

## **I-WIRE**

### **Independent Workers and Industrial Relations in Europe**

AGREEMENT NUMBER: VS/2016/0149

### **WP3. Transversal analysis of case studies**

Anna Mori and Renata Semenza  
(Università degli Studi di Milano)

## **Summary**

1. Introduction
2. Research design and case studies selection
3. The organisational structure
  - 3.1. Timeframe
  - 3.2. The trajectory of creation
  - 3.3. The geographical dimension
  - 3.4. Independency
  - 3.5. The internal structure
  - 3.6. Membership
4. The organisational strategies
  - 4.1. The servicing model
  - 4.2. The lobbying model
  - 4.3. The integrated strategy
  - 4.4. The collective bargaining model
  - 4.5. The coalition-building model
5. Conclusion

## References

## **1. Introduction**

Over the last decades the labour movement in Europe has displayed a growing erosion (Waddington and Hoffmann 2000). Across European member states, the role of the trade unions as primary institution for the collective representation of workers has begun to decline (Regini 1992). Despite internal differences, overall the trade unions have increasingly experienced various forms of ‘crisis’: decline in membership, either in aggregate terms or among specific segments of the labour market (such as among young workers or precarious workers); erosion of the collective bargaining coverage; declining mobilization capacity, also following members’ reluctance in taking part to union activities; increasing membership heterogeneity and relating difficulties in the definition as well as in the aggregation of interests; more constrained opportunity structures; erosion in the structures of interest representation, such as workplace representation bodies (Bernaciak, Gumbrell-McCormick and Hyman 2014). This is due to industrial, economic, political and social transformations which challenged the role of trade unionism: “European economic integration; intensified internationalization of financial and product markets; decentralization of neo-corporatist and industry-level collective bargaining; and changing structures of employment (individualization, feminization and tertiarization)” (Frege and Kelly 2003: 8). Accordingly, the trade unions have become less effective in attracting new workers with employment contractual arrangements that differ from the standard full-time open-ended subordinate contract, such as in the cases of fixed-term contracts, non-standard jobs (project contract, contract of collaboration), economically dependent or pure self-employed workers. In particular the recruitment of self-employed workers turned to be notably challenging for a series of reasons. First, this segment of the labour market is geographically scattered and fragmented across many different and dispersed workplaces: hence it is highly problematic to reach these workers and to build solidarity among them. Second, self-employment represents an inherently individualistic working condition: accordingly what is preliminary necessary to recruit these workers is the promotion and the socialization to a different state of mind. The paradigm of the collective action in the labour market has to first substitute

the individualism that has generally characterised the actions of self-employed workers. Third, the demand for collective representation of self-employed workers is a relatively recent phenomenon following the rapid proliferation of this segment of workers during the last decade: thus the trade unions have to quickly adapt their structures to continuous transformations of the labour market. For long this segment of the labour market has not expressed any demand for collective representation.

At the same time the traditional industrial regulation model based on the collective bargaining between the social partners is hardly applicable to the new emerging forms of non-standard employment. If it is becoming less and less effective for a growing part of the traditional standard job (due to weaker coverage, decreasing coordination of collective bargaining, marked decentralisation), the picture is even worse for all the non-traditional forms of employment. When collective bargaining becomes weaker even at company's level, individual bargaining becomes stronger (Crouch 2012). But the application of the word "bargaining" to such a circumstance can be misleading: in fact the company often offers a pre-defined job position and the worker can only accept or refuse the job offer and the relating terms and conditions of employment. A real negotiation process at workplace level generally occurs when the worker displays a strong bargaining power in the labour market, namely the worker has high and specific skills, a professionalism in great demand by the market but hardly replaceable.

The spread of individual bargaining is strictly connected to the individualization process of the labour market, which has taken place in every industrialized country. The process is ambiguous as it bears both risks and opportunities. If on the one hand, it gives more freedom and self-determination to accommodate the terms and conditions of employment to the own specific needs of each worker, on the other hand the worker is forced to face all the risks of her working activity on an individual basis (Bologna and Banfi 1997). Such ambiguity of the individualization process is well represented by the self-employed workers.

To counteract such individualisation, over the last decade, the trade Unions in Europe have tried to build membership among the under-represented groups, including the self-employed workers. In some countries, they have implemented new strategic and

organizational actions in order to adjust their logics of action to the protection needs of these specific workers. Extending the representation to new labour market segments means taking greater account of their distinctive demands and specific needs (Bernaciak, Gumbrell-McCormick and Hyman 2014). Different strategies have been put in place. In some cases the trade unions have offered services, such as legal, fiscal and social security assistance. They have adopted the servicing model not only for the autonomous workers, but more generally for all the non-standard workers. Other trade unions have innovated their strategies by adopting new organising models to promote the direct participation of workers and their collective mobilization. This last model represents a more active approach, given that the trade unions do not try to attract workers in a traditional way but actively look for new members by recruiting them one by one.

The search for innovative responses by the trade unions in many European countries has encouraged the establishment of new alliances and coalition-building. This strategy seems to be an attractive and effective one for various reasons. “It can increase access to new constituencies: this is particularly important for efforts to recruit previously unorganised (or weakly organised) groups of workers. Coalitions may also be a source of added legitimacy for union campaigns: working with community or religious organisations may help unions recruit ethnic minority members, and a common campaign with relevant NGOs (non-governmental organisations) may strengthen union claims to represent a broad public interest. Finally, alliances can strengthen unions’ mobilisation capacity, particularly when working with NGOs that possess a vibrant activist base” (Bernaciak, Gumbrell-McCormick and Hyman 2014: 21).

In parallel to union revitalization attempts, new innovative organisational forms have emerged, responding to otherwise unaddressed demands of representation on the modern economies: this is the case of quasi-union (Hecksher and Carrè 2006) and labour market intermediaries (Autor 2008). Quasi-unions are defined as “the broad range of organizations that have emerged to represent the interests of otherwise unrepresented people in their work lives and in their relationships with their employer, seeking to address matters of worker rights and to improve working conditions”

(Heckscher and Carré 2006: 606). These organisations embody an heterogeneous field through a multitude of diverse organisational forms. What they have in common however in the fact that these organizations, instead of representing their members and affiliates in workplace matters, are not formal unions. They are generally member associations, but they often lack formal membership mechanisms and have few ways to collect dues. Overall they do not seek to become formal unions in the short term. Quasi-unions are self-organized organisations, with limited financial resources, that do not follow the traditional collective bargaining approach. They are mainly based on voluntary work, with a strong core staff whose commitment is permanent, complemented by a very loose and shifting membership. Their notion of member affiliation is loose and varied: members can be “supporters” who take part in specific collective actions, “registered members” who sign up for websites /social media or “paying members” who pay a yearly subscription fee to support the activities of the association. In terms of primary functions and levers for actions, the quasi-unions follow a logic of action between service and advocacy.

The labour market intermediaries (henceforth LMIs) represent a second innovative organisational form that growingly support and organise self-employed workers in the labour market. Between the hierarchy and the market as forms of career management, these novel initiatives developed by third party actors appear on the labour market in order to support workers throughout non-standard job transitions. These organisations play an intermediary role between individual workers on a nonstandard path and the end-users of their services (the latter can no longer be considered as their employers). Moreover, in a context of growing hyper-specialization of the tasks, it becomes more and more difficult for companies to find the appropriate workers without the support of such third parties, very often through ICT solutions (Malone, Laubacher, & Johns, 2011). The logic of action of the LMIs in particular focus on the matchmaking process. Moreover they may also act as a service supplier during job transitions: in fact the LMIs deliver various services such as networking activities –with potential employers and colleagues– or information on vacant positions. They can provide workers with training and offer access to facilities for individual and/or collective activities, which reinforces

their feeling of belonging to a community. A third function played by the LMIs is to ensure to affiliated workers the entitlement to a series of social and employment rights independently from their contractual situation and transcending from discontinuity in the employment. Through new forms of mutualism, the LMIs offer access to a series of rights (insurance packages, training, financial support for developing activities, administrative support opening access to social entitlements) that can be activated by workers whatever their professional status (employee, trainee, unemployed, in parental leave, etc.).

