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**Please select the type of contribution, only one choice :**

- \* Workshop [ ]
- \* Plenary Speech X

**Title of your workshop presentation/plenary speech:**

*Life long learning: a precondition for flexibility and security (flexicurity)*

**Objectives of your presentation:**

**Summary of content (max 600 words):**

An economic and especially an ethical crisis world wide has been brought about by capitalism. This crisis-prone development has been inherent to capitalism and was covered up by an economic development during a number of decades. Nevertheless, almost all parts of the population of developed capitalistic countries profited by this. Economic growth seemed to have no limits. Sceptical views of critical scientists were pushed aside – the works of the Club of Rome should be remembered – temporary economic crises were forgotten relatively fast.

Within developments of the economy and the productive force during the last decades lie the reasons why we - as a trade union - use “knowledge” for the development of the productive force: important are the interests of our members and all workers and employees. Experience teaches us that workers and employees without sufficient qualification can be replaced very quickly. For capital it is the cheapest way to train “people on the job” on a short term basis without considering longer-term prospects. Europeanization and globalization of production and trade and especially the capital and finance sector lead us in particular to the fact that national orientation alone won’t be enough for labour markets. Under current conditions it might be rather “tempting” to favour protecting solutions but we won’t give in to temptations. We need European solutions, the way the European Trades Union Congress emphasized with its declaration of 28<sup>th</sup> May 2009. Mobility and flexibility for workers and employees guarantee security. That is how we understand flexicurity: a sound all-around education for all people is a precondition for further qualification. This is – in my opinion – a fundamental right and should be applied all over the world.

The educational system should be open and flexible as such that contents of education and training could be acquired by every one at all the different institutions – this should be possible independent of formal prerequisites. Academic institutions should no longer exclusively be at the disposal of academics.

Such an educational system must function and must be offered across borders at least within Europe. On as many levels of qualification as possible there should be bilingual offers – as a precondition, and within such a system of life long learning, existing institutions will have to take on important tasks.

From the view of the European Trades Union Congress challenges are enormous: “Continual technological progress is becoming faster, the development of new information technologies requires therefore anticipation through life long learning”.

Through the institutionalized cooperation between the Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg and the union, together with its educational establishment called ARBEIT UND LEBEN there are already conditions for a lasting opening of the university for additional academic qualification for workers and

employees. In order to materialize this sensible extension of university offers, prerequisites for entering university ought to be changed in a way that the university must adapt to an additional target group concerning content and didactics. Those who wish for the opening must change themselves and leave the ivory tower of the university. Objectively, this is in the interest of society – universities are part of society and substantially financed through it. Being a regional union, we are demanding such a development.

**Questions for discussion/workshop activity:**