

HOW DOES TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGES AFFECT
TURKISH TRADE UNIONS?

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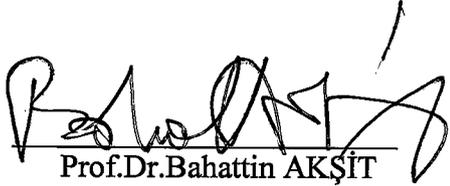
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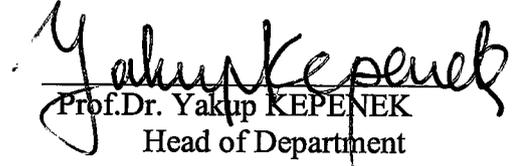
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ABSTRACT

HOW DOES TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGES
AFFECT TURKISH TRADE UNIONS?

Kepenek, Emek Barış

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This thesis aims at examining the recent conditions of trade unions in terms of technological developments and the Turkish Trade Unions are studied as a case. The technological developments, especially after the Second World War, influenced many social, political and economical aspects all around the world. The working life or production processes have also affected very much from technological developments. A new type of production and work organization have emerged. Today, trade unions try to cope with these changes. But, the problems of Turkish Trade Unions are much more than the other unions of the developed world. Because, Turkish Unions have also many political problems in addition to technological ones

Key Words: Technology, Production Process, Trade Union, Democratization

ÖZ

TEKNOLOJİK DEĞİŞİMLER TÜRK SENDİKALARINI NASIL ETKİLEDİ?

Kepenek, Emek Barış

Yüksek Lisans, Bilim ve Teknoloji Politikası Çalışmaları
Tez Yöneticisi: Dr. Erkan ERDİL

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Bu tez sendikaların teknolojik değişimler karşısında geldikleri son durumu araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Türkiye sendikalarında örnek olarak çalışılmıştır. Teknolojik değişimler, özellikle İkinci Dünya Savaşından sonra, bütün dünyada bir çok sosyal, politik ve ekonomik değişime sebep oldular. Çalışma yaşamı ve üretim süreçleri teknolojik gelişmelerden çok etkilendiler. Yeni üretim şekli ve çalışma organizasyonu ortaya çıktı. Günümüzde, sendikalar bu değişimlerle başa çıkmaya çalışıyorlar. Ama, Türk sendikalarının problemleri diğer gelişmiş ülke sendikalarına göre çok daha fazla. Çünkü, Türk Sendikaları, teknolojinin yarattığı problemlerin ötesinde bir çok politik sorunla da karşı karşıyalar.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Teknoloji, Üretim Süreci, Sendika, Demokratikleşme

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The world went through major changes during the second half of 20th century, especially after the 1980's. The economic, politic and social developments have influenced individuals and societies differently. As a whole, the world economy is experiencing a significant change in production technologies, labour processes, organizational principles and inter firm relations. (Duruiz- Yentürk, 1995) It is obvious that conditions of working class have also been affected in a negative way. More specifically organisations of workers, ie. trade unions, are trying to survive. It can be stated that technological change is pillar or the source of one of the main reasons that lie behind these changes.

This work aims at analysing the primary aspects of influences that the technological advancements inflict on the working life in general and in Turkey in particular. After a brief historical background about the interrelationships between technology and the trade unions, recent developments will be discussed rather extensively. These general points will be used within a more specific case, which is the Turkish situation.

For the overall framework, the related literature will be surveyed selectively. The evolution of the main functions of unions that are related to technological advancements and the changing nature of the production structures will be summarised.

Turkey is not a leading country from the point of view of the technological progress; it is rather a follower. Since the core of this study is to work out the effects of technological developments on the unionisation and working life in Turkey, some Turkish unions should be investigated closely. Achieving this target requires a more detailed research. For this reason, some selected direct interviews, which would provide a sound basis for the subject being studied. These interviews are undertaken in the three main unions, which are considered as influenced from the technological change mostly. These three unions are The Revolutionary Labour Confederation (DİSK), Petroleum, Chemical, Rubber Workers' Union of Turkey (Petrol-İş) and Rubber, Petroleum and Chemical Workers' Union (Lastik-İş).

The second chapter presents a brief survey on the relationships between technology and workers in both unionisation and the work process with more emphasis on the recent developments such as the post-fordism.

Development of the trade unions in Turkey is the subject of the third chapter, where historical background is accompanied by some facts and figures. After a short account on how ETUC is responding to the new technological changes the interviews of the Turkish unions are summarised in the fourth chapter. Finally the fifth chapter gives the concluding remarks.