Hence, to recap, the transition from a labour market primarily grounded on a salaried dependent workforce towards a society where the demand and supply of independent workers is growing sheds light on the inefficacy and the incongruity of the traditional model of collective representation. Such shift triggers a profound redefinition of the employment relations which calls for a revitalization in the strategies and organisational forms to collectively represent workers' interests, while a number of scholars agree on the concern of integrating the increasingly heterogeneous constituencies of independent workers into the union movement (Dølvik and Waddington, 2002; Gottschall and Kroos, 2003). The difficulty to build a class consciousness within the population of independent workers is recognised, since they have limited personal contacts with other workers in their conditions of employment (Pernicka 2006).

The present report aims at mapping both the traditional and non-traditional forms of collective representation of new professional self-employed workers in the European labour market. The focus is on the role played by both traditional actors as the trade unions and the professional associations, as well as by the new innovative forms of workers representation, such as the quasi-unions, the labour market intermediaries and the social movements. Moreover the analysis investigates the interlinks, the relations, the forms of coordination and the possibilities for collaboration between the different types of actors.

## 2. Research design and case studies selection

The transversal analysis comparatively examines the traditional and innovative organisational forms of collective representation of the new professional self-employed workers across nine countries: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Empirical evidence are drawn from 29 case studies of organisations representing professional self-employed workers. In each country, at least 3 organisations have been selected and analysed (with the exception of Slovenia where only two case study matched with the selection criteria) according to a set of shared criteria that ensure the comparability across diverse types of organisational forms, as well as across countries. The main criteria set to select the case studies are the following:

- Organising exclusively and/or predominantly professional self-employed workers in the tertiary sector;
- Representing relevant experiences within the respective national context;
- Representing diversified organisational forms, ranging from traditional organisations as trade unions and professional associations to innovative forms like quasi-unions and LMIs.

The case studies have been investigated through a qualitative analysis based on semi-structured interviews with keynote informants within the organisations, complemented by documentary analysis of official documents, websites, newspaper and the relevant literature.

Accordingly, the following 29 case studies have been selected and analysed.

**Table 1. List of case studies**

<b>Name of the organisation</b>	<b>Organisational form</b>	<b>Country</b>
CSC - Christian Trade Union	Trade union	Belgium
SmartBE	LMI	Belgium
AJP - Association of Professional Journalists	Professional association	Belgium
FEDAE – Fédération des auto-entrepreneurs	Quasi-union	France
Coopname (a business employment cooperative)	LMI	France
AFD - Alliance française des designers	Professional association	France

CGT	Trade union	Trade union
Platform Union (F3C – CFDT)	Trade union	France
Ver.di Selbstständige	Trade union	Germany
SmartDE	LMI	Germany
Supermarkt	Platform cooperativism	Germany
BDÜ - Federal Association of Interpreters and Translators	Professional association	Germany
ACTA - Association of Consultants in the Advanced Tertiary Sector	Quasi-union	Italy
vIVAce! the community (CISL)	Trade union	Italy
CLAP - Chambers for independent and precarious workers	Movement	Italy
Kustenvbond	Trade union	the Netherlands
Yacht	LMI	the Netherlands
PZO-ZZP	Quasi-union	the Netherlands
Movement for Decent Work and Welfare Society	Movement	Slovenia
Trade Union of the Precarious Workers	Trade union	Slovenia
CTAC - Confederació de Treballadors Autònoms de Catalunya	Trade union	Spain
Autònoms PIMEC	Employer association	Spain
UATAE Catalunya - Union of Associations of Autonomous and Entrepreneurial Workers of Catalonia	Professional association	Spain
SEC - Self-employment company	LMI	Sweden
JU – the Journalist Union	Trade union	Sweden
Job Security Foundation	LMI	Sweden
MU- the Musicians' Union	Trade union	the UK
IPSE - Association of Independent Professionals and the Self-Employed	Quasi-union	the UK
Equity	Trade union	the UK

The investigation of the case studies was based on a common template addressing the following main dimensions of analysis:

- **Organisational structure**: date of establishment; origin (bottom-up/top-down establishment); independency (independent organisation/affiliated to other organisations); geographical coverage; constituency (groups/types of workers organized); internal structure (voluntary associations, structured/unstructured organization, paid personnel, formally elected board, hierarchal internal organisation).

- **Organisational strategies**: strategies of recruitment (role of social networks- digital platforms, word of mouth, traditional ways of recruitment, vis-à-vis); strategies of collective action, representation and mobilisation (provision of services, advocacy/ lobby/ political role, collective bargaining); communication strategies to mobilise members; coalition-building and alliances (strategic alliances, agreements, networks) with different institutional/non institutional actors.

### 3. The organizational structure

**3.1 The timeframe.** The establishment of organisations for the collective representation for professional self-employed workers seems to represent a recent phenomenon. The large majority of case studies in fact has been launched during the last 15 years, allegedly in conjunction with the proliferation of this segment of the labour market in the tertiary sector across Europe. As further proof of this correlation, the most innovative experiences have emerged over last years, such as the German cooperative for artists SmartDE set in 2013; the German experience of the platform cooperativism movement called Supermarkt launched in 2012 for artists as well; the CLAP - Chambers for Independent and Precarious Workers, a federation of independent and self-managed associations created in Rome in 2013 that offer services and information to self-employed workers in occupied warehouses managed by networks of volunteers. The traditional trade unions have recently either revitalized their structure to encompass the new self-employed workers (as the CSC – The Christian Trade Union in Belgium did in 2015) or created new *ad hoc* internal structures to build membership among the group of self-employed. Most of the trade unions under scrutiny opted for this latter option as several examples demonstrate: the vIVAce! on-line community launched in Italy in 2015 by the union confederation CISL; the Platform Union set in 2016 by the Federation of Communication, Conseil, Culture F3C of the French trade union CFDT; the Ver.di Selbstständige, the specific unit devoted to self-employment of the trade union Ve.di created in 2001 in Germany; the Trade Union of the Precarious Workers

established in Slovenia in 2016; the CTAC – Confederation of Autonomous Workers of Catalonia set in the Spanish region in 2001.

The origins of the innovative experiences of quasi-unionism and labour market intermediation, although recent, predate the wave of union revitalization to encompass the self-employed workforce. The cooperative SmartBE in Belgium for the artists was created in 1998; the Italian quasi-union ACTA - Association of Consultants in the Advanced Tertiary Sector was established in 2004; the British quasi-union IPSE - Association of Independent Professionals and the Self-Employed was set in 1999; the Dutch labour market intermediary Yacht was launched in 1999 by the Ranstad group for the highly skilled independent professionals.

Among the limited longstanding experiences of collective representation we can list the cases of sectoral or occupational trade unions with an established tradition: this is the case of the AJP - Association of Professional Journalists created in Belgium that traced back to 1886; the German BDÜ – the Federal Association of Interpreters and Translators established in 1955; the Dutch trade union for artists created in 1977; the JU – the Journalist Union established in Sweden during the 1960s; the British MU – Musicians’ Union set in 1921 and the union for professional performers and actors Equity created during the 1930s.

**3.2 The trajectory of creation.** The process of establishment of these organisations followed a twofold trajectory. On the one hand in fact we observe a top-down development: this is mainly the case of creation of new *ad hoc* internal structures that the trade unions built to target the interest of the professional self-employed workers. Such top-down pattern can be tracked in the establishment of the CSC – The Christian Trade Union in Belgium; the vIVAce! on-line community in Italy within the union confederation CISL; the Platform Union in the Federation of Communication, Conseil, Culture F3C of the French trade union CFDT; the Ver.di Selbstständige created by the trade union Ve.di in Germany; the CTAC – Confederation of Autonomous Workers of Catalonia set in Spain by the trade union UGT; the Dutch LMI Yacht launched by the Ranstad group; the Swedish freelance section launched by the Journalist Union.

On the other hand the most innovative experiences of collective representation followed the opposite trajectory, emerging from bottom-up initiatives undertaken by activists and the same professional self-employed workers who decided to set up their own association. This is the case of the cooperative SmartBE in Belgium launched by a manager of musical bands together with a sales engineer whose spouse works in the artistic industry, who wanted to assemble artists in order to defend their professional interests and provide them with joint services. Likewise in Belgium, the German cooperative SmartDE follow a similar process of bottom-up establishment. This was also the case of the AFD – the French Alliance of Designer (*Alliance Française des Designers*) created by a group of professional designers with the aim of federating all the designers whatever is their area of specialization. The origins of quasi-union ACTA - Association of Consultants in the Advanced Tertiary Sector in Italy traced back to the initiative of a small group of 20 independent professionals from different occupations who decided to self-organise themselves as a way to fill a gap in the collective representation of self-employment. By definition, the advent of movements in defence of the rights of self-employed workers follow a bottom-up pattern. The Movement for Decent Work in Slovenia and the CLAP - Chambers for Independent and Precarious Workers in Italy were launched and animated by groups of activists and volunteers deeply committed in the cause.

