

**European
conference**



European Union, Brexit – the future of workers' rights

#WorkersMigrants
BrexitELDH

**Saturday
11th
November
2017
London**

9:30am – 6:30pm
Diskus Centre at Unite the
Union, 128 Theobald's Road,
Holborn, London WC1X 8T

Programme

Conference Handout

The Programme

09h30 – 10h00 Opening:

Unite the Union: Rose Keeping, Regional Industrial Officer

IER: John HENDY QC

ELDH/Haldane: Prof. Bill Bowring, ELDH President 10h00 – 11h45

1. The Future of Trade Union Rights, social rights (collective labour law, for a social Europe instead of a “social pillar):

- Esther Lynch, Confederal Secretary of ETUC, Brussels: **For a Pillar of enforceable and universal social rights**
- John Hendy QC, barrister, London (IER): **The dilemma for trade union rights in Britain: caught between the EU and Free Trade Agreements**
- Lorenzo Fassina, Rome (Head of the legal office of CGIL): **CGIL's strategy for defending and increasing individual and collective rights in Italy**
- Marthe Corpet, CGT, Confederation Policy Advisor - International Department, Paris: **Trade union rights in France under attack - CGT strategy**

11h45 – 12h00 Coffee break

12h00 – 13h30

2. How to create more security for workers (concepts on national and European level for individual labour law for domestic and migrant workers)

- Klaus Lörcher, Germany, former ETUC legal advisor, former Legal Secretary of the Civil Service Tribunal of the European Union: **The role of the European Social Charter for the protection of (migrant) workers' rights, in particular after Brexit**
- Ms. Dr Sanja Cukut Krilic, Research Fellow, Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Slovenia: **Insecurities and vulnerabilities of migrant and posted workers: the need for information provision**
- Sergey Saurin, Centre for Social and Labour Rights (CSLR), lawyer, Moscow: **The impact of European labour standards on Russian labour law and enforcement practice**

13h30 – 14h15 Lunch

14h15 – 16h00

3. How to defend the rights of refugees and migrants. The impact of Brexit and EU policy.

- Frances Webber, Institute of Race Relations: **Brexit, refugees and the hostile environment**
- Wendy Pettifer LIB MA UK Solicitor and Legal Shelter Calais Legal Advisor : **The effect of Brexit on refugees and forced migrants**
- Karl Kopp, Director of European Affairs, PRO ASYL, Frankfurt/Main: **Perspectives for the defence of Human Rights for Refugees in Europe. The impact of Brexit.**
- Alison Harvey, barrister, London: **The trafficked and the new undocumented post Brexit**

16h00 – 16h15 Coffee break

16h15 – 18h00

4. European Democracy and human rights – between (Br)Exit and the rule of exception (How to develop European Democracy, how to fight non-democratic developments in EU states;):

- Prof. Andreas Fisahn, Bielefeld: **The lack of democracy and the future of the union**
- Prof. Steve Peers, Essex

- Dr. Marco Inglese, Faculty of Law, University of Fribourg, Switzerland: **The European Citizens' Initiative: an effective tool to boost democratic participation?**
- Julian Bild, Solicitor: Anti-trafficking and Labour Exploitation Unit (speaking in a personal capacity): The EU: A help or hindrance?

18h00 - 18h30 Closing: Thomas Schmidt ELDH Secretary General

European Conference

European Union, Brexit – the future of workers' rights

Saturday, 11 November 2017, London, 9:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Diskus Centre at Unite, 128 Theobald's Road, Holborn, London, WC1X 8T

09h00 Registration

09h30 – 10h00 Opening:

Unite the Union: Rose Keeping, Regional Industrial Officer

IER: John HENDY QC

ELDH/Haldane: Prof. Bill Bowring, ELDH President

10h00 – 11h45

1. **The Future of Trade Union Rights, social rights** (collective labour law, for a social Europe instead of a “social pillar):

Esther Lynch, Confederal Secretary of ETUC, Brussels: For a Pillar of enforceable and universal social rights

CV Esther Lynch is currently serving as Confederal Secretary with the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) where her responsibilities include the Health and Safety dossier.

Esther has extensive trade union and legal experience at Irish, European and international level and has played a key role developing trade union Health and Safety policy and practices.

