfl to 30 Hfl per month, 12,50 Hfl of these returns being remitted per member per year to the confederation. Like the CNV, the MHP does not have a central industrial action fund.

The second source of income are the employer contributions, which are paid not to the confederations but to the individual unions. Employers pay these contributions on the basis of collective agreements, and they vary from one agreement to another. In some cases quite substantial amounts are paid, and they are generally used for education activities.

The third source of income are the public authorities, from which the confederations receive financing for specific projects, and these contributions can only be used for funding those activities. Examples of such public aid are subsidies granted for development cooperation, research, education and training for target groups, and awareness-raising activities.

And lastly there are the allowances paid for participation in official advisory organs. Examples of this are the per diems paid for attendance at the sessions of the Economic and Social Council and the Labour Foundation. In addition to this, the confederations also receive some payments for services rendered, for example for activities in the context of employment services.

7. SPECIAL PROGRAMMES

For this chapter a number of programmes have been selected from the policy documents published by the affiliated organisations in the past few years: positions of the Dutch trade union organisations on Europe, a general policy document, and memoranda on working conditions for the years that lie ahead.

THE MEMORANDA ON WORKING CONDITIONS

The memorandum on working conditions is one of the most important policy documents of the Dutch trade union movement. It lays down priorities for negotiations with employers. The confederations themselves do not conclude agreements with employers on working conditions, but they do coordinate their affiliates' demands relating to working conditions. However, agreement is sometimes reached at the central level on questions such as wage restraint or on measures to promote collective facilities or job opportunities. These agreements have to be implemented at the sectoral level, and the results of negotiations can differ from those of the central agreements.

In its medium-term policy on working conditions the FNV gives top priority to improving employment. Half of the wage margin (i.e. the sum of the increase in labour productivity plus inflation) should be used for redistributing the work available and creating employment. To achieve this the FNV proposes the following instruments:

- reduction of working time
- more possibilities for part-time work
- extension of various forms of holidays
- early retirement.

Access to employment for specific target groups must also be included in the negotiations on working conditions. Such groups are ethnic minorities, the long-term unemployed, women who wish to go back to work, and partially disabled workers.

And finally, labour agreements should also include clauses on improving job quality. In this context efforts should be concentrated mainly on increasing possibilities for worker participation and improving working conditions. At the same time, the working conditions recommended by the FNV aim to reduce absenteeism for reasons of illness and industrial disablement.

In its memorandum on working conditions for 1992, the CNV also calls for more attention to be devoted to objectives other than wage increases such as the improvement of job quality, environmental protection, and measures to strengthen the employment market position of weaker groups.

The CNV considers that there should be an overall approach to job quality but that at the same time attention should be devoted to each individual aspect of the concept. This implies that the issue must be given priority in negotiations on working conditions. In 1992 the CNV has been concentrating its efforts on reducing industrial disablement, a context in which greater attention must be devoted to working conditions and effective preventive measures.

The employment market position of a number of groups of workers in The Netherlands is insecure, the weak groups being ethnic minorities, the partially disabled, women and older workers. Greater attention must be devoted to these groups in the negotiations on working conditions, a central issue being measures to improve the transition from the education system to the

employment market, and at the same time training opportunities for workers must be developed.

The CNV considers furthermore that the environment issue is also integral to a policy on working conditions. Attention should be devoted in this context to a system of internal environmental protection aiming at systematic and consistent control of the effects of industrial activity on the environment. Employers must recognise workers' right to a healthy, safe and unpolluted place of work and must take the necessary steps to provide this.

The MHP has not been publishing any memorandum on working conditions for the past few years, since the confederation believes that the implementation of policy on working conditions must be decentralised. This means that the confederation has no say in this policy, which is entirely the responsibility of the individual affiliates. However, due to changing circumstances there is to be more coordination of demands relating to working conditions in the near future.

POSITIONS ON EUROPE

Both the CNV and the FNV have published memoranda devoted specifically to European integration. In these documents both the social dimension per se and the manner in which it is to be realised have been central issues.

With its memorandum entitled "The CNV is working on the structure of Europe" the CNV produced a blueprint for the constitution of a European State proposing that the European Commission should operate as an Executive Board of the European Community under democratic control of the European Parliament. The position of the Economic and Social Committee (ESC) must also be strengthened in this context. A second CNV memorandum

entitled "Europe for working people through working people" expands on the latter topic, advocating in particular that with a view to self-regulation responsibility be shared between the social dialogue and the Economic and Social Committee as an instrument of socio-economic consultation.