**3.3 The geographical dimension.** In terms of geographical coverage of these organisations, the large majority aims at ensuring national coverage of their strategic action.

**3.4 Independency.** Among the case studies under scrutiny, all the organisations which followed a self-organised and autonomous process of creation display a status of independency. The Movement for Decent Work in Slovenia and the CLAP - Chambers for Independent and Precarious Workers in Italy are independent. Likewise, the new experiences of cooperativism shows an independent status, such as for SmartBe in Belgium, SmartDE and Supermarkt in Germany. Despite a common affiliation to the

European Federation of Independent Professionals (EFIP), the quasi-unions ACTA (Italy), IPSE (UK) and PZO-ZZP (the Netherlands) are independent.

Conversely, most of the union categories and structures organising in professional self-employment are formally part of a union confederation. This is also the consequence of their process of establishment, since they directly emanate from the union confederal initiative. Hence the CSC - Christian Trade Union belongs to the MOC – the Christian Blue Collar Movement in Belgium; the Platform Union created by the F3C is federated in the CFDT in France; the Ver.di Selbstständige is affiliated to the German Confederation of Trade Union DGB; the vIVAce! on-line community is a unit within the Italian union confederation CISL; the LMI Yacht in the Netherlands is part of the Ranstad group; the Trade Union of the Precarious Workers in Slovenia is affiliated to the Association of Free Trade Unions; the CTAC - Confederation of Autonomous Workers of Catalonia in Spain is affiliated to both the UGT and UPTA – Professional Union of Autonomous Workers (*Unión Profesional de Trabajadores Autónomos*); the freelance section for journalists in Sweden is part of the Journalist Union.

**3.5 The internal structure.** Most of the organisations investigated opted for a formalised and hierarchical internal structure in order to gather together professional self-employed workers. Generally these organisations are led by a chairman who presides over an elected board. Hierarchically structured, the internal areas of policy are under the steering of specific commissions / branches / units / departments. Most of these organisations employ personnel to carry out the administrative functions, despite the role played by volunteers and the activists remain fundamental.

Exceptions are represented by peculiar cases of two kinds. The movements display a fluid and horizontal structure, as in the case of the Movement for Decent Work in Slovenia and the CLAP - Chambers for Independent and Precarious Workers in Italy. The second type of non-formalised organisation is represented by on-line communities set up by trade unions to intercept professional independent workers by exploiting the potential of the Internet. The Platform Union launched by the CFDT's Federation of Communication, Conseil and Culture (F3C) in France and the vIVAce! on-line

community launched by the CISL in Italy embody experiences of support and service provision through their websites.

**3.6 Membership.** The groups and the occupations of self-employed workers targeted by the single organisations are in many cases mixed and heterogeneous. The main strategic focus is to recruit and give collective voice and visibility to professional self-employment in general, as a working condition *per se*, rather than to specific professions. This is the case of the initiatives launched by the trade unions for self-employed workers. The CSC – the Christian Trade Union in Belgium, after having long refused to represent autonomous workers, during the 2015 congress decided to “initiate a debate over the enlargement of our union to self-employed workers without employees<sup>1</sup>”, hence deciding to tackle the needs of self-employment in general. The Platform Union in France offers services to all self-employed workers, apart from those in the regulated professions. The Ver.di Selbstständige union in Germany organises across several economic sectors including the media and communication, education, culture, ICT, the creative industry. Likewise the vIVAce! on-line community of the Italian confederation CISL provides services to any kind of independent workers who is not covered by other associations, such as the professional registers. The CTAC - Confederation of Autonomous Workers of Catalonia was created in response to the lack of legislative initiatives in defence of the self-employed workers.

When innovative experiences of quasi-unionism and cooperativism were launched, the strategic and organisational focus was similarly on the specific condition of self-employment, than on specific occupations. Hence the cooperatives SmartBE in Belgium and SmartDE in Germany, despite starting from representing the artistic industry, fast enlarged their logic of action to the creative industries more generally first, and then to the wider world of freelancing. The quasi-unions PZO-ZZP in the Netherlands, ACTA in Italy and IPSE in the UK were launched to represent professional independent workers in the advanced tertiary sectors of the economy in their respective countries and

---

<sup>1</sup> Congrès annuel de 2015, ligne de force n°29, <https://cne.csc-en-ligne.be/csc-en-ligne/La-CSC/congres-2015/themes-du-congres/elargir/elargir.html>, consulted on 18.05.17.

more widely at European level since they are all affiliated to the European Federation of Independent Professionals (EFIP). PZO-ZZP presents itself as “an association of self-employed, for self-employed, by self-employed”.

However there are also, despite more limited, organisations whose constituency is circumscribed to a specific occupation or profession. In this case the organisations organise in the selected sector of the economy, grouping together both self-employed and employees working in the targeted industry. Generally these economic sectors are dominated by self-employment. This is the case of the AJP – the Association of Professional Journalists in Belgium where freelance journalists represent the 75% of the members; the freelance section of the Journalist Union in Sweden; the MU – the Musicians’ Union in the UK, where the 90% of membership is made up of self-employed musicians; the union Equity in the UK, with a large majority of independent actors and performers. Likewise the AFD – the French Alliance of Designers specifically focus on the design industry (including space, product and message design). The Dutch union Kunstenaarbond (Art Union) serves the creative professionals in the art and creative sectors. The BDÜ - Federal Association of Interpreters and Translators organises 7,500 members, corresponding to the 80% of the professional translators and interpreters registered in the German professional registers.

The rate of membership across organisations is hardly comparable given the very different constituencies to whom the associations refer. Moreover some organisations affiliate as members at both first level, hence individual self-employed workers, and at second level, thus associations of self-employed. This is the case for instance of the British quasi-union IPSE that amount to 22,000 members and the Dutch PZO-ZZP with its 100,000 members. The French Federation of Auto-entrepreneurs FEDAE counts 80,000 individual members in the whole country. Interestingly, the cooperative SmartBe has known a quick growth, by moving from 10,000 members in 2010 to 85,000 in 2017. The occupation unions for professional self-employed boast high membership rates: the British Musicians’ Union steadily counts 30,000 members, while Equity 40,000. The longstanding tradition of these unions enabled them to maintain such density. Interestingly, similar rates have been reached in few years by new, but encompassing

and general, unions such as the German Ver.di Selbstständige with its 30,000 members and the Spanish CTAC with 35,000 members.

This is not the case for many innovative experiences which still have to build a sound membership, such as the French Platform Union (CFDT), the vIVAce! community in Italy (CISL), the Italian quasi-union ACTA.

**Table 2. The organisational structure: a synopsis**

<b>Date of establishment</b>	<b>Recent creation</b>	<b>Longstanding representation of self-employed</b>
	CSC - Christian Trade Union (BE) (2015); SmartBE (BE) (1998); FEDAE (FR) (2009); Coopname (FR) (2003); AFD - Alliance française des designers (FR) (2003); CGT (FR) (2017); Platform Union (F3C – CFDT) (FR) (2016); Ver.di Selbstständige (DE) (2001); SmartDE (DE) (2013); Supermarkt (DE) (2012); vIVAce! (IT) (2015); ACTA (IT) (2004); CLAP (IT) (2013); Yacht (NL) (1999); PZO-ZZP (NL) (2002); Movement for Decent Work (SL) (2011); Trade Union of the Precarious Workers (SL) (2016); CTAC (ES) (2001); Autònoms PIMEC (ES) (1999); UATAE Catalunya (ES) (2011); IPSE (UK) (1999);	AJP - Association of Professional Journalists (BE); BDÜ (DE) (1955); Kunstenbond (NL) (1977); JU – the Journalist Union (SE) (1960s); MU-Musicians’ Union (UK) (1921); Equity (UK) (1930)
<b>Geographical coverage</b>	<b>Local/regional</b>	<b>National</b>
	AJP - Association of Professional Journalists (BE) (French speaking area of Belgium); Coopname (FR) (Paris region); CLAP (IT) (Rome); CTAC (ES) (Catalonia); UATAE Catalunya (ES) (Catalonia);	CSC - Christian Trade Union (BE); SmartBE (BE); FEDAE (FR); AFD - Alliance française des designers (FR); CGT (FR); Platform Union (F3C – CFDT) (FR); Ver.di Selbstständige (DE); SmartDE (DE); Supermarkt (DE); BDÜ (DE); vIVAce! (IT); ACTA (IT); Kunstenbond (NL); Yacht (NL); PZO-ZZP (NL); Movement for Decent Work (SL); Trade Union of the Precarious Workers (SL); Autònoms PIMEC (ES); JU – the Journalist Union (SE); MU-Musicians’ Union (UK); IPSE (UK); Equity (UK)
<b>Internal structure</b>	<b>Formalised and hierarchical</b>	<b>Non-formalised/horizontal</b>
	CSC - Christian Trade Union (BE); SmartBE (BE); AJP - Association of Professional Journalists (BE); FEDAE (FR); Coopname (FR); AFD - Alliance	Platform Union (F3C – CFDT) (FR); vIVAce! (IT); CLAP (IT); Movement for Decent Work (SL)

