



**MANIFESTE RELATS**  
**Euro-Latin American Network of Analysis**  
**on Labour and Unionism**  
**2016**

Between Latin America and the European Union there are major structural differences in economic, social and institutional development, both inter- and intra-regional level, also registering common elements and convergent processes derived from the accelerated globalization process.

With a similar volume of active population (273 and 245 million, respectively), which together represent one-sixth of world employment, as well as deep qualitative differences regarding their employment status and legal regulation, both regions share a long history of working class and union struggle aimed at defending the dignity of work and the worker's rights.

Even with the logical differences arising from their respective paths, models and organizational cultures, in the European Union and Latin America the two main centers of world trade unionism focus (with membership rates of 23 and 21 percent on the wage-earning population of each area), having contributed decisively to the defense and promotion of freedom, justice and solidarity.

The economic crisis and the neoliberal management that of the same make most of the political and business institutions, both

locally and globally, has led the design and development of strategies of labor deregulation (contractual insecurity, individualization of labor relations , removal of rights) and expansion of inequality (rising unemployment, wage devaluation and cuts in social benefits), whose implementation requires the weakening and marginalization of unionism that has historically operated as a social actor (aggregation, representation and defense of the interests of workers) and factor of equality, acting both on the first distribution of income (wages, working conditions, labor market regulation) through collective bargaining, as on the mechanisms of the second redistribution (fiscal policy , social services), combining their repertoires proposal and collective protest.

The anti-union offensive includes everything from legislative reforms to deregulate the labor market and labor relations, to cuts and limitations on the organization and involvement of the unions, through insidious campaigns of delegitimization and social invisibility.

## **OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES**

This Network assumes as a central axis of its activities and projects the critical defense and active promotion of democratic and class unionism, their analysis, alternatives and intervention, according to the following operational objectives:

1. **Network coordination** between researchers and analysts in the fields of sociology, economics, law, political science and labour history, operating from European and Latin American academic and social institutions, developing its activity on, from, to and with the union movement.
2. **Meeting space** between critical thinking and union action, from the respect to autonomy of scientific research and social intervention of organized labor movement.
3. **Coordination** between the activities and projects developed in universities and those promoted by foundations linked to national and international trade union organizations.

4. **Promotion** of comparative analyzes, research projects, congress and discussion forums in defense of the dignity of work and the claim of class and democratic unionism

5. **Platform for dissemination** of studies and publications by members of the Network, on matters related to the thematic areas considered priorities by the Network, to strengthen media visibility and social legitimacy of unionism, establishing, when appropriate, specific working groups and connections with other networks of different scope and similar objectives.

## **MEMBERS**

Network registration is individually, although institutional membership should appear in the curriculum, may be part of it:

- Teachers and social researchers with publications and studies on the world of labour
- Trade unionists with publications and studies on their experiences and alternatives

In implementing the objectives of the Network, registration and affiliation includes the commitment of its members to spread and share their documents and projects through its publication on the website of the RELATS.

## **THEMES**

Depending on its objectives and structure, activities of the Network will be structured around the following areas:

### 1. Forum:

- Future of work. It's framed in the Initiative on the ILO subject, aimed to celebrate 100 years of the ILO, in 2019. It includes general and specific collective reflections.
- Representation in the workplace.
- Social and solidarity economy.

First forum is reserved for members of the Network.

The other two are open to other authors.

### 2. Sections on:

- Labor law and social security rights.
  - Organization and union intervention.
  - National work policies.
  - National policies and work.
  - Globalization and work.
3. Specialized network on labor history and regulations.  
Cross-cutting perspectives on gender and migration will be promoted in all axes.

## **CALL**

It is based on these objectives and methods that we call on the Network members present and share their analysis and reflections, aiming unionism to reach a virtuous combination of social commitment and strategic development.