The FNV published a European Programme in 1989 setting out the confederation's demands in all the relevant fields of policy. The confederation considers that the European integration process, which has both an economic and a social dimension, should be aimed at realising lasting economic development and full employment. In the implementation of this policy the aim should be to achieve more and more coordination of policy and in some cases a common policy. The FNV considers that democratic control must obviously be guaranteed in this context.

The FNV and CNV have issued several positions and launched (education) activities in connection with Europe 1992 and the ensuing developments, a focal point of interest being effective trade union work and the establishment of European works councils. The FNV has published several documents in this context including a paper entitled "Participation without frontiers".

OTHER PROGRAMMES

There are two further FNV and CNV documents which are typical of their respective organisations.

The FNV document is a resolution which was adopted at the FNV Congress in 1990 on the topic of economic independence and solidarity. It lays down the principles of the redistribution of paid and unpaid work. In the FNV's opinion, this redistribution is necessary in order to increase women's participation in the labour market and at the same time to increase men's share of unpaid

work. If these aims are to be achieved within the next few years, the FNV considers that further reductions in working time will be necessary, and the creation of stable part-time jobs must also be stimulated. Accompanying measures will be necessary in this field; in short, an adapted employment creation policy in which attention is devoted to retraining, further training and an appropriate education policy. Measures must be taken at the same time to extend childcare facilities and parental leave. Incomes policy must furthermore be based on the principle of economic independence, which means that the policy must be based on the right of every individual to earn an income (benefits must thus be individualised and participation in working life must be expanded).

In the case of the CNV, reference should be made to the paper on "Threatened responsibility", which was drawn up on the occasion of the Christian Social Congress in 1991. In this discussion paper, the CNV advocates that responsibility be shared on a broader basis. Many tasks currently carried out by the public authorities could be carried out more efficiently by social organisations. The public authorities must give them this opportunity. A further major problem is the low level of participation in the labour market. Two solutions are possible: the first is to bring about lasting economic growth, which will create more jobs, and the second is to redistribute paid and unpaid work. And, although economic growth has positive effects on employment, environmental requirements must also be taken into account.

8. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

THE BASIS OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Collective bargaining in the Netherlands is based both on legislation and on collective agreements. There is no specific law on the establishment and operation of trade union organisations. Working people are in principle absolutely free to set up a trade union; this is governed solely by the general legislation pertaining to the right of association.

The only provision laid down in Dutch legislation on the conclusion of collective agreements is that the trade union must have legal personality and must be authorised by virtue of its constitution to conclude such agreements.

At the central level, the labour and management associations collaborate in the **Labour Foundation**, which is recognised by the government as a joint advisory body. It is composed of representatives of the national trade union confederations and employer organisations, the self-employed, the liberal professions and agriculturalists. Central agreements can be concluded, but these are not legally binding. Recommendations can be made to employers and trade unions which are members of the central organisations. The Foundation is an important forum for communication and cooperation between employers and workers.

The **Social and Economic Council (SER)** is the second body in which such communication and cooperation takes place at the central level. It is an advisory body, which was established by law in 1950. One third of the Council's members are appointed by the employer organisations, one third of the members represent the trade unions, and one third of the members are experts nominated by the Crown. The management and labour

representatives must be appointed by recognised representative organisations. The main task of the SER is to advise the government; government ministers are required to obtain the Council's opinion before taking any important social or economic decisions. The Council is also entitled to issue opinions on its own initiative. Agreements can also be concluded between the parties represented within the SER. The SER has set up various committees and subcommittees - some permanent, some ad hoc - to assist it in the execution of its tasks.

A number of **sectoral bodies** have been set up. The law instituting the SER also provided a legal framework for establishing sectoral bodies consisting of management and labour representatives from one specific branch of industry or from undertakings which operate in several different branches but which have a common interest. The SER can transfer certain powers to the sectoral bodies or ask their opinion.

The **sectoral committees** are also related to a branch of industry. They are governed by the 1979 Works Council Act. Their task is to supervise the procedures followed in works councils and, where necessary, to arbitrate in the event of disputes between members of the works council and the employer. Following a law passed in 1990, however, these bodies lost their decision-making competence and can now only act as arbitrators. It is now local magistrates who take the final decision in disputes (Works Constitution Act, Art. 36).