	française des designers (FR); CGT (FR); Ver.di Selbstständige (DE); SmartDE (DE); Supermarkt (DE); BDÜ (DE); ACTA (IT); Kunstbond (NL); Yacht (NL); PZO-ZZP (NL); Trade Union of the Precarious Workers (SL); CTAC (ES); Autònoms PIMEC (ES); UATAE Catalunya (ES); JU – the Journalist Union (SE); MU- Musicians' Union (UK); IPSE (UK); Equity (UK)	
<b>Type of membership</b>	<b>Sectoral/occupational</b>	<b>Heterogeneous</b>
	AJP - Association of Professional Journalists (BE); AFD - Alliance française des designers (FR); BDÜ (DE) Kunstbond (NL); JU – the Journalist Union (SE); MU- Musicians' Union (UK); Equity (UK)	CSC - Christian Trade Union (BE); SmartBE (BE); FEDAE (FR); Coopname (FR); CGT (FR); Platform Union (F3C – CFDT) (FR); Ver.di Selbstständige (DE); SmartDE (DE); Supermarkt (DE); vIVAce! (IT); ACTA (IT); CLAP (IT); Yacht (NL); PZO-ZZP (NL); Movement for Decent Work (SL); Trade Union of the Precarious Workers (SL); CTAC (ES); Autònoms PIMEC (ES); IPSE (UK)
<b>Independency</b>	<b>Independent</b>	<b>Affiliated</b>
	SmartBE (BE) (affiliated at EU level); FEDAE (FR); Coopname (FR) (affiliated to Coopérer pour entreprendre); AFD - Alliance française des designers (FR); SmartDE (DE); Supermarkt (DE); BDÜ (DE) (affiliated to the FIT); ACTA (IT) (affiliated to EFIP); CLAP (IT); PZO-ZZP (NL) (affiliated to EFIP); Movement for Decent Work (SL); JU – the Journalist Union (SE); MU- Musicians' Union (UK) affiliated to the Labour party; IPSE (UK) affiliated to the EFIP;	CSC - Christian Trade Union (BE) affiliated to the MOC (Christian Blue Collar Movement); AJP - Association of Professional Journalists (BE) affiliated to the federal General Association of the Belgian Press; CGT (FR); Platform Union (F3C – CFDT) (FR); Ver.di Selbstständige (DE) affiliated to the DGB; vIVAce! (IT) affiliated to CISL; Kunstbond (NL) affiliated to the FNV; Yacht (NL) affiliated to Ranstad; Trade Union of the Precarious Workers (SL) affiliated to the Association of Free Trade Unions; CTAC (ES) affiliated to UGT and UPTA; Autònoms PIMEC (ES) affiliated to PIMEC; UATAE Catalunya (ES) affiliated to UATAE Spain;
<b>Trajectory of creation</b>	<b>Top-down</b>	<b>Bottom-up</b>
	CSC - Christian Trade Union (BE); AJP - Association of Professional Journalists (BE); CGT (FR); Platform Union (F3C – CFDT) (FR); Ver.di Selbstständige (DE); BDÜ (DE); vIVAce! (IT); Kunstbond (NL); Yacht (NL); PZO-ZZP (NL); CTAC (ES); Autònoms PIMEC (ES); JU – the Journalist Union (SE); IPSE (UK)	SmartBE (BE); FEDAE (FR); Coopname (FR); AFD - Alliance française des designers (FR); SmartDE (DE); Supermarkt (DE); ACTA (IT); CLAP (IT); Movement for Decent Work (SL); MU- Musicians' Union (UK); Equity (UK)

Density	Low membership	High membership
	CSC - Christian Trade Union (BE); AJP - Association of Professional Journalists (BE) (2,200); AFD - Alliance française des designers (FR) (2,200); CGT (FR) (unknown); Platform Union (F3C – CFDT) (FR) (unknown); SmartDE (DE) (unknown); vIVAce! (IT); ACTA (IT) (1,000); CLAP (IT); Movement for Decent Work (SL) (100); JU – the Journalist Union (SE) (1,800)	SmartBE (BE) (10,000 in 2010 - 85,000 in 2017); FEDAE (FR) (80,000); Ver.di Selbstständige (DE) (30,000); BDÜ (DE) (7,500); Kunstebond (NL) (6,000); Yacht (NL) (3,500); PZO-ZZP (NL) (100,000); CTAC (ES) (35,000); Autònoms PIMEC (ES) (9,000); UATAE Catalunya (ES) (10,000); MU-Musicians' Union (UK) (30,000); IPSE (UK) (22,000); Equity (UK) (40,000)

#### 4. The organisational strategies

By analysing the dominant strategies of collective representation for professional self-employed workers displayed by the 29 case studies investigated, diverse organisational strategies emerge. The servicing model and the lobbying model seem to be the main strategic actions adopted to collectively give voice to this segment of the labour market. Moreover many associations combine the two organisational strategies. A third pattern, despite limited in its actual application, is represented by the organising model based on the collective bargaining of collective agreements for self-employed professional workers. Finally, a further organisational strategy widely adopted is the coalition-building model: it represents a diffused strategy that generally complements either the lobbying model or the servicing model.

**4.1 The servicing model.** A number of organisations focuses their organisational strategies for the professional self-employed workers on the provision of services. A variety of *ad hoc* services are supplied to respond to the specific needs of those who work autonomously, including in particular:

- Fiscal and accounting services
- Legal advice and support in case of judiciary proceeding
- Administrative support for the business contracting
- Training
- Personalised and individual general assistance

- Customised insurance packages at discounted rate

Some trade unions which created their internal *ad hoc* structure for the professional self-employed workers adopted the servicing model: the Platform Union of the French union CFDT; the vIVAce! community of the Italian Confederation CISL and the Trade Union of the Precarious Workers in Slovenia. The provision of specific services represents the current dominant strategies in these unions, which are however newly established. Hence they might decide to re-orient their focus in the medium-long term. As emerged during the interviews, while the vIVAce! community of the CISL in Italy points towards lobbying and campaigning actions, conversely the Platform Unions of the CFDT in France aims at developing strategies of collective representation via the platform.

Other innovative organisations opted for the servicing model. The Dutch LMI Yacht, beyond providing a range of legal, fiscal and administrative services, targets its core function on matching and placement activities in the labour market for professional independent workers. Moreover it organises events and sets-up on-line networks to facilitate the meeting between clients and professionals. Particularly interesting are the services offered by the cooperatives SmartBE in Belgium and SmartDE in Germany. They represent experiences of new mutualism for the members: they provide mutual guarantee fund, customized insurance packages, leasing for professional equipment, microcredit for the development of professional activities, subsidies.