Ms Lynch is currently a Board Member of the European Chemicals Agency (2015- to date). Previously she served as a Board Member of the Health & Safety Authority of Ireland (2006-2012) and the Irish government's advisory body on Better Regulation & Company Law Reform.

Ms Lynch is the author of the ICTU guide on negotiating polices to assist workers with breast cancer to return to work. She has spearheaded a number of trade union health and safety campaigns, on issues such as effective risk assessments for MSDs, ending occupational cancer and in 2016, she concluded the 'Covenant on raising awareness and exchanging good practices to deal with risks arising from occupational exposure to carcinogens' with Business Europe, the EU Commission and EUOSHA.

A key focus of Esther's work during the second half of 2017 will be the revision of the EU Health and Safety Directives and the European Pillar of Social Rights.

She holds a BSc in Management and Law. Is certified in Corporate Governance and remains a Senior Adjunct Lecturer in Law at the National University of Ireland (Maynooth).

- **John Hendy QC, barrister, London (IER): The dilemma for trade union rights in Britain: caught between the EU and Free Trade Agreements**

CV

John HENDY QC is a member of Old Square Chambers in London. He specialises in trade union law, having appeared in most of the leading collective labour law cases in the UK over nearly 40 years, in particular in relation to industrial action and collective bargaining.

He is Standing Counsel to 8 British trade unions and has worked with many international trade union bodies, including the International Trade Union Confederation, the International Transport Workers Federation and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

He is an Honorary Professor in the Faculty of Law of University College, London.

He is Chair of the Institute of Employment Rights and President of the International Centre for Trade Union Rights.

Abstract

He lectures and writes extensively on collective labour law issues, recent examples including: A Manifesto for Labour Law: towards a comprehensive revision of workers' rights, KD Ewing, J Hendy, C Jones (eds), 2016, Institute of Employment rights, Liverpool.

He has a particular interest in labour history.

- **Lorenzo Fassina, Rome (Head of the legal office of CGIL): CGIL's strategy for defending and increasing individual and collective rights in Italy**

CV

Lorenzo Fassina was born in Rome in 1966, where he pursued classical and musical studies and graduated in Political Science. He worked for several years as academic researcher in the field of social security and labour law, at the law school of Università La Sapienza, in Rome. Since 1993 he collaborated, as member of the editorial board, with the academic journal *Rivista giuridica del lavoro e della previdenza sociale*, and he wrote multiple academic articles on the topic of labour law and social security. Since 1995 he works with Cgil: from 1995 until 2010 he was responsible for the legal office of the tutelage service (patronato) Inca-Cgil. Since 2000 he is responsible for the national legal department of Cgil.

Abstract:

In Italy, during the past 20 years, labour law has regressed, leading to a general weakening of both individual and, even more severely, collective workers' rights.

That is the consequence of the political strategy of centre-right wing cabinets, which aimed at undermining trade unions through measures oriented at increasing the leeway of enterprises vis-à-vis the workers.

When in 2015, under the Renzi Government, such a political effort to reduce labour law protection led to the adoption of the so-called "jobs act" Cgil, after years of fierce opposition to this hostility towards labour rights, took the decision to frame its own political stance, by submitting a legislative proposal, in the form of citizens' initiative, which obtained around 1.200.000 signatures.

In order to underpin its legislative proposal (that at the moment is under the scrutiny of the Parliament), Cgil for the first time in its history presented three referenda on the abolition of the most controversial aspects of Italian labour law.

The Italian Constitutional Court, with an highly debated decision of January 2017, has blocked one of the three referenda, and precisely the one that could have implied the most pervasive and marked effect, affecting the jobs-acts rules on dismissals.

Cgil has therefore decided to react by setting up a multiangled strategy to contrast the jobs-act, both on the national and supranational level based on a judiciary approach.

As for the national strategy, Cgil managed to bring the legitimacy question of the jobs-act under the attention of the Constitutional Court: the Tribunal of Rome, in July 2017, upholding Cgil concerns, submitted a request for preliminary ruling on the constitutionality of the jobs-act, in relation to the doubtful compatibility with different articles of the Italian Constitution. Among them, Article 117, which imposes the respect of the rules established in international treaties, such as Article 24 of the revised European Social Charter. Article 24 establishes that the workers whose employment is

terminated without a valid reason shall receive adequate compensation, which should be effectively dissuasive for the employer.

The Tribunal of Rome has upheld the view that the jobs-act prevents the dismissed worker to rely on this guarantee, and has therefore requested the Constitutional Court to issue a declaration of constitutional incompatibility.

As for the supranational strategy, on the 16 of October 2017 Cgil submitted a collective complaint to the European Committee of Social Rights (n. 158/2017) concerning the violation of Article 24 of the Charter, based on the same grounds of the Constitutional proceeding initiated by the Tribunal of Rome.

In conclusion, Cgil has created a potentially successful approach which relies on these two separate judicial proceedings, both founded on the incompatibility of the jobs-act with the European Social Charter, which imposes the worker's right to an adequate relief in case of unlawful dismissal.

- **Marthe Corpet, CGT Confederation Policy Advisor – International Department, Paris: Trade union rights in France under attack – CGT strategy**

CV

Marthe Corpet is graduated in law and political sciences and is currently policy adviser in the international department of La CGT (french trade Union). She is in charge of multinationals firms including participation of workers and social corporate responsibility.

11h45 – 12h00 Coffee break

12h00 – 13h30

2. How to create more security for workers (concepts on national and European level for individual labour law for domestic and migrant workers)

- **Klaus Lörcher, Germany, former ETUC legal advisor, former Legal Secretary of the Civil Service Tribunal of the European Union: The role of the European Social Charter for the protection of (migrant) workers' rights, in particular after Brexit**

CV

During most of his professional life, Klaus Lörcher worked as trade union lawyer at national and European levels and as Legal advisor of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC). He has also worked as Legal Secretary of the Civil Service Tribunal of the European Union. As 'Human Rights Advisor' he represented the ETUC as an observer in different bodies of the Council of Europe and advised the ETUC on human rights issues. Moreover, he is as a member of the Transnational Trade Union Rights Network.

Abstract:

The presentation will first describe the system of the European Social Charter in substantive and procedural terms. In substantive terms, it will show the content of the relevant provisions protecting migrant workers and develop the case law. A decision of the competent supervising body, the European Committee of Social Rights, will serve as an example in relation to posted workers. Bearing in mind the developments concerning social human rights protection in a post-Brexit situation the presentation will address the specific role of the European Social Charter in this respect. Finally, the Conclusions will provide some orientation how to best ensure human rights protection in the social field at European level.

- **Ms. Dr Sanja Cukut Krilic, Research Fellow, Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Slovenia: Insecurities and vulnerabilities of migrant and posted workers: the need for information provision**

CV

Sanja Cukut Krilić, sociologist, Research Fellow at the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, her main research topic include transnational families, care work, female migration and posting of workers.

Abstract (Authors of the research work: Dr Sanja Cukut Krilic and is Mojca Vah Jevšnik)

Research on the general wellbeing of workers posted abroad to provide services is scarce and fragmented. A growing body of literature has revealed the ongoing tensions between liberalisation of the service sector and preserving national labour and social standards, but the overlooked aspect of assuring decent working conditions, safe and healthy working environment, and workplace wellbeing in general is yet to be explored. Drawing on different aspects of vulnerability of posted workers and migrant workers in general, the presentation will explore their precariousness that involves instability, lack of protection, insecurity and social or economic vulnerability. The hyper-mobility of most posted workers and their usually relatively short-term employment situation pose an additional challenge to the work of trade unions, and national union support for a more transnational approach in this area is also needed. In this respect, the presentation will highlight information-provision issues that might affect the insufficient access of information of workers posted abroad.

- **Sergey Saurin, lawyer, Moscow: The impact of European labour standards on Russian labour law and enforcement practice**

CV

Sergey Saurin, PhD, Head of legal department in Center for Social and Labor Rights.

Since 2009 – working as a lawyer in the sphere of social and labor rights of workers and trade unions.

Since 2013 to 2015 – expert-consultant of the Social Chamber in Russian Federation in the commission on social politics, labor relations and the quality of life.

Has a successful experience of protection of social and labor rights in Russian courts. The author of many informational and educational publications on law issues.

Holder of a certificate of International visitors program in USA dedicated to social and labor rights protection.

Trainer certificate holder on the application of European Convention on Human Rights (European Council).

Multiple awards winner of the Professional Association "Lawyers for labor rights" in the period from 2011 to 2014, since 2014 - Member of the Board of the Association.

