

An Assessment of NUMSA's Attempt to Develop its Political and Organisational Independence, 2012-2016

Thursday 19 July 2018, by [DI PAOLA Miriam](#) (Date first published: 1 August 2017).

Abstract

The paper evaluates progress made in the past three years regarding the implementation of the various resolutions adopted at the NUMSA (National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa) Special National Congress in December 2013, when the union withdrew its support from the ruling party, the African National Congress. Widely known as the »NUMSA moment«, it signalled a commitment to develop a new independent working class politics to be pursued in the sphere of production as well as in broader society. NUMSA has been transformed from an industrial-specific to modern general union, and, despite difficult economic conditions, particularly in manufacturing, has steadily increased its membership. Moreover, it has aimed to contest the public discourse from a class perspective and assert a presence in society. Results have been mixed: while the union has made impressive achievements in terms of membership and in overcoming media isolation as well as in asserting its position in the public discourse, further work is needed in specific areas. In particular, internal unity needs to be built and officials have to overcome divisive forms of factionalism. Secondly, NUMSA has been less successful on the societal power front, especially in relation to the establishment of sustained relations with working-class community organizations.

Full-length Study (PDF): An Assessment of NUMSA's Attempt to Develop its Political and Organisational Independence, 2012-2016 by Miriam di Paola
<http://www.fes.de/cgi-bin/gbv.cgi?id=13638&ty=pdf>

After a difficult liberation, South Africa's largest trade union ponders the future by Miriam di Paola
<https://www.fes.de/index.php?eID=dumpFile&t=f&f=31096&token=517d7536f844deeb83f5cb08c2d33d12e6661cb3>

Después de un difícil proceso de liberación, el mayor sindicato sudafricano considera sus opciones a futuro by Miriam di Paola
<https://www.fes.de/index.php?eID=dumpFile&t=f&f=31090&token=89f2f119612e4b4c0de80484b6b941fc00b172b0>

Miriam Di Paola

[Click here](#) to subscribe to our weekly newsletters in English and or French. You will receive one email every Monday containing links to all articles published in the last 7 days.

P.S.

Freidrich Ebert Stiftung (FES)

<http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/13638.pdf>