**4.2 The lobbying model.** Other organisations conversely focused their main organisational strategy on lobbying actions. Advocacy and lobby actions are carried out towards the governments, the parliament, the public administrations, the local policy-makers, the institutionalised consultative bodies. This is the case of some quasi-unions, auto-entrepreneurs' associations and professional associations for independent workers. The German BDÜ - Federal Association of Interpreters and Translators is strongly oriented towards a structured lobby activities, carried out also through specifically hired personnel. The lobbying actions are developed through vis-à-vis contacts with policy-makers, courts and official bodies, organisations and clients and are oriented to ensure

long-term improvement of the general working conditions for interpreters and translators. Moreover the BDÜ is consulted when legislative interventions affecting its professional groups are under discussion in the Parliament: it has played a core role in the definition of the German Judicial Remuneration and Compensation Act (JVEG68), which provides the basis for remuneration of linguists and other professionals for services provided to courts, public prosecutors' offices and other governmental agencies. The quasi-union ACTA – the Association of Consultants in the Advanced Tertiary Sector was launched in Italy to lobby for the rights of the independent professional workers who work outside the protection of the professional bodies. ACTA's lobbying actions pursue three main core questions: welfare issues (high social security contributions combined with the exclusion from the system of protection and very low pension); fiscal issues (higher taxes compared to other workers); rights (in the Italian legislative framework, the labour law is applied only to subordinated workers). The professional association PZO-ZZP – Platform for Independent Entrepreneurs is a lobbying organisation set-up in the Netherlands to give collective voice to the world of professional self-employment, without focusing on specific professions. Thanks to the possibility to seat in the Dutch Social Economic Council, the PZO-ZZP has a privileged position to carry out lobbying and advocacy actions. Similarly the Spanish professional association Autònoms PIMEC – Autonomous Small and Medium Enterprises focuses on lobbying actions to influence members of the Government or the opposition to defend the interests of the self-employed. In that sense, the organisation has pressured at political level over the issue of the adoption of laws to fight against defaulting.

**4.3 The integrated strategy.** A third strategic organisational model strictly integrates the provision of services with lobbying activities. The German union Ver.di Selbstständige explicitly refers to its organisational strategy as an integrated one, as explained during the interviews:

We advise to freelancers and we also make a political and trade union work. Our model is not that of Freelancers Union of the United States. We do not believe that a union can

exist only providing services and benefits connected to private insurances. Obviously it's good if you can offer an advantageous health insurance in a country where the welfare is mainly managed by the private market, but this is not enough to call "union" that organisation. We often explain that part of our activities deal with the discussion of social rights. Obviously no one pays only for making pleasant conversations; that's the reason why useful services are needed. At the same time you have to be a little bit more than a service if you want to act as a union do, and the union must be a little bit more political to attract freelancers.

The AJP - Association of Professional Journalists in Belgium complements the provision of several services with lobbying and campaigning actions towards the government. The association develops two categories of vis-à-vis actions with the political actors: reactive actions in lobbying to maintain the specific status of journalist (self-employed) workers and proactive actions concern issues that the association want to raise in the political debate. A good example is the question of whistle-blowers for which the association wants to create a legal protection, similar to the protection of information sources. This lobbying activity is very frequent when the specific status of journalists is at stake, for instance when politicians want to adapt either the pension schemes or the copyright taxes. According to the General Secretary, this way of voicing is very effective since it allows the organization to have a direct connection with the political decision makers while the traditional Belgian collective bargaining is currently in direct conflict with them, and even frozen to a certain extent. Similarly the French federation of auto-entrepreneurs FEDAE backs its main strategy of service provision by important advocacy actions. FEDAE is in fact politically very active: recently for instance has published a practical guide geared towards the candidates for the presidential election "For a renewal of the independent work". Moreover it launches petitions, white papers, press releases and participates in meetings with ministers. Other examples, the FEDAE contributed in the Commission Grandguillaume about the simplification of the legal, social, fiscal regimes for individual contractors, while in 2014, it supported the APCE – Agency for the Creation of Enterprises (*Agence pour la*

*creation d'entreprises*) whose future was threatened. In 2015, the FEDAE launched the operation "I am a little stone" (*je suis un caillou*) and sends an open letter to Nicolas Sarkozy who described the auto-entrepreneurs as "stones in his shoe". It founded also "the Observatory of the Uberisation", in order to improve the social protection of the digital platforms' workers. It contributed in the Barbaroux Report which aims at simplifying the auto-entrepreneur regime. Similar integrated strategies have been adopted also by the Spanish employers' association UATAE - Union of Associations of Autonomous and Entrepreneurial Workers and by the British quasi-union IPSE – the Association of Independent Professionals and the Self-Employed. UATAE combines a series of structured services (labour and tax advice; consulting; sectoral and cross-sectoral training; prevention of occupational hazards; financial help; quality and technological innovation; environment; professional networking; study and reports; seminars, congresses and professional fairs. Also other services more focused on the entrepreneurship: information office and orientation to the entrepreneur; support for the preparation of the business plan; viability reports for the change of the card for the account of others; self-employment orientation public service; training the entrepreneur; financial help; and aid for the promotion of self-employment) with a strong orientation towards the defence and representation of self-employed workers and the promotion of entrepreneurship as a form of economic and individual development. To this aim, through its member associations it maintains a permanent and stable dialogue with all public administrations and institutions, based on the demand and the struggle for the improvement of the conditions of the collective of self-employed workers, but also in the cooperation with in public policies and private initiatives that serve to this purpose. Likewise IPSE associates a wide range of services for its members with lobbying actions in order to gain public visibility and awareness of professional self-employment. IPSE has established a stable liaison with the Parliament. It participates to Government consultations, with feedback from the members and research. It also engages extensively with politicians and civil servants. IPSE works with other organisations such as the Confederation of Business Industries (CBI) and the Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC) to proactively campaign on issues that matter to

businesses in general. A dedicated team of policy and public affairs professionals regularly meets with MPs, Ministers and Shadow Ministers to brief them on issues affecting independent professionals and self-employed workers. IPSE lobbies the Parliament with a series of issues including maternity, better regulation for self-employed, agency workers regulation, pension, freelancer limited companies, work hubs.

**4.4. The collective bargaining.** Very few cases reported to carry out collective bargaining of collective agreements for professional self-employed workers as main organisational strategy. The negotiation of collective agreements for self-employed represents a tricky matter. The application of standard terms and conditions of employment to inherently individualistic and independent workers is not widely acknowledged as being an effective way of regulating the working conditions in self-employment. Some occupational unions in the creative industry in the UK however display a longstanding tradition of collective negotiation. The Musicians' Union MU and the union for actors and performers Equity regularly negotiate and sign collective agreements, generally with individual employers and companies. The MU signs collective agreements with a large number of broadcasters, film producers and record companies in particular in the recording and broadcasting department, hence for the music, film and the television industry. The collective agreements apply to self-employed musicians engaged in recording music of all sort, ranging from film soundtrack, to advertisement jingles, to soundtrack for TV shows. Unlike traditional agreements for salaried workers that set the hourly wage floor, MU negotiates the minimum rate of pay based on 3 hours sessions.

Beyond setting the wage floor to be applied and the terms and conditions of work, the collective agreements establish the legal conditions to apply for the transfer of the intellectual property rights. Hence musicians have some protection against having their performance recorded without their consent. Consent is usually given through the use of MU Standard Agreements and Consent Forms and the manner in which consent is given is important as it can affect payment for secondary and further uses.

The agreements take into considerations also the qualifications of the musicians, or instance the number of instruments played. Likewise Equity as a social partner negotiates several collective agreements in all the main areas of the creative industry with diverse employers, single employers like the BBC or trade bodies representing multiple employers in the same sector like the independent producers. The union involves in the negotiations the specialised committees representing occupations and groups who will materially affected by the agreements. In some cases Equity organises also ballots among those workers potentially affected by an agreement before signing it. The collective agreements set a wage rate, but also further contractual arrangements:

we look at thing like working hours, really important in the creative sector, often periods are very very intense for people working in our sector, we look at the structure of the working day, start time, finish time, also on social areas payments, so for Sunday performances or generally for weekend working, overtime payments and things like that. We also look at provisions like holiday pay which for most self-employed workers it's not guaranteed but we fight for because we have got the worker status, so we introduce that in our collective agreements as much as possible (Head of the General Secretary department interview).

The collective agreement in particular sectors might also include new specific clauses: for instance a special payment regime for auditions. So self-employed actors taking part to auditions get paid for the time spent. Equity has in many workplaces, especially in casts and productions centres, what they call the deputies. Despite not fully trained like the shop stewards, the deputies act as representatives of the union at workplace and as main point of contact between the union and the workers.

