

Transnationalizing Unions: The Case of the UAW and the IG Metall

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This is a case study of the processes that have put the transnational cooperation of the German IG Metall and the UAW in the U.S. on a new trajectory. It is a template for the challenges unions face in adapting their self-interest toward building transnational solidarity and being able to leverage global corporate power in defense of workers' interests across borders. Using the power resource approach, it highlights the importance of developing capabilities toward understanding and strategically mobilizing associational and institutional resources towards achieving a more lasting and effective mode of transnational trade union cooperation.

The case study focuses on the initiation and preparation phase of a more intensive cooperation, culminating in a formal agreement to establish a Transnational Partnership Initiative (TPI) in 2014. Although there were no organizing gains in this phase, it was crucial for building trust and mutual understanding, as well as for actively promoting a broadly-based anchoring of the TPI policy-wise in both unions. The case study's conclusions are generally positive on this count, yet preliminary as the overall project is work in progress and its basis of support beyond the two unions (societal power) still untested.

Download the full case study here (PDF)

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See also

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See also (in French)

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