Trade union organisations in The Netherlands enjoy freedom of trade union action: there is no law on strikes and lockouts. But since the trade unions have legal personality trade union freedom of action can be limited simply through application of the civil law. A labour agreement can thus contain restrictions of the right to strike.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING STRUCTURES

In the Dutch industrial relations system negotiations on labour agreements and the conclusion of such agreements are primarily the task of labour and management organisations. By virtue of the law on collective agreements, any trade union which has legal personality and which is authorised by its statutes to conclude collective agreements can sign such agreements. The establishment of a labour agreement depends entirely on agreement reached freely by one or more trade unions on the one hand and by one or more employers or several employer organisations on the other. In view of the principle of contractual freedom, employers are under absolutely no legal obligation to hold negotiations. Collective agreements create rights and obligations which are legally binding for the signatory parties. They automatically determine the content of employment contracts concluded between employers and workers who are members of the parties to the labour agreements.

The Minister of Social Affairs can declare a labour agreement to be generally binding, so that it also applies to employers and workers who are not affiliated to the organisations signing the agreement (1937 Act).

Collective agreements can be concluded at sectoral, plant or group level.

Until 1970 the system of collective bargaining and in particular of wage bargaining in The Netherlands was strongly dominated by the central employer and worker organisations and influenced by the government. Since 1970, collective bargaining has been decentralised, taking place at the sectoral and plant level. In the last decade, however, central agreements have been reached on various occasions which have subsequently had effect at the decentralised level.

Working conditions in the public sector are not governed by collective agreements but by unilateral regulations issued by various public authorities (the national, provincial and municipal authorities) on the basis of joint negotiations with the trade unions. In the event of dispute the higher public servants' unions can apply to a permanent advisory and/or arbitration board, which has been set up for that purpose.

EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATION AT THE WORKPLACE ⁸

In the private sector workers are represented by trade union delegations and works councils. Furthermore, workers have a certain amount of influence on the composition of the supervisory boards of large limited companies or private companies.

⁸ For details of employee representation at the workplace cf. the ETUI survey entitled "Workers' Representation and Rights at the Workplace in Western Europe", Brussels 1990

9. RELATIONS AMONGST THE TRADE UNION CONFEDERATIONS

We refer to the chapter on the history of the trade union movement as regards the relations between the confederations before the FNV was established.

The present situation

After the establishment of the FNV there was little contact with the CNV for quite some time. But for several years now the presidents of the three trade union confederations in The Netherlands have been holding regular consultations, in which the policy to be followed is discussed and coordinated as far as possible. These consultations do not bind directly the individual policies of the respective confederations.

In 1991, joint CNV, FNV and MHP action was held for the first time in history to protest against government policy on the Health Insurance Act and Industrial Disablement Act.

Current differences between the trade union confederations

There are two main dividing lines between the three trade union confederations.

First, the FNV and CNV can be regarded more as broad social organisations than can the MHP. The latter focuses more on defending the interests of its members, most of whom are senior and higher managerial staff.

The second dividing line can be drawn between the FNV and the CNV. The FNV expects more of the public authorities, whereas the CNV lays greater emphasis on the individual responsibility of the social organisations. The FNV also has more faith in the conclusion of central agreements than does the CNV.

10. RELATIONS WITH POLITICAL PARTIES

Involvement in political activities is one of the forms of external contacts that the trade unions engage in. In a democracy the decision-making process can be influenced by exerting influence on political parties and parliamentary factions. The trade unions have three resources at their disposal for using this means of influence: money, votes and competence. In The Netherlands the trade unions do not use money to bring influence to bear on political parties; they do not give donations to those parties. But they do use the other two resources. When the parties publish their electoral programmes, the trade union movement carries out a comparison of the publications. In this comparison the content of the programmes is examined and compared with the relevant policy of the trade union confederation. This comparative document is published a few weeks before the elections. No voting recommendations are made, since the trade union confederations consider that their members are sensible enough to be able to make their own choice.

As far as competence is concerned, trade union leaders have been involved in politics to quite a large extent in the past. Trade union representatives were often members of parliament. However, in recent years it has no longer been possible to hold dual office in this way in The Netherlands. But trade union leaders quite often do move on into politics and are elected as members of parliament.

Relations with the political parties have definitely changed. In the past there were formal contacts with friendly political parties, but these formal links now no longer exist. Informal relations are now entertained, however, in order to continue to influence political decisions, often taking the form of participation by trade union officers in the committees and working groups of political parties.

These persons are then not regarded as trade union representatives but as members of a political party. And in addition to these contacts the trade union movement holds regular talks with the political parties.

The trade unions in The Netherlands are independent of political parties and no longer entertain formal relations with those parties. It is now also no longer the case that a person who is a member of the CNV automatically votes for a Christian Democrat party. Nor does a member of the FNV automatically vote for the PvdA (Social Democrat Party).