Beyond these patterns of organisational responses and strategies towards the collective representation of professional independent workers, some further peculiarities emerge. First, most of the organisations analysed pointed out the increasing use of social network, on-line forum, websites and digital tools to promote theirs services and

campaigns, as well as to recruit and mobilise members. The large majority of cases regularly update the webpage, the Facebook page and the Twitter account. Second much creative efforts was increasingly put in the promotion of new captivating and innovative campaigns. The British Musicians' Union MU launched the campaigns #WorkNotPlay and "Keep Music Live"; the Belgian Association of Professional Journalists AJP launched the campaign "Freelance not easily fooled" (*pigiste pas pigeon*); the Italian quasi-union ACTA launched the campaigns on Twitter using word puns: #refurtIVA and #malusRenzi. Third, in various cases the organisations set up informal networking meeting in the forms of "coffee break" or "breakfast appointments": the French FEDAE organises the "café de l'entrepreneurs"; the Dutch PZO-ZZP organises the "knowledge cafés"; the Belgian SmartBE organises Breakfast meetings.

**Table 3. The organisational strategies**

	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Organisational strategy</b>
BE	CSC - Christian Trade Union	Few examples of company collective bargaining for self-employed. Planned service provision in the future
BE	SmartBE	<b>Mutual guarantee fund</b> and customized insurance packages. "Smoothing out individual job transitions via transitional rights". Admin services for business contracts. Advocacy with stakeholders. Information via breakfast, networking meeting, local partnership
BE	AJP - Association of Professional Journalists	<b>Services</b> : business activities; admin/legal; communication services; training. <b>Lobbying</b> with the government and negotiation of "civil agreements". Campaign "Freelance not easily fooled/ <i>pigiste pas pigeon</i> ". Communication through website, internal newsletters and magazine, social networks.
FR	FEDAE – Fédération des auto-entrepreneurs	Main strategy: <b>services provision</b> Advocacy: guidelines for candidates of presidential elections "For a renewal of the independent work"; petitions; white papers, parliamentary audit. Networking through the websites and "café de l'entrepreneurs": meeting hours to catch up and networking
FR	Coopname (a business employment cooperative)	<b>Mutualized services</b> : accounting, invoicing, legal assistance, support and advice Advocacy to obtain recognition of the salaried-entrepreneur status. Information and services
FR	AFD - Alliance française des designers	Legal and fiscal <b>services</b> , personalised assistance <b>Lobbying</b> for the recognition of the design diploma
FR	CGT	Industrial action and proposal of collective representation (mainly platforms couriers). Legal action

FR	Platform Union (F3C – CFDT)	<b>Services:</b> protection, free bank account, insurance. Future: collective representation via the platform
DE	Ver.di Selbstständige	Integrated strategy: <b>services</b> important (provided by a company) but complemented by <b>lobbying</b>
DE	SmartDE	<b>Services</b> and advice. Financing services: <b>mutual guarantee fund</b> , leasing for equipment, microcredit. Matching services and training
DE	Supermarkt	Promotion of an alternative economic model. Co-working space, platform for digital activist' meeting.
DE	BDÜ - Federal Association of Interpreters and Translators	<b>Professional lobby:</b> promotion of adequate remuneration and working conditions with the Parliament Information and communication tools (on-line forum, professional journals, on-line survey among members), professional development and advisory services
IT	ACTA - Association of Consultants in the Advanced Tertiary Sector	Limited services, mainly <b>lobbying and advocacy</b> with the Parliament on welfare, fiscal and rights issues. Campaign on social networks, exploiting new digital tools: fax-bombing and tweet-bombing
IT	vIVAce! the community (CISL)	<b>Services:</b> fiscal, legal, consultancy, health services. No collective bargaining in the agenda On-line recruitment and campaign on social networks
IT	CLAP - Chambers for independent and precarious workers	Services: legal, fiscal and welfare assistance. <b>Organising and campaigning</b> strategies
NE	Kustenvond	<b>Advocacy</b> in the Social-Economic Council; engaged in policy preparation. Admin and legal <b>services</b> Negotiation for copyright contract law
NE	Yacht	<b>Services: matching, placement</b> , admin support for contracting On-line networking and training, organise events
NE	PZO-ZZP	<b>Advocacy and lobbying</b> (seat in the Dutch Social Economic Council). Networking through "Knowledge Cafés". Growing set of services (outsourced – legal, fiscal and insurance)
SL	Movement for Decent Work and Welfare Society	<b>Campaigning</b> to raise public awareness E-newsletter, websites, social networks
SL	Trade Union of the Precarious Workers	Legal assistance and accounting <b>service</b> . Payment enforcement procedures Recruitment via email
ES	CTAC - Confederació de Treballadors Autònoms de Catalunya	<b>Advisory and advocacy</b> to improve working conditions Services: management and consulting, training
ES	Autònoms PIMEC	<b>Lobbying</b> action with the government Collective representation and few services. Networking and coordination among members
ES	UATAE Catalunya - Union of Associations of Autonomous and Entrepreneurial Workers of Catalonia	<b>Lobbying and advocacy</b> with institutions and government. Campaigning to promote a culture of self-employment. <b>Services:</b> legal, fiscal, training, financial help. Networking and communication, collaboration with institutions (bank, universities, p.a.

SE	SEC - Self-employment company	Provision of <b>services as a commercial operator</b> for self-employed without firm-tax permit (invoicing, collection of fees from freelancers' clients). <b>Campaigning</b> for promotion of self-employment as an alternative way of working
SE	JU – the Journalist Union	Lobbying for fair pay “freelance recommendation pay” and against the introduction of a new copyright agreement for freelance content
SE	Job Security Foundation	
UK	MU- the Musicians' Union	Negotiating <b>collective agreements</b> <b>Campaigns:</b> #WorkNotPlay, Keep Music Live Training and wide range of <b>services:</b> personal insurance, legal, advisory Lobbying with the parliament and audited (e.g. copyright and fair compensation regulation)
UK	IPSE - Association of Independent Professionals and the Self-Employed	<b>Lobbying:</b> public visibility and consulted in Parliament. Financing research, roundtables, networking events Several <b>services:</b> pension scheme, life assurance, legal tools, fiscal help,
UK	Equity	Negotiating <b>collective agreements</b> <b>Services:</b> personal insurance, contract and legal advice, training legal representation. Lobbying via MPs in Parliament

**4.5 Coalition building.** Many of the organisations investigated take part to more or less structured and formal partnerships with other associations as a strategy to collectively represent professional self-employed workers. The search for new alliances and coalition-building has been widely explored by the organisations, since partnership represents a positive-sum game for all the actors involved. The coalitions can facilitate the access to new constituencies of workers: such aspect is particularly important when the recruitment of unorganised segments of the labour market are at stake, such as in the case of self-employed workers. Moreover the creation of coalitions can increase the legitimacy of the campaigns and of the lobbying actions carried out together, on behalf of wider rank-and-file. Partnerships enable to strengthen the individual organisation's capacity to mobilise, in particular when movement and innovative bottom-up associations are involved, give that they are animated by active members and volunteers. Two main types of coalitions have emerged among the case studies: the industry/sector-wide coalitions and the coalitions built on self-employment rights.

The occupational/sectoral organisations often build partnerships with other associations in the same industry to jointly pursue sector-specific campaigns and policies. The AJP – Association of Professional Journalists in Belgium, after a period of opposition with the trade unions organising journalists, found a deal of reciprocal involvement thanks to a united front against bogus self-employment. In fact the unions accepted to invite the AJP to the discussion table when major issues arise, while the AJP facilitates the access of unions in organizations where they are not yet present. Such collaboration turned to be effective since it led to local gentlemen agreements, regularly signed at company level. These agreements state that when one party starts a negotiation with a company, it invites the others to participate and to create a common front; and that the agreements between AJP and employers are transformed into regular collective agreements through to the signature of the official unions. The French Alliance of Designers AFD has partnerships with several other designers' associations such as the APCI - *Agence pour la création industrielle*; *Designers interactifs*; *Observatoire de l'EcoDesign*; Fablab Woma; Shanghai Art and design Academy. The Dutch association for artists *Kunstenbond* collaborate with other associations in the creative industry, such as ACT for actors, DuPho for photographers, and authors unions, such as the Dutch association of writers and translators. These associations can benefit from *Kunstenbond*'s lobbying power and the tools and other services it provides for self-employed. In turn, these associations bring in relevant professional knowledge and expertise regarding their sectors, hence facilitating the provision of tailored and specific services for the members. In the UK both the Musicians' Union MU and Equity, the trade union for actors and performers, are affiliated to the Federation of Entertainment Unions (FEI) to improve the rights of workers in the creative industry. Moreover the unions liaise with each other and with other unions like BECTU to directly lobby with the government. For instance they successfully lobbied together to block the Government attempt to raise the National Insurance contributions for self-employed workers of 3 percentage point, from 9% to 12% in 2017.