Abstract

The main point of the speech is to make a brief overview of actual labor topics in Russia in comparison with European standards. There are at least four sensitive sectors of Russian labor law, which are appropriate to compare with European experience.

1. Freedom of association.

The relevant Russian labour legislation is stable but there are some practical issues, which are decent to discuss:

- Financial support of trade unions from the government;
 - Trade union as a foreign agent according to Russian legislation;
 - Works councils system in Russia.
2. Discrimination (on different grounds including trade union membership).
- Recognition of discrimination by Russian courts;

- Consequences of discrimination for the violator;
 - The case of flight attendants vs Aeroflot.
3. Temporary agency work and further regulation of other forms of provision of personnel.
- A new draft law is ready, and it contains certain points directed to total malfunction of any guarantees for workers.
4. Gender pay gap and the predetermination of social roles for men and women
- National Action Strategy for Women 2017-2022;
 - ILO observations;
 - The case of Svetlana Medvedeva.

3. How to defend the rights of refugees and migrants. The impact of Brexit and EU policy.

- **Frances Webber, Institute of Race Relations: Brexit, refugees and the hostile environment**

CV

Frances Webber, a former barrister who specialised in immigration, refugee and human rights, is vice-chair of the Institute of Race Relations, an honorary vice-president of the Haldane Society and a member of the Helen Bamber Foundation Human Rights Advisory Group. She is the author of *Borderline justice: the fight for refugee and migrant rights* (Pluto, 2012).

Abstract:

In both the UK and the EU, hard-line hostile environment/ exclusionary principles dominate in refugee policy. The political imperative to exclude and deter spontaneous refugees / undocumented migrants has led to a bonfire of rights and values, deals with dictators, and a silent, largely hidden humanitarian crisis, with those who have escaped bombardment in Syria and slave houses and torture camps in Libya, face squalor and destitution in Europe. As civil society steps in with rescue and aid, volunteer humanitarian actors are increasingly criminalised.

- **Wendy Pettifer LIB MA UK Solicitor and Legal Shelter Calais Legal Advisor: The effect of Brexit on refugees and forced migrants**

CV

Solicitor

I have been a legal aid lawyer since the 80s working mainly with migrants on destitution issues in the public law context in Hackney. I fight for social justice. I have a MA in Refugee Studies. I am a founder member and Trustee of Hackney Migrant Centre Social Workers without Borders and the Greek Solidarity Campaign. I participated in overseas missions in Egypt (refugee project), Tunisia (the expulsion of the Ben Ali regime in 2011) and Kenya (the upper Tribunal case of AM and AM against the forced return of Somalis)

I spent 4 months in the Jungle in Calais in 2016 working on take charge requests for children to come to the UK and have returned many times. I also volunteer with Refugee Legal Service Athens advising migrants. I am a JC supporter and am in Hackney Labour party. I am an active member of the Haldane Society and it's European sister organisation ELDH

Abstract: from Lionel Crusoe presented by Wendy Pettifer in his absence due to illness

Lionel Crusoe lawyer with the Paris Bar. I've worked with NGOs from Calais in the context of different legal challenges they have raised since February 2016 to improve living conditions for migrants in Calais.

For this presentation I will focus on the question of control of the French/UK border and the situation of migrants present in France wanting to come to the UK.

What concerns French lawyers is how the situation on the North (European) coast will develop once the UK is no longer part of the EU.

I am concerned that the operation of Dublin 111, one of the (Eu) regulations which allows an asylum seeker to make a take charge request that their application for asylum be transferred to the UK will no longer operate after Brexit.

French lawyers will probably lose a useful tool in their arguments to help migrants wanting to go to the UK (bearing in mind the interesting jurisprudence of the administrative Courts in Paris and Lille on family reunion procedures in the perspective of the decisions of the Upper Tribunal).

But I would say that in spite of that, the departure of the UK from the EU should not cause great disruption in the French/UK North coast border control for several reasons (weak procedures on family reunion procedures based on Dublin 111 in France, the fact that the UK is already outside Schengen, bi-lateral agreements already exist between France and the UK to protect the border and take care of vulnerable people etc.).

Access to the UK has not improved. I take the examples of the closure of the Sangatte Centre and the destruction of the slum on la Lande de Calais (the Jungle) (the example of the CAOMIEs) to show that, rather than trying to develop mechanisms to extend law shared by the two states, the French and the British often resort to ad hoc or provisional methods to organise entry to the UK of migrants present on French territory.

The UK is still a signatory to several human rights treaties like the European Convention on Human Rights and fundamental freedoms or the European Convention on the rights of the child. These Conventions can perhaps sometimes be useful in putting pressure on states to create in the future new re-unification demands.

However, conditions of live on the French/UK border will probably stay the same. Being part of the EU has not, in effect, ever helped to improve conditions of life on the frontier.

Its only if we have political change that things may improve.

The elected representatives of the North coast (particularly the mayor of Calais and the president of the Region of Hauts de France would like to renegotiate the le Touquet agreement. In May 2017 Theresa May indicated that she would also like to do so.

- **Karl Kopp, Director of European Affairs, PRO ASYL, Frankfurt/M.: Perspectives for the defence of Human Rights for Refugees in Europe. The impact of Brexit.**

CV

Karl Kopp represents PRO ASYL in the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE). He is responsible for media relations in the European context and for PRO ASYL's Europe-wide connections with human rights and refugee organisations.

- **Alison Harvey, barrister, London: The trafficked and the new undocumented post Brexit**

CV

Alison Harvey is a barrister and has specialised in work in immigration since the mid-1990s, representing individuals and working on policy and legislation, in the UK and abroad. She publishes and lectures widely on nationality, immigration, asylum and free movement law. Her most recent publication is 'A Guide to the Immigration Act 2016', with Zoe Harper, published by Bloomsbury Professional and she writes for the Free Movement blog. She is the chair of trustees of Kalayaan, which works with overseas domestic workers.

She is a former General Secretary and Legal Director of the Immigration Law Practitioners' Association and in that capacity has done extensive work on Brexit, including providing evidence to parliamentary committees, briefing parliamentarians on the EU Withdrawal Bill, training practitioners and representing the organisation at meetings with government, representatives of the EU institutions and NGOs, work which she now continues in her personal capacity.

Abstract: This presentation will consider those third country nationals currently exercising rights under EU law who currently look most likely to find themselves on the wrong side of any Brexit settlement and to swell the ranks of the undocumented. It will consider what would need to be put in place to protect them against the worst forms of labour exploitation, including trafficking and forced labour, were the UK to leave the EU. In so doing it will examine the protection EU law and procedures afford over and above that provided by domestic law and the European Convention on Human Rights against the worst forms of labour exploitation of third country nationals.

- 16h00 – 16h15 Coffee break

16h15 – 18h00

4. European Democracy and human rights – between (Br)Exit and the rule of exception (How to develop European Democracy, how to fight non-democratic developments in EU states;):

- **Prof. Andreas Fisahn, Bielefeld: : The lack of democracy and the future of the union**

CV

8.10.1960: Date of birth

1981-1987: studies of jurisprudence, philosophy, politics and history.

1992: Dr. jur. (mark awarded: Magna cum Laude) Title of the thesis: „Eine Kritische Theorie des Rechts – Zur Diskussion der Staats- und Rechtstheorie von Franz L. Neumann“ (A Critical Theory of Law - A Discussion of Franz L. Neumann's Theory of State and Law).

2001: Habilitation Venia legendi: Public law, including European Law; Theory of Law; title of the habilitation thesis: „Demokratie und Öffentlichkeitsbeteiligung“ (Democracy and Public Participation).

Since 2003: Professor for public law at the University of Bielefeld.

Recent Publication:

2016: Die Saat des Kadmos – Staat, Demokratie und Kapitalismus, Münster (The seed of Cadmos – state, democracy and capitalism)

2017: Hinter verschlossenen Türen – halbierte Demokratie, Hamburg (Behind closed doors, halved democracy)

Abstract:

Andreas Fisahn is analyzing the constructional deficiencies of the European Treaties. These deficiencies are producing a lack of democracy. Fisahn suggests to distinguish the procedural and the material side of the lack. The first concerns the election systems and the competences of European institutions. The material lack of democracy is recurring on the determination of policies in the Lisbon Treaties, which preclude the change of policies in accordance with the rules of the constitution. The conclusion is obvious: a fundamental, democratic change of the treaties is necessary. But Fisahn points out, that the political situation does not give hope for such a change. So he discusses suggestions for a step by step change and resistances against a move of the Union to a democratic organisation founded on solidarity.

- **Prof. Steve Peers, Essex**

- **Dr. Marco Inglese, Faculty of Law, University of Fribourg,, Switzerland, The European Citizens' Initiative: an effective tool to boost democratic participation?**

CV

Dr. Marco Inglese is holder of an Excellence Grant of the Swiss Confederation to carry out postdoctoral researches on collaborative economy at the Institut de Droit Européen, Faculty of Law, University of Fribourg (2017-2018).

Prior to move to Switzerland, Marco worked at the School of Politics and International Relations, University College Dublin, where he was staff member of a large-scale European project dealing with EU citizenship and focusing on the European Ombudsman (2016-2017).

Marco was Assistant Professor of International and European Law at the China Europe School of Law, China University of Political Science and Law, Beijing (2015 and 2016) where he was junior lecturer too (2011, 2012).

Marco also worked at the Faculty of Law, University of Sarajevo, where he conducted postdoctoral researches on the right to health at the crossroad between EU and international law (2015-2016).

Marco interned at the Secretariat General of the European Commission (2014) drafting reports on State aid and infringement procedures as well as at the TMC Asser Institute (The Hague, 2010) where he was research assistant mostly covering issues regarding EU environmental law and the WTO.

Dr. Marco Inglese holds a joint PhD in European and Public Law (University of Bologna and University of Strasbourg, 2014). A substantial part of his PhD thesis was developed at the Faculty of Law, University of Strasbourg, where he was visiting researcher (2012, 2013). Marco's PhD thesis dealt with EU health law with a decisive focus on patients' mobility and access to equitable healthcare as well as health-related fundamental rights. During the preparation of his PhD thesis, Marco was teaching assistant of EU law, Faculty of Law, University of Bologna. In addition, Marco holds an MA in International Law (University of Bologna, 2010) and a JD in Law (University of Bologna, 2009).

Marco is often invited as guest speaker of seminars, lectures and conferences. His main research interests are European Union law, EU health law, EU internal market, EU fundamental rights as well as public international law and law of international organizations.

Marco can be contacted at marco.inglese@hotmail.it.

Abstract:

Citizens' legislative initiatives are not uncommon in sovereign States and are usually established through national constitutions. Following this pattern, the Treaty of Lisbon introduced for the first time the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) as a tool to empower EU citizens to invite the Commission to propose a legal act to implement the Treaty. In order to do so, several administrative requirements must be fulfilled, most importantly, first, the proposed legal act must fall within the scope of the Commission's powers (phase one) and, second, one million statements of support must be collected (phase two). Should these two cumulative conditions be met, the Commission is required to express its legal and political views on the subject matter of the ECI (phase three). The administrative procedure surrounding ECIs gave rise to a steady stream of judgments, an ex officio investigation of the European Ombudsman and an intense academic debate. Furthermore, associations and NGOs have expressed disappointments on the Commission's management of ECIs' lifecycle. Since 2012, only four ECIs have completed all the three phases of the administrative procedure.

Against this background, my speech will be structured as follows. First, it will introduce the main mechanisms and criticalities surrounding ECIs. Taking stock of the growing body of General Court's judgments, it will sketch out the three main phases of an ECI: the boundaries of the Commission's powers and the identification of the subject matter, the collection of statements of support and, finally, the Commission's duty to follow up an ECI. Second, it will delve into a critical assessment of the Commission's practice, a practice so strict that has, to date, basically hindered ECIs to express all their potentialities. Indeed, it is not a coincidence that Regulation 211/2011 - the so called ECI Regulation - is currently under revision. Third, it will focus on the three ECIs – currently in phase 2 - linked to Brexit: Retaining European Citizenship, EU Citizenship for Europeans: United in Diversity in Spite of jus soli and jus sanguinis and European Free Movement Instrument. In conclusion, I will argue that ECIs are an important instrument to empower EU citizens to have their say in the EU institutions' agenda setting, thereby enhancing the level of democratic participation in the EU. However, this democratic effort should be backed by the European Parliament, an actor to date utterly silent.

- **Julian Bild, Solicitor, Anti-trafficking and Labour Exploitation Unit (speaking in a personal capacity):
The EU: A help or hindrance?**

18h00 - 18h30 Closing: Thomas Schmidt ELDH Secretary General

After the conference:

Some of us will go to The Old Nick pub: 20-22 Sandland St, London, WC1R 4PZ straight after to continue, feel free to join us.