11. REPRESENTATION ON EXTERNAL BODIES

In The Netherlands a trade union confederation is regarded as a recognised trade union organisation when it is admitted to the consultations on the Social and Economic Council and Labour Foundation. The CNV, FNV and MHP are members of these two advisory bodies, which means that the trade union confederations also automatically sit on (executive) bodies such as the Health Insurance Council, the Social Insurance Council, the Social Insurance Bank and so on. The trade union confederations also sit on the Central Board of the Employment Office and the Bank Council.

In addition to representation at the central level, the trade union confederations also sit on the regional boards of the Employment Office and in the Chambers of Trade.

There are no differences between the trade union confederations as far as external representation is concerned, except for the number of seats allocated to the individual confederations, which is proportionate to the number of trade union members.

12. MEMBERSHIP IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

The FNV and CNV are affiliated to international trade union organisations. The FNV is affiliated to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), whereas the CNV is a member of the World Confederation of Labour (WCL).

The FNV, CNV and MHP are all affiliated to the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), but only the FNV and CNV are affiliated to the Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC) to the OECD.

13. SPECIAL FEATURES

Union density in The Netherlands is not high. Whereas it was 39% in 1980, it is now around 25%. However, there has been an increase in trade union membership in the last two years, but the rate of growth in the active labour force has been higher. Growth in union membership is lagging behind in a number of industries. In order to correct this trend, new forms of commercial services are being contemplated. The closed shop does not exist in The Netherlands, with the exception of the graphical sector and the diamond-cutting industry.

Industrial relations in The Netherlands can be classed as a consultation model, in which the social partners aim to avoid conflict as far as possible and are therefore prepared to accept compromises. The social partners thus have an influential position in social and economic life in The Netherlands. Whenever the government advisory bodies on which the social partners sit issue unanimous opinions these opinions have considerable influence on government policy.

This also means that there is strong trade union organisation at the central level, where the trade union movement also holds a strong position. But its representation at the local, regional and plant level is much weaker than at the national level - a situation which the Dutch trade union movement intends to remedy.

A further feature of the Dutch trade union movement is its complexity, which is in part the result of the influence exerted on the trade union movement throughout its history by ideologies and the Catholic and Protestant Churches.

14. PUBLICATIONS AND ORGANS

The three trade union confederations each have their own information service. These information departments are also responsible for publishing the various trade union organs. The *FNV-Magazine* is a fortnightly publication with wide circulation amongst the membership. The CNV publications are *De Gids* and *CNV-Opinie*. The monthly publications are sent to trade union officers free of charge. The MHP publishes an MHP newsletter, *MHP-Krant*.

Besides these more general magazines and newsletters there are also publications on specific subjects. The CNV, for example, produces publications focusing on participation (*Het Medezeggenschapsmagazine*) and the Third World (*Kom-Overmagazine*). The FNV is closely connected with the publication of *Zeggenschap*, which generally discusses trade union topics, and has also published a number of newsletters on various subjects.

**LIST OF THE INITIALS OF THE DUTCH
ORGANISATIONS AND THEIR ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS**

- ANDB** Algemeen Nederlandse Diamantbewerkersbond (General Dutch Diamond Workers' Union)
- ANWW** Algemeen Nederlands Werklieden Verbond (General Dutch Workers' Union)
- AVC** Algemene Vakcentrale (General Trade Union Confederation)
- CNV** Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond (Christian National Trade Union Confederation)
- EVC** Eenheidsvakcentrale (United Trade Union Confederation)
- FNV** Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging (Confederation of Dutch Trade Unions)
- KAB** Katholieke Arbeidersbeweging (Catholic Workers' Movement)
- MHP** De vakcentrale voor Middelbaar en Hoger Personeel (Confederation of Senior and Higher Managerial Employees' Unions)
- NAS** Nationaal Arbeids Secretariaat (National Labour Secretariat)
- NKV** Nederlands Katholiek Vakverbond (Dutch Catholic Trade Union Confederation)
- NVV** Nederland Verbond van Vakverenigingen (Confederation of Trade Unions in The Netherlands)
- RKVB** Rooms-Katholieke Volksbond (Roman Catholic People's Federation)
- RKWW** Rooms-Katholiek Werkliedenverbond in Nederland (Roman Catholic Workers' Confederation in The Netherlands)
- SDB** Sociaal-Democratische Bond (Social Democratic Federation)
- SER** Sociaal-Economische Raad (Social and Economic Council)
- STAR** Stichting van de Arbeid (Labour Foundation)

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