A second type of coalitions is based on joining forces to lobby and campaign for the wider and transversal rights of the professional self-employed workers, regardless the

economic sector or the occupation. This second pattern of coalition-building can be traced back mainly in the organisations characterised by an heterogeneous membership. The French Federation of Auto-Entrepreneurs FEDAE has established strong partnerships with a series of associations: AFE (*Agence France Entrepreneur*); Pôle Emploi (French governmental agency which operates as employment centre); CIPAV (*Caisse interprofessionnelle de prévoyance et d'assurance*); ACOSS / URSSAF (public agencies centralizing the collection of social contributions and ensuring their redistribution); RSI (*Régime Social des Indépendants*); *Chambre nationale des professions libérales* (Union of liberal professions). The British quasi-union IPSE - Association of Independent Professionals and the Self-Employed works with other general professional associations organisations such as the Confederation of British Industries (CBI) and the Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC) to proactively campaign on issues that matter to business in general. The Italian quasi-union ACTA - the Association of Consultants in the Advanced Tertiary Sector has successfully undertaken lobbying activities with a large coalition for the approval of the Jobs Act on Autonomous Work: ACTA campaigned with trade unions (Consulta delle Professioni – CGIL and vIVAce! on-line community of CISL), second level associations (ConfProfessionisti) and movements (Coalition 27February, AltaPartecipazione). The French Business Cooperative has built partnerships with other cooperatives through the federation 'Integral Cooperative' that links different fields of the economic and social life, as well as with other organisations in autonomous workers' movement such as Bigre! that gathers several organizations of the social economy (associations, cooperatives and mutuals). The partnerships around the cooperative organisational model contributed to diffuse a new concept of employment and a new concept of enterprise. The Dutch PZO-ZZZP closely lobbies with VNO-NCW, the employers' association: together they fight in order to halt the emerging difficulties for self-employed professionals.

The trade unions choose different strategies in the coalition-building approach. The German union Ver.di Selbstständige opted for collaborating with other unions, in particular the Ver.di DJU – the German Journalist Union, with the association of

literary translators VdÜ and with freelance organisations in order to create closer collaboration agreements and share the perspectives and visions. Conversely the French union CGT decided not to establish partnerships, given that it disagrees on many of the positions adopted by the other French organisations of representation. In particular it does not support the status of auto-entrepreneur promoted by FEDAE, considered a dangerous measure that pulls down the workers' rights. Hence the CGT decided to adopt a bottom up approach, by supporting the idea that “coalitions can be built only from the bottom up”.

**Table 4. Coalitions and partnerships**

	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Coalitions</b>
BE	CSC - Christian Trade Union	No coalitions
BE	SmartBE	Initial suspicion from other unions, then relations with classical unions and policy-makers
BE	AJP - Association of Professional Journalists	<b><u>Coalition with SmartBE.</u></b> During the 1990s <b><u>opposition of the traditional unions</u></b> , they <b><u>found a deal</u></b> of reciprocal involvement thanks to a united front against bogus self-employment: Unions accept to invite the journalist association to the discussion table when major issues arise and the journalist association facilitates the introduction of unions in organizations in which they are not yet present.
FR	FEDAE – Fédération des auto-entrepreneurs	<b><u>Several partnerships with:</u></b> AFE (Agence France Entrepreneur); <b><u>Pôle Emploi</u></b> (French governmental agency which operates as an employment center); <b><u>CIPAV</u></b> (Caisse interprofessionnelle de prévoyance et d'assurance); <b><u>ACOSS / URSSAF</u></b> (public agencies centralizing the collection of social contributions and ensuring their redistribution); <b><u>RSI</u></b> (Régime Social des Indépendants); <b><u>Chambre nationale des professions libérales</u></b> (Union of liberal professions)
FR	Coopname (a business employment cooperative)	Partnership with other cooperatives, in 'Integral Cooperative' (linking different fields of the economic and social life) and with other organizations in autonomous workers' movement such as Bigre! that gathers several organizations of the social economy (associations, cooperatives and mutuals) which, thanks to the cooperation, want to move beyond the alternative choice between the subordinated salaried work and a precarious independent work.
FR	AFD - Alliance française des designers	Partnership with other design associations (APCI - Agence pour la création industrielle); Designers interactifs; Observatoire del'EcoDesign; Fablab Woma; Shangaï Art and design Academy
FR	CGT	CGT disagrees with the FEDAE: it doesn't support the status of auto-entrepreneur, considered a dangerous measure that pulls down the workers' rights. The CGT decided to adopt a bottom up approach: to relay the demands of emerging collectives: “coalitions can be built only from the bottom up”.
DE	Ver.di Selbstständige	Collaboration with other unions (Ver.di DJU – German Journalist Union) and freelance organisations to create closer collaboration agreements and share the perspectives and visions. Ver.di has an historical collaborations with the association of literary translators VdÜ

DE	Supermarkt	The network of Supermarkt is extremely structured: it aggregate NGOs, companies and start-ups, activists, research centres, through several initiatives involving local, national and international groups and associations (including SmartDE)
DE	BDÜ - Federal Association of Interpreters and Translators	BDÜ is affiliated to the DGB; is connected to many industry associations, as well as to the German Association for SMEs – BVMW
IT	ACTA - Association of Consultants in the Advanced Tertiary Sector	<b>Lobbying activities in partnership</b> for the approval of the Decree on Autonomous Work supported by a large coalition: ACTA together with trade unions (Consulta delle Professioni – CGIL), second level associations (ConfProfessioni) and movements (Coalition 27February, AltaPartecipazione). ACTA refused to institutionally affiliate with other associations,
IT	vIVAce! the community (CISL)	No formal coalition so far. <b>Lobbying activities in partnership</b> for the Decree on Autonomous Work with many other associations (ACTA, ConfProfessioni, Consulta delle Professioni – CGIL, Coalition 27February, AltaPartecipazione)
NE	CLAP - Chambers for independent and precarious workers	Clap is affiliated to the Coalition 27 February, that campaigns for a universal welfare system and a fairer fiscal system. They collaborate, despite frictions, with some federations of the CGIL dealing with independent workers
NE	Kunstenbond	Kunstenbond <b>considers to collaborate with other associations</b> , such as ACT for actors, DuPho for photographers, and authors unions, such as the Dutch association of writers and translators. These associations would benefit from Kunstenbond's lobbying power and the tools and other services it provides for self-employed. In turn, these associations would bring in relevant professional knowledge and expertise regarding their sectors
NE	Yacht	Yacht aims to remain an independent organization under the name of Randstad,
NE	PZO-ZZP	Closely working with VNO-NCW, the employers' association; together they fight in order to stop the already emerging difficulties for self-employed professionals
SL	Movement for Decent Work and Welfare Society	Nongovernmental organizations and unions under the initiatives of the Movement formed a working group on Precarious Work
SL	Trade Union of the Precarious Workers	Collaborate with other unions under the umbrella of the Association. Their goal is to set such a system in which those who would change their employment from the precarious form would also join other sectoral union
ES	CTAC - Confederació de Treballadors Autònoms de Catalunya	Collaboration with the Barcelona City Council. Political party Ciudadanos placed on the political agenda the situation of self-employed.
ES	UATAE Catalunya - Union of Associations of Autonomous and Entrepreneurial Workers of Catalonia	Aims at improving collaboration with UATAE Spain
UK	MU- the Musicians' Union	MU is affiliated to the TUC and the Federation of Entertainment Unions (FEI) to improve the rights of workers in the creative industry. Within the FEI, the MU copes with industry-specific issues. The MU liaises with individual unions (Equity and BECTU):they sign their own collective agreement with the same employer
UK	IPSE - Association of Independent Professionals and the Self-Employed	IPSE works with other organisations such as the CBI and the Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC) to proactively campaign on issues that matter to businesses
UK	Equity	Equity is affiliated to the Federation of Entertainment Industries (FEI) and to the TUC in the UK and to the International Federation Of Actors at international level

## 5. Conclusions

The transversal analysis of the 29 organisations across nine European countries sheds new light on interesting dynamics that are developing in the field of the collective representation of professional self-employed workers in the advanced tertiary sector.