CHAPTER II

TECHNOLOGY AND UNIONS: A BRIEF BACKGROUND

II.1.An Overview

It can be argued that technology has been the most influential concept all over the world in recent years. It can be said that technology is the motor or the leading force of economic and social changes.

Technology has been in the lives of human beings since the beginning of the world history. It is well known that the world history began with the invention of writing which is by itself a result of neo-lithic revolution. In fact, the transformation from the primitive communal living to the settled societies is a result of improvements in production methods. The prehistoric ages of human history are divided into periods, such as Stone Ages, etc, according to the materials and techniques that are used. Similarly, the beginning of use of horse shoe or iron plow has changed the feudal production structures.

Although the effects of technology over the economic, social, cultural and political lives of societies can be seen during the whole human history, the Industrial Revolution when the steam engine and capital are united for more profit is considered as the turning point (Pavitt, 1997).

It is argued that “the heart of Industrial Revolution was the interrelated succession of technological changes combined with the new forms of industrial

organisation. The main technological changes were (1) the substitution of mechanical devices for human labor and skill; (2) the replacement of animal and strength by inanimate power; (3) the improved getting and working of raw materials. The main organisational changes were associated with the factory system of production, worker relationship and increase in the size of productive units". But Industrial Revolution was more than these, the means of major social and political transformation. It created new classes and new relations in societies. (Pavitt, 1997)

Wage labour and productive capital are the most by-products of the Industrial Revolution. Since their interests are conflicting, there should be means and ways of solving this contradiction. Technology is one of the factors, which increase what is called the relative surplus value, ie more efficient use of labour power and thus increasing the rate of profit provides a way of solving this contradiction for the benefit of capitalists. On the other hand, in Marxian view, technology is a force of production to produce more surplus product, more productivity and rate of profit for capitalists. (Ansal, 1994)

To limit the degree of exploitation after countless hardships and difficulties, to reduce the work day, to increase wages and to improve working conditions, labourers were able to get unified under the title of trade unions that will be studied in the next section.

II.2. Reasons for the Recent Changes

As it is known, after the Second World War, the Golden Age of capitalism began. Most of the European countries and Japan were devastated and their peoples were in ruins after the War. Although the US army fought, because of both economic and geographical reasons, its country could stay away from it. After the War, the

USA gained dominance and became the leader of the capitalist world easily. The War and its aftermath have forced the US to give priority to scientific researches and thus technological developments. At the same time, the other countries tried to cure the ills of the War and to improve the quality of life of their people. But, their economies were experiencing difficulties. For this reason, they became dependent to the US. In addition to that, the US was the main economic, political and military might of the so-called Cold War period, which continued for about 45 years after the Second World War. Since the socialist world is considered as the main threat to capitalism, all the conditions were relevant to a rapid development of capitalism.

Simultaneously, the policy of a welfare state, which was started around the 1920's and 1930 and considered as the main policy device against socialism, was well established. The welfare state had begun to take important roles in every aspect of the society. With social policies, harmonious conditions were created among the working class, government, capitalists and the rest of the society. The working class in general, and trade unions in particular gained many social and economic rights. In the developed countries, wage earners' share in the national income increased after the 1950s. Unions became very powerful. The number of union members increased. They could be organised very well and were having successful collective bargaining agreements. With the practice of political democracy, trade unions were able to be very much in harmony with the system in general. This harmony is also called as cooperation. Communist parties were against that system just because they were arguing that welfare state was a new way of exploitation of capitalism and passivity of the labour.

The welfare state practice of the developed world began to lose strength after 1970's, because of the big economic crisis. The system could not deal with the crisis

in the production processes. With the incredible rise in the petroleum prices, every country had entered into economic slumps stemming from the energy supply and related issues, such as the balance of international payments. On the other side, there were new developments from the Far East and Japan. Japanese made a great entrance to the world markets. The Western world was panicked and became aware of the dangers of the rising power of the competition. They tried to take some measures against it. The USA had also faced with the danger that its leadership was being threatened.

The developed capitalist economies could not carry out their welfare state character with these developments as it was before the crisis. The full employment could not be kept either. The governments became obliged to accept the existence of a steady unemployment rate around more than 5 per cent, even higher.

Under these circumstances more liberal economic policy measures were undertaken. In order to adjust the economy to the new market conditions, all the barriers blocking the free market economy had to be removed. All policies had to be reformulated. According to that, the social policies of the welfare state period were seen as the main barrier over the economic growth and development.

Firstly, in the USA -Reaganism- and in England -Thatcherism- took many steps to trim the rights of workers, especially in the case of social policies. Governments of these countries started to support capitalists more openly. Such a policy gained momentum in all non-socialist countries all around the world.

Secondly, with the help of technological developments, capitalists of developed countries showed an incredible progress, while the welfare state came almost to its end. The capitalists' share in national incomes increased whereas working class and also traditional sectors, like manufacturing, iron and steel, had

significant losses. Besides, the capitalists wanted the governments to decrease the share of social expenditures such as education, health etc. in their budgets and in the national income as well.

Thirdly, the fall of socialism around 1990 resulted in the removal of all the barriers in front of capitalism. Therefore, capitalism began to spread to all parts of the world. (Koray, 1996)

The new period was labelled as “globalization”. In this period, in developed countries, mass production lost its importance and entered into a crisis. Instead of industrial sector, the services in general and information and communication sectors in particular were gaining importance. Thus, the flow of knowledge became more profound and influential.

The dominance of internationalised capital and other developments forced less developed economies to open up. Developing economies began to be integrated into the world market. At that time, a somewhat brutal competition among the economies started. With the help of technological progress, capital became more profitable and thus powerful. Furthermore, capitalists demanded to remove all the barriers in front of them. It is obvious that the most important of these barriers were the workers’ organisations and the rights of the working class.

Today, there is an increasing tendency for monopolisation all around the world. Monopolies have been seeking for newer markets all around the world. They want more free international trade and also movements of capital to be freed. Especially the USA and Japan took many steps to that end. In order to become stronger in the market, the countries established some regional markets or trade blocks, ie. European Union (EU), North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA), Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN). In that way, they

could increase their share in the world market and protect themselves against their rivals. These institutions have helped very much to the free flow of the capital. These countries started to exploit the new markets and increase their share in the world markets.

The changes of the world market have seriously influenced the lives of working class. With the introduction of liberal policies, state intervention to economic and social life has decreased day by day. The capitalists have seen the trade unions as a barrier that prevents the development, because, trade unions have been the main organisations, which cope with the pressure over the workers in terms of wages and working conditions and thus have been main barriers that prevent the maximisation of profits. For that reason, capitalists have used every mean to harm the union power.

The giant monopolies provide new methods in order to cope with the competition and the changing market demands. The main method is the use of new technology. The restructuring of the production process and the possibilities that are created by the use of new technology, have created a new understanding of industrialisation. Therefore, instead of mass production, a new type of production has come into existence. This new type of production has to meet the changing demands of the new market. The structure of the market has become more flexible and the choices in the market have increased. Fordism has been far from meeting the needs of that new market. With the help of technology, a new type of organisation of production has become into existence: the post-fordism.

Moreover, the competition between the multinationals forced the capital to search cheap labour force and to find out sources of cheap raw materials in order to maximise its profit. Moreover, capitalists were able to find these sources in

developing or in underdeveloped countries. For that reason, all types of capital, productive, trading and money capital, began to move across the countries. They used the globalisation concept in order to realize and legitimize their sole aim, i.e. profit making. While capital was able to use all means, including bribing, the underdeveloped countries had no power to resist to the faster movements of capital. It is argued that this short term capital flow gave some advantages to small countries, such as easing the difficulties of foreign payments or employment creating in a limited extent. But this gain is minimal because the bulk of capital gains has always been taken by the capitalists. As a matter of fact, the super powers have had no interest in using their capital in favour of underdeveloped countries.

Capital movements became internationalized day by day. This new system also changed the structure of production and the work processes.. The whole production process has now been broken up and realized in different places; i.e. the whole proces has become decentralized. In other words, unlike the Fordist mass production where the whole, mass production was realized in one big factory, in the new system, this feature dissappeared. While the structure of the production process changed, the working life of the people changed too. The main change was seen in the quality and in the relations of the labor. The use of flexible labor seriously influenced the workers. The solidarity and the organizations of the workers were weakened.

The capital flew to underdeveloped countries for cheap labor. In these countries, the capability of the workers' organizations to resist the harmful influence of international capital is also very weak. Their weakness come not only from the low level of industrialisation but also from the legal limitations on the union rights. That means fewer problems and more profits for the capitalists. If

underdeveloped or developing countries like Turkey can not make proper counter-acting policies against them, these capital movements make them more dependent to developed ones.

In order to secure the new order of the conservative policies, many measures have been implemented. In short the Reaganism in the US and the Thatcherism in the UK replaced the Welfare State. What is called the brutal capitalism was back again.

II.3. Some Aspects of Trade Unions

II.3.1. Introduction

Trade unions are one of the most important organizations that affect the social, political and economical life of every developed and developing society. They came into existence with the emergence of the working class or the birth of capitalism as a new production system around the end of the 18th century. They are organized or established in order to protect the rights of workers. For this reason, depending on the quantity and quality of the working population, trade unions have a crucial role in the society.

Throughout the last 150 years, trade unions or protective organisations of workers played a key role not only in the life of the working class but also in the whole society that they function. Of course, their role was determined by the existing objective and subjective conditions. At the beginning, most of them were charity organisations, some of them were organised as education centres or as solidarity cooperatives. With the development of capitalism, these institutions changed qualitatively and were called as “trade unions”. As capitalism developed, unions became broader organisations, which protected the rights of the workers against the capitalist class in general or their employers in particular. The burden of unions is

broader than this, since some interest groups other than capitalists and/or governments may behave against trade unions.

The first members of the unions were skilled workers as unskilled ones could not become a member of the unions. In 19th century, the organisations of workers' resistance by the trade unions brought about the first legal regulation of the working day in the direction of laying down its maximum length. The legal limit of the working day was fixed at first as 12 hours with clashes. The First of May fightings in the USA in 1894 is an example of those clashes, the duration of the legal work day was reduced to 8 hours around the beginning of the 20th century. (Koç, 1998)

Trade unions are the organisations that are established in order to improve the rights and benefits of workers. The targets and policies of the unions are depending particular or/and general interests of their members.

Trade unions can be classified, depending on their jurisdictional qualifications:

*Industrial unions: They want to protect the workers who work on the same profession.

*Local unions: They protect the workers who work in the same work place

*General trade unions: They are organised with the participation of different sub-branches of the economy.

* Federation: These are the higher organisations of the trade unions

*Confederation: These are the organisations of the federations and are organised in the national and international levels.

Trade unions protect the rights of their workers in two ways:

1- Collective bargaining agreements and related tools.

2- Lobbying for changing the legal framework about the minimum wages, daily working hours, job security, sanitary conditions in the work place, health, social security, retirement, participation in management, etc. (Koç, 1998)

II.3.2- What about Trade Unions in the Process of Change?

It is obvious that the technology related new changes such as globalisation, privatisation, flexible production, etc. have created many problems for the trade unions especially in developed European countries. Therefore a short analysis about the impacts of these changes over the labour process should be provided.

As it is well documented, in recent years, capitalism has passed from a restructuring period. This period, especially caused by the internationalisation of capital and a rapid technological change, has had many effects over the production and labour processes. There are two main events that have impacts over labour process:

- 1- The international flow of capital, especially the form of money capital
- 2- The increase of the impact of technology over the production process

With the rise of technology, the economy of large scale production and mass consumption was replaced by small scale and flexible production, which can respond to the changing demands of the market, that is, to the new consumption patterns. The new technology created a situation where responding to the more specific individual demand become relatively easier. Competition for more profit forced firms to utilise all the possible ways and means to respond to these individual consumption trends which are also being reshaped by the technological developments continuously. In order to maximise their profits, producers became much more individual consumer oriented during the recent decades.

This new development caused structural change in the labour process with its new features, such as an increase in the demand for high-skilled work force. The creation of new types of occupations and work practices resulted in new types of work force. The most important feature of the new order is the differentiated market that depends on the competition of quality and the development of new type of production for that market and also the rise of service sector and the structural changes of the division of labour.

The production process was divided into segments and minimalised. The small scale production units were born with the help of the new technology. These changes also caused important problems for the work force. The aim of employers to decrease the cost of labour force created a big pressure over labourers. It could be seen that the flexible use of labour force created new types of work, such as part-time employment, subcontracting, and illegal workers. As a result, the influence of state on economy and labour process was diminished. Social rights of workers were cut off. There are important outcomes of these developments:

- 1- Unemployment has spread out and has gained structural feature in the most developed countries, except the USA, during the second half of 1990s.(Maliye Bak. Yıllık Ekonomik Rapor 2000) In addition to that and probably the most importantly, the USA is the leading place of the new technologies, especially the information and communication technologies well ahead of other advanced countries. With more emphasis on the education and scientific research, the USA is able to be a source of the new technologies. Movements of capital and especially the migration of the educated people from the other countries provide the USA with a big advantage on this point.

- 2- There has been an increase in flexible use of work force, part-time jobs, use of illegal work force, etc.
- 3- Small scale production has gained dominance.
- 4- The capitalists have wanted to make direct relations with workers by neglecting the trade unions.

These developments seriously affected the trade union movement. There were powerful attacks to the existence of unions. Their rights were taken back by the new legislation. By creating new types of work, the ability to become organised for workers was curtailed. The number of union members was decreased and making a collective bargaining became a hard task. The tendency towards de-unionism was put into practice. (FEV Ekonomik Forumu, 1996)

At the beginning, the unions could not exhibit adequate resistance to these changes. They could not become aware of these changes. Beyond that, they accepted the flexible specialisation brought by the new technology to some degree, because, for the efficient use of technology, the employers were in need of high skilled workers. For this reason, the workers, obviously not all of them, began to be trained in their work places. Trade unions wanted to retake their social rights at first. In order to do this, unions have formulated some policies such as;

- * Raising the rate of non- wage payments.
- * Creating pressure to retake their social rights
- * Decreasing the authority of employers in the work place
- * Emphasising the importance of legal measures such as job security, better working and health conditions, etc.
- * Taking part in the processes of bringing and the application of the new technologies

There are two additional vital problems for the unions;

- 1- The Adaptation to the new differentiated structure of labour force
- 2- Finding necessary policies for the efficient union work

In the differentiated labour force, it becomes very hard to establish trade union organisations and they have difficulties in functioning.

In Turkey, conditions are much worse. Since, it is well known that Turkey is a developing country having prolonged social, economic and political problems. Therefore, the impact of these changes which will be analysed later in detail have been much more stronger.

CHAPTER III

A NEW WORK ORGANIZATION: POST-FORDISM

III.1. Post- Fordism in General

Post-Fordism is a type of production which came into scene after 1980's. In the heart of that appearance, there were technological developments and especially the development of the information technology. After the Second World War, with the using of computers, it became very easy to process and disseminate knowledge and information. Knowledge could be processed and used everywhere and very fast. This development gave way to an incredible rise in the intensity of scientific research. Although technology had begun to be used in every aspect of life more and more extensively, its utilisation in the field of economy in general and in the production process in particular is more profound. In about 1980's, Fordism could not cope with the changes in the market demand where consumption process was diversified because of the intensification of competition from Japan and newly industrialized countries. (Duruiz-Yentürk, 1995) The structure of production had to

gain a new phase. Because, the economies in crises needed a new system in the production process, Post-Fordism came into existence.

Instead of machines of mass production –single aim machines-, the machines with multi-aim and which could be programmed whenever and however wanted, are used. These machines were invented with the help of micro-electronics. And these machines also help to producers in saving time. Like machines, labour using them also has become multi dimensional. Raw materials can be used as they are needed and there is no need to have large amounts of stock of output. Such an organisational set up can produce many things simultaneously and can realise many different things at the same time. Thus, they provide maximum productivity. In addition flexibility in the production can be realised. That is to say, with that new model, the producers can give responses to the changing conditions of the market easily. As explained before, with the help of new technologies production process and sales can be arranged according to the desires and incomes of specific consumers. This is the meaning of flexible production. It is obvious that the economies which can cope with the changing conditions of the market, gain the dominance in the world economy.

The flexibility in the relations of production has given way to new relations: industrial design, stock controlling, marketing, finance, total quality management, etc. The production process is now determined according to these notions. The new technology used in the production provided low costs and quick and proper meetings to the changing demands in the market.

The main aspects of that new system are (Özkaplan, 1994):

- Changing the design of product,
- Changing the production process,
- Creating conditions for the intensified production;

- Increasing the qualification of the labour power.

With the coming of the new technology, the old labour force could not be used any more. The quality of labour had to be raised. For this reason, working people is the group that has been most influenced from these changes in the production process. The producers realised savings in labour power with the aim of decreasing the costs and preventing the use of unskilled labour. They decreased the total number of workers.

Another aspect of that new system is to reduce the unqualified products which cause a decrease in the profit. Instead of clearing the unqualified products after production –as it was in Fordism-, it tries to prevent the production errors before and during production process. This new system is called as “total quality management”(TQM). In that system, the workers are educated and forced to use improvements in the production process. Thus, with the rising of profits, the employees keep high productivity levels. Japanese firms began to use the “just-in-time” (JIT) system in the production and thus the continuity of the process is kept and the defective products are cleared during the process. (Özkaplan, 1994)

This new system causes many changes in working life. The scale of production gets smaller at the firm level. With new types of management, collectivity in the firm is increased. The workers are also included in these new management applications. The problems that lie in front of the production are attempted to be solved creating harmonious relations. The workers are given responsibilities and power about the production process. Working conditions change together with the working hours and heterogeneity among workers is created. Wages are determined according to the performance criteria. This difference is the main factor which lessens the solidarity between workers. Firms determine their own future by

establishing long-term plans. Workers are forced to work according to the conditions that are offered by employers.

III.2. Post-Fordist Labor Process

With the fast growing technology, the relations of labour have changed very much. In that system, instead of the difference between workers and employers, the idea of social dialog, cooperation and consensus are taken into consideration. Employer and management become relatively more dominant. Because, a well qualified and multi dimensional worker now tries to make his/her bargaining individually. That is to say, the relationships between employers and employees are more and more dominated by individual behaviours.

While labour relations change, trade unions are influenced very much. They enter a difficult period. They become aware that the old policies are not sufficient any more. New policies have to be formulated.

During the welfare state period, the union movement gained many rights. The employment rate was at the maximum level and the workers made successful organisations. Furthermore, their relations with the government and employers were very smooth, because when they gained many rights, they lost the sense of struggle. In Turkey, labor got many rights in 1960's and they were very active in social, economic and political life of Turkey until 1980. At the end of 1970s and with 1980s, the economies and the production process entered a big impasse.

The market conditions were drastically changing. In order to overcome the problem of impasse and to increase the profit, the countries found the solution of decreasing the public spendings and putting pressures on wages. Social policies were put into a secondary role and the working class was one the most affected class in the

society. Moreover, their rights were seen as the main force that caused social problems and unemployment.

Now, new working conditions are appearing, ie. a new type of management, a new production process...etc. A new sector, in which the organisation of workers is not so easy, is enlarged very much; service sector. Unemployment is reappearing and becoming a chronic problem. Trade unions are seen as the main barrier to profit making. All new policies are made according to this idea. The organised movement of the workers is endangered. In some branches, cheap labour power is used and the working life becomes very flexible. Trade unions lose their power as compared to what they have had before. By using technical and scientific knowledge extensively, a new type of worker, skilled labour is becoming more dominant. Keeping the solidarity between them becomes difficult since the working class is extensively fragmented.

Flexibility causes many problems in the union movement. The main problem is the decreasing influence of the unskilled workers in the production process. From the point of view capitalists, the primary aim in using new technology in production is to decrease the cost of labour power, raise productivity, increase the quality of products, provide good service to consumers and cope with the changes in the market, etc. In this situation, there is no need for the unskilled labour. In addition, direct labour-capital relations are somehow loosened. Some flexible types of work such as subcontracting, unregistered employment, working at home, part-time job, etc are used. These flexible types of labour relations also limit the capability of the organisation of workers. Furthermore, in order to break the solidarity among workers, employers try to create harmonious relations with their employees. In some cases employers give them the right to take part in the decision-making mechanisms

of the firm. But, it is questionable if this type of participation really works. It is certain that some employees “seem” to participate in the decision making process, where the crucial decisions are taken by the employers and/or managers. This is especially true in the case of the introduction of the new technologies.

Under these conditions, workers are unable resist the demands of their employers. In addition to these, because of the high rate of unemployment, the bargaining power of unions is diminishing continuously.

Since some unions are unable to adjust themselves to the new age and have some misconducts. The trust to unions is decreasing. The unions become aware of that danger. They have to cope with that new life. They have to realise many changes in every areas, such as in their policies of struggle, in their structure, etc.

The flexible working conditions do need highly skilled labour power. Industrial design and its implementation cannot be done with the old type, unskilled labour. The worker has the potential to be active in the production process, has proper knowledge about the product, is highly skilled and can intervene the process at any stage if it is needed. In other words, the profile of classical worker is beginning to change. It should be stated that the worker becomes multi-function, not multi skilled. He is employed in different places. So, the worker becomes so fragmented that he can not give his consciousness ho his job properly and thus becomes standartized. (Artun, 1999) This new profile means new problems for the unions. Trade unions should establish new policies according to this new labour profile.

With the expansion of technology and service sectors, a large market comes into existence. Trade unions are obliged to work in new areas, such service sectors as knowledge creation, use of electronic and communication devices, artistic and

cultural activities, assurance, entertainment, etc. Now, they also have to organise in these areas.

Some new notions are being used; such as TQM, quality chambers, team work, etc. They are the new names of restructuring the production. In that type, workers should participate in the process. Management is now established in low base. Because the organisation of the production or the work process is divided into many parts and decision making is essentially decentralised.

The working time of a worker and the processing time of production are separated. Overtime work is often used. The worker is utilised in different places in production. By creating different skills in work, the solidarity between workers is lessened. These differences can be also seen in wages. The decrease in solidarity is the main danger for the trade union movement. With the highly skilled worker, the rate of profit and productivity increases very much. The differences in wages force the worker to make the bargains personally. The idea of collective bargaining is beginning to be threatened. Trade unions become aware that they should raise the level of education and skills of their workers. Their policies are made according to needs of highly skilled workers.

Trade unions know well that participating in the decision making process is vital. If their workers are educated in accordance with the necessary skills, the employers can not neglect them and also solidarity between workers should be kept easily. According to Ozaki, "in the 1990's, with organizational reforms overwhelmingly driven by employers' pursuit of higher competitiveness in a globalized market, unions are confronted with the challenge of defining new policies, particularly towards restructuring aimed at making work organization more flexible

and enabling management to benefit optimally from workers' knowledge. (Ozaki, 1996)

III.3-Practical Tool of Post-Fordism: Flexibility

III.3.1 The Concept of Flexibility

During the early 1970's, with the US decision of cutting the link between the US dollar and gold in international transactions, monetary policies changed drastically. In addition to that, a very fast increase in petroleum prices caused crisis in capitalist economies. In the beginning of 1980's, the economies had changed and restructuring process had begun. Nowadays, these changes are becoming the subject of many researches and studies. Many of them deal with notions, such as post-Fordism, flexibility. Although, there have been many different studies about capital flows, technological change, changes in labor dynamics, the notion of flexibility has always played an important role in all of these studies. Many new concepts have come out, i.e. flexible labor power, flexible worker, flexible working conditions.

The concept and understanding of flexibility have always influenced workers and employers. Since they are looking at the issue from different points, the meaning of flexibility for workers differs very much from that of employers. For the Confederation of the Turkish Trade Unions (Türk-İş), for workers, flexibility means: (Özveri, 1999)

- Using the annual paid vacation when the worker wants,
- Being educated in order to increase his ability and knowledge about work,

- Joining the management process in the workplace,
- Giving opinion to the employer in terms of arrangement of working hours;

But for the employer, it means:

- Firing the worker when he/she wants;
- Changing the workers's position in the workplace whenever she/he wants,
- Employing worker without caring what its position in the workplace is,
- Forcing the worker for over-time, without asking his approval,
- Preventing the practice of social and legal rights of workers.

According to the French Regulation School, the change that we faced after 1980 can be considered as the crisis of Fordism and the birth of Post-Fordist era. That is to say, instead of the concepts of mass production and mass consumption, new concepts, such as flexible production techniques, different types of production and also a new type of state have emerged.

Because of the market limitations, that is to say, inability of producers to sell what they produce and accordingly falling rates of profit, the capitalist economies were faced with a serious crisis. To cope with the crisis, on the introduction of structural change into the system was inevitable. For the revitalisation of economies, the problems that are related to the production process had to be solved. In order to achieve that, a transformation had to be realised in both social and institutional relations.

Fordism, shortly, is a type of mass production where the whole production process is done on a single line. Work is performed from a single place. The workers are organised accordingly. This type of work organization is very restrictive, bureaucratic and hierarchic. The production process is organized from one center. No

outside intervention can be done during the process. The workers should do what the employer tells them to do without putting her/his knowledge or consciousness into the work process, so the consciousness of the worker decreases day by day until he/she has become completely mechanized. The employer always tries to decrease the production cost. In order to decrease the variable costs, he always applies pressure over the workers and try to prevent the unionisation of workers.

One of the main features of Fordism is the standartization. The continuation of production is kept by a moving product line. The small products are produced by special machines. As, that machine is designed specially for that product, using it for another or different product is not so easy and also expensive. For this reason, the production is done in wide scales. Moreover, the product is limited by the demand in the market.

According to the French Regulation School, in responding to the changing market conditions, the only requirement is a change in the production process. For them, there are five aspects of flexibility:

- The adaptability of different production organizations to changing conditions,
- The ability of a worker to undertake different works or duties,
- The worker rights and job related arrangements written in the work acts to be loosening,
- The ease of change in wages in both directions,
- The decrease in the responsibility of firms to their workers (Ansal, 1996)

Piore and Sabel have considered change as the change in the production processes. Because of over production, faced in 1970s, the quality of production and consumption began to change. Moreover, the capital flow well beyond the national

borders and the structure of the world market changed. The tough structure of Fordism could not cope with these changes any more. To overcome that crisis, the production process had to be re-organized. In order to respond to the changing market demand, the flexibility in production process was developed. (Ansal, 1996)

The change in markets, the developments of new technology in production – appeared especially in the end of 1970's- required a new flexible production process based on flexible specialization. That new organization means that the production is realized in different places and done by the employers, designers and workers together. Group tasks for team working, team work and job sharing is emphasized mainly. (Duruiz, Yentürk, 1995) Some of the main features are, adaptability to new technologies, using them quickly and creating new technologies and new types of production.

The big firms that are at the center of production have begun to work with small firms that are located at the periphery. Besides, these firms formed an industry that can respond to the changes in the market properly and export many different products to the world market by establishing close relationships between them and by using multi-aimed technologies.

The small scale firms of developed economies have taken a big step in that direction for mainly two reasons. Firstly, with the use of information and communication technologies more intensively, small and medium sized enterprises, the so called SMEs can create some special products and services to other firms and to consumers as well. For example by using software and other means, some SMEs may become very effective suppliers. Secondly, the fragmentation of consumption patterns, that is the differences of tastes and preferences of consumers and profit maximising behavior of firms do force fragmenting of supply of products and

services. Under these conditions, especially the SMEs will operate more profitably either creating or using high technology. It is not “small is beautiful” that result in strengthening SMEs but the reason is that small brings more profit for the time being.

In the heart of flexibility in workplaces, the change in the type of workers can be seen. Some workers can be labelled as nucleus; i.e. the workers are qualified and can realize many different jobs and can design the product and control the production process. These features create differences among workers. The unqualified worker can be fired very easily. And the employer can gain flexibility in its workplace. These results can be seen much in work places where sub-contracting is also practiced. The big firms prepare a “philosophy” or do create new “business culture” of work for themselves shaped under these conditions and get organized according to that philosophy in their headquarters. On the other hand, with the ideas such as “team spirit” or “we are family in our firm”, a new culture is given smoothly to workers. This is the main way to hide the authority, dominance in the firm. (Artun, 1999)

After 1980's, the use of computers created a revolution in information and communication. The speed in the flow of knowledge became a fact. The technological developments and the use of knowledge are powerful aspects of these changes. Those who own them can control the world market. For this reason, to catch that change, each country is trying to take effective steps and formulate its own policies. The revitalisation and practices of the concept of national innovation system is a product of that need (Freeman, 1995)

The concept of flexibility was still been a famous concept in the 1990's. At that time, it was considered as the main way to increase production, quality,

employment and industrial democracy in workplaces. Moreover, it is the only way to increase the worker's consciousness and to eliminate his/her alienation.

But, it is well known that capitalists want to use the capacity of their worker completely and try to get the maximum surplus value from the production process by exploiting workers. For this reason, the labour processes are always main areas that can be used for that aim. Employer wants to establish a strong control over their workers. He can be increased the productivity of labor by increasing the intensity of work and to keep the guarantee of the creation of surplus value with adjusting the working rules.

It is true that capitalism has always wanted to exploit labour. It tried to realize that with different production processes in different times; i.e. Taylorism, Fordism...etc. Flexibility is the new name of the game. "The success of flexibility was realized not by keeping the solidarity of workers to the firm but by keeping the impossibility of leaving the job for worker. (Ansal, 1996)

III.3.2-The Outcomes of Flexible Production for Workers

Flexibility means widely use of the new technologies, the limitless possibility in the organisation of work and the arrangements of working processes as the employers want. In other words, the employers try to keep the continuation of work by arranging new working types; such as part-time, house work, sub-contracting and by arranging new working hours without the consent of the workers. These applications also mean the organisations of the employers according to their aims and preventing the organisation of workers (Özveri: 1999).

One of the main outcome of flexibility over labor market is the fragmentation of labour. Three new types of workers appear in that new system:

- 1- The workers that are employed in the center firms using high-tech and work the whole day. Their wages are relatively high. They have a comparative job security. They are highly qualified and can adapt themselves to new technological developments easily.
- 2- These workers also work the whole day. But, they are not as qualified as the first type of workers. They are usually employed at daily routine works.
- 3- These workers are part-time, temporary workers. They are employed at subcontracting firms and have no (or very limited) job security.

In Turkey, capitalists used to exploit workers very easily with the help of legal limitations on the labor rights, overall restrictive social conditions, such as obeying orders from the above and anti-democratic policy practices. With a very limited private capital accumulation and imported technology, making profit from production is based essentially on cheap labor.

Under these unfavorable conditions for workers, capitalists are trying to implement flexibility. This intention causes enormous problems for workers and for the effectiveness of the union movement.

CHAPTER IV

TRADE UNIONS IN TURKEY

IV.1-Trade Unions in the Ottoman Empire

In the Ottoman Empire, