

## **“Weltumspannend arbeiten” (“Global working”)**

“Global working” is an NGO founded in 1996 as a “development policy project” of the Austrian Trade Union Federation. We are working to establish an understanding for social justice by focusing global relations. “Global working” works on informational and educational activities, cooperations, exchange projects and international networking and supports encounters between workers and activists all over the world.

“Global working” is an expert organization on international labour issues and workers’ rights and has the agenda to inform the Austrian workers and the civil society about what is going on in other parts of the world, especially in developing countries, how there are the living and working conditions, how workers are exploited, who is responsible for that and how the European civil society can help to improve the situation.

One of our main working issues is the analysis of the globalized labour market in times of neoliberal economic system. In the last decade we focused especially on the developments in the countries of the European Union, Brazil, Mexico, Philippines, Republic of Moldova and China.

In this context we are mainly doing development education to raise public awareness in Austria. People have to get informed about the exploitation of labour, the bad working standards, child labour, missing labour laws and the rejection of trade unionists, NGOs and activists.

Therefore we plan and organize seminars, workshops and trainings on the issues of globalization, international labour rights, social justice and social security and produce and provide educational materials like films, documentations and exhibitions.

We also do lobbying for international labour standards, try to build up a network of activists, join campaigns for fair labour conditions and fair trade and we want to bring as many people as possible to join our ideology. We are trying to improve labour standards and social security in developing countries together with NGOs, activists and trade unionists.

“Global working” works on international networking and supports encounters between workers all over the world to give trade union work in Austria a more international perspective.

We already have organized encounters between Austrian and Mexican and Austrian and Brazilian workers. Our new aim is to bring Austrian trade union members and members of workers councils together with Chinese labour right organizations and activists. Therefore we are organizing a journey to China in March 2010. Many Austrian companies have outsourced their production to China or have Joint Ventures in China. The participants of this journey, who are all members of workers councils of such Austrian companies or trade union members, are going to visit the factories in China to see how working conditions are there and if there are any worker’s representatives. We also want to meet labour right organizations, who can give us detailed information about what is going on in the factories, how working conditions are and what the organizations are able to do.

“Global working” further provides an essential contribution to a better understanding of structural mechanisms and cultural differences.

Through exploration of politics, history, economy, society and culture of various countries, images, stereotypes and prejudices about other cultures are questioned, to make a sustainable contribution to respect and tolerance others.

Furthermore, employees and workers shall be given motivation and ability to support colleagues from other countries in their aspiration to “fair working conditions”. We face the importance of development issues in trade union activity and have anchored this work in the surrounding of trade unions in Austria.

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Claudia Schürz, born in 1981, is the coordinator of the non-profit-organization “Global working”, which was established in 1996 as a “development policy association” of the Austrian Trade Union Federation. After graduating in Political Science she started working to establish an understanding for social justice by focusing global relations. “Global working” works on informational and educational activities, cooperations, exchange projects and international networking and supports encounters between workers all over the world.