First, **new innovative organisational structures** have emerged to collectively represent this unorganised segment of the labour market. Quasi-unions, labour market intermediaries (LMIs) and new forms of cooperativism have emerged across Europe. These new organisations have gradually institutionalised themselves, becoming relevant interlocutors when the interests and the rights of professional self-employed workers are at stake in the public debate as well as in the political agenda. Interestingly these innovative organisational forms have in several cases **predated the traditional trade unions** in the collective representation of the professional self-employed workers. Created *ad hoc* to target the demands of this segment of workers, they quickly and flexibly responded to the new demands raised by this specific population in the labour market. Not rarely these new organisations built their membership on the belonging to self-employment segment, regardless the economic sector of activity and the occupation. The underlying rationale was in fact to focus their organisational strategies on the distinctive interests of self-employed as such.

Conversely the structures of the **trade unions turned to be less reactive** to include this growing segment of the labour market: they in fact kept on focusing on their traditional constituency mainly composed of subordinated workers. Despite the delay in restructuring their organisational configuration, the trade unions in Europe started to adjust their structure to build membership among the professional self-employed workers. Such process of renewal occurred at different paces and followed diverse trajectories. The dominant pattern however seems to reflect the **creation of *ad hoc* structures**, separate from the core union structure. This strategy may respond to a twofold, opposed, exigency. On the one side, the *ad hoc* union structure might accommodate more flexibly the specific interests borne by this segment of the labour market, which are inherently different from the interests of the subordinate salaried

workers. On the other side, however, “this may also be seen as a means of marginalising such workers, rather than mainstreaming their organisation within the core sectoral union structure” (Bernaciak, Gumbrell-McCormick and Hyman 2014:4).

Interestingly, the two different types of organisations, the traditional and the innovative ones, representing professional self-employed workers followed **two distinct trajectories of establishment**. The traditional organisations like the trade unions and the professional associations established their structures to represent these workers following a top-down approach. Conversely the new innovative experiences, such as in the case of quasi-unions and new forms of cooperativism, emerged from bottom-up initiatives undertaken by activists and the professional self-employed themselves who decided to set up their own associations. In the large majority of the cases however they opted for formal hierarchical internal structure, based on elected representative boards and a clear division of the roles.

Another noteworthy trend that emerges from the comparative analysis of the 29 organisations across Europe regards the **type of membership** they target. Most of the experiences investigated in fact transversally organise self-employed professional workers across different occupations, diverse economic sectors and a wide range of activities. The main strategic focus is to recruit and give collective voice and visibility to professional self-employment in general, as a working condition *per se*, rather than to specific professions. However there are also, despite more limited in number, organisations whose constituency is circumscribed to a specific occupation or profession. In this case the organisations organise in selected sector of the economy, generally dominated by self-employment, grouping together both self-employed and employees working in the targeted industry.

In terms of organisational strategies to collectively represent this segment of the labour market, empirical evidence shows different dominant patterns.

The **provision of professional services specifically provided for professional self-employed** members represents the main organisational strategy in several organisations investigated: legal advice, fiscal support, training, administrative services are the most widespread services provided. Interestingly new innovative cooperatives have set up

forms of new mutualism for their members, including mutual guarantee funds, customized insurance packages, leasing for professional equipment, microcredit for the development of professional activities and subsidies. Such experimental solution can be interpreted as “functional equivalent” (Marsden 2004) to the range of social protections that generally standard employment relationships guarantee to subordinated workers. In the words of these cooperatives, their goal is to “smooth out the individual job transitions via transitional rights”, trying to disconnect the access to social rights from the professional and employment status, hence minimizing the risk for the workers. In other cases the service provision represents the first phase in the setting up of the organisations, an effective and continuous recruitment tool for members, but that prefaces a complementary organisational strategy focusing on lobby and advocacy. **The lobbying model** embodies a second widespread organisational strategy. Lobbying and campaigning for the rights of self-employed workers, for a better acknowledgment of their specific status to which the social and employment protections are attached, represent the core goal of several other organisations. The traditional representation via the collective negotiation of terms and conditions of employment turned to be hardly applicable, except for few cases. Hence the institutional embeddedness of this segment of the labour market into the traditional institutional configurations of the employment relations remain rather limited.

**Coalition-building** finally represents a further organisational strategy adopted to give collective voice to these scattered segment of the labour market. Many of the organisations investigated take part to more or less structured and formal partnerships with other associations as a strategy to collectively represent professional self-employed workers. The search for new alliances and coalition-building has been widely explored by the organisations, since partnership represents a positive-sum game for all the actors involved. The coalitions can facilitate the access to new constituencies of workers: such aspect is particularly important when the recruitment of unorganised segments of the labour market are at stake, such as in the case of self-employed workers. Moreover the creation of coalitions can increase the legitimacy of the campaigns and of the lobbying actions carried out together, on behalf of wider rank-and-file. Partnerships enable to

strengthen the individual organisation's capacity to mobilise, in particular when movement and innovative bottom-up associations are involved, give that they are animated by active members and volunteers. The **geometry of the coalitions** among organisations displays two main patterns: the industry/sector-wide coalitions and the coalitions built on self-employment rights.

The different organisations have to act together within their national labour markets and political frameworks in order to be heard. Effective alliances must be based on the **mutual acknowledgment beyond the own autonomy**. The sharing of common visions and prospects should overcome the different logics of actions and of organising that each association follows. Through coalitions, the organisations can mutually benefit from the power resources that the other have at disposal: associational power, institutional, structural.

For an effective collective representation of this labour market segment, what seems to be needed is a **shared collective understanding** of the phenomenon and of the relative challenges it raises. A common understanding then should be backed by new shared narratives and languages to address the specific demands. Finally we can certainly observe a high degree of **transnational emulation**. Through the affiliation to international federations, networking occasions and a wider access to digital tools, the organisations have the opportunity to mutually learn from each other across the national borders. Across European countries similar organisational responses emerged to common supranational challenges.

## References

- Autor D.H. (2008), *The Economics of Labor Market Intermediation: An Analytic Framework*, NBER Working Paper no. 14348. Downloaded at: <http://www.nber.org/papers/w14348>.
- Bernaciak M. , Gumbrell-McCormick R. and Hyman R. (2014), *European trade unionism: from crisis to renewal?*. ETUI Report 133. Downloaded at: <https://www.etui.org/Publications2/Reports/European-trade-unionism-from-crisis-to-renewal>.
- Bologna S and Fumagalli A (eds) (1997), *Il lavoro autonomo di seconda generazione: Scenari del post fordismo in Italia*. Milan: Feltrinelli.
- Crouch C. (2012), Il declino delle relazioni industriali nell'odierno capitalismo, *Stato e Mercato*, 94(1): 55-76.
- Dølvik, J. and Waddington, J. (2002), Private Sector Services: Challenges to European Trade Unions, *Transfer* 3(2): 356–76.
- Frege C. M. and Kelly J. (2003), Union revitalization strategies in comparative perspectives, *European Journal of Industrial Relations*, 9(1): 7-24.
- Gottschall, K. and Kroos, D. (2003), *Self-Employment in Germany and the UK. Labour Market Regulation, Risk-Management and Gender in Comparative Perspective*, ZeS Arbeitspapier 13, Bremen: Zentrum für Sozialpolitik.
- Hecksher C. and Carrè F. (2006), Strength in Networks: Employment Rights Organizations and the Problem of Co-Ordination, *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 44(4): 605-628.
- Malone T. W., Laubacher R. J. and Johns T. (2011), The Age of Hyperspecialization, *Harvard Business Review*, July-August 2011. Downloaded at: <https://www.topcoder.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Hyperspecialization.pdf>.
- Pernicka S. (2006), Organising the self-employed: Theoretical considerations and empirical findings, *European Journal of Industrial Relations*, 12(2): 125-142.
- Regini, M. (ed.) (1992), *The Future of Labour Movements*. London: Sage
- Waddington J. and Hoffman R. (2000), Trade Unions in Europe: Reform, Organisation and Restructuring', in J. Waddington and R. Hoffmann (eds) *Trade Unions In Europe: Facing Challenges and Searching for Solutions*, pp. 27–79. Brussels: ETUI.