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## **International co-operation in the Danske Bank Group – with support from the EU**

The increasing internationalisation of the Danske Bank Group has urged the local unions representing employees in the Danske Bank Group to intensify their international co-operation. The most concrete result of this has been the creation of the Danske Bank Group Works Council and the creation of Danske Unions (until recently Danske Union Group), which is a formalised co-operation between the local unions in Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Ireland, Northern Ireland and Finland.

For some time now, Danske Unions has wanted to strengthen the employee influence on an international level. That is why Danske Unions asked the Financial Services Union in Denmark (FSU-DK) to help work out a project and apply for support from the European Commission.

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November 2007 the European Commission sent a letter to FSU-DK and Danske Unions in which they informed that they had decided to support the project.

The FSU-DK has received a project grant of around EUR 120.000 from EU. The project has a total turnover of around EUR 150.000. Some 20 per cent of the project costs will be covered by FSU-DK and the project partners themselves.

### **Objectives**

The main objectives of the project are to strengthen the international co-operation between employee representatives in the different countries and the co-operation between the employee representatives and the management of the Danske Bank Group.

The participants of the project will also obtain knowledge regarding the conditions of employee representation in the Baltic countries. This is to prepare the participants for a possible future co-operation with employee representatives from these countries, where the Danske Bank Group has approximately 1.200 employees.

### **Participants and partners**

The participants of the project are the Danske Bank Group (represented by the HR-management) and the local unions representing Danske Bank employees in Denmark, Norway (although not covered by the EU-funding), Sweden, Ireland, Northern Ireland and Finland.

The national unions (Finance Services Unions in Denmark (FSU-DK), Norway (FSU-NO) and Sweden (FSU-SE), SUORA from Finland and IBOA from Ireland and Northern Ireland) are partners in the project. The NFU – the confederation of the Nordic Bank, Finance and Insurance trade unions is also partner.



And finally the Danske Bank Group is not only a participant but also an active and contributing partner in the project. Senior Executive Vice President and Member of the Executive Committee in Danske Bank Group, Lars Mørch explains the reason for the Danske Bank Group's active participation in the project: "By participating in the project we follow up our good cooperation with employee representatives and the unions. By participating we also follow our policy about Corporate Social Responsibility".

The project is managed and administrated by the FSU-DK with support from Danske Kreds (the local Danske Bank union in Denmark).

“Today we are a part of a globalised world of finance” said the president of UNI-Finance, NFU and FSU-DK, Allan Bang. He stresses, that “building efficient systems for employee representation and co-operation among the elected employee representatives at the company level is necessary. We have an ambition that a trans-national company with a central management that speaks with ‘one voice’ should be met by a strong trans-national group of employee representatives also speaking with one common voice.”



Allan Bang also stresses the importance of the cooperation between the national and international trade unions/confederation. “Therefore we want to put resources into the project, and we find it very positive, that the EU-commission supports the project in Danske Bank Group”, he concludes.

The president of Danske Unions and Danske Kreds in FSU-DK, Per Alling Toubro agrees with Allan Bang. Per Alling Toubro explains the situation seen from a local Danske Bank point of view: “In a decade the Danske Bank Group has gone from being a national Danish bank to a multinational financial company with activities in 15 countries. The number of employees has grown; there is a greater geographical dispersion and longer distances between employee and central management. This challenges the system of employee representation in the company. And therefore it is our ambition with this project, to qualify, strengthen and formalise the employer-employee cooperation and employee involvement within the Danske Bank Group.”



### **Activities in the project**

The project will run from November 2007 to October 2008 and consists of three phases: a preparatory phase, a main phase and a follow-up phase.

The preparatory phase has two activities, building a home page, and holding a seminar for the employee representatives in Danske Unions, which is the co-operation between the local unions.

The main phase contains a seminar for all the Board members in the local unions and representatives from the national and international trade unions.

The follow up phase contains a seminar with focus on employee representation in the Baltic countries. The participants are the members of Danske Unions.

You can read about the idea with the activities in the working program.

### **Follow the project**

Throughout the project newsletters will be produced. You can find these on different home pages – amongst others this one – [www.nfufinance.org](http://www.nfufinance.org) – and Danske Unions’ home page which is under construction right now as part of the project, and thereby supported by the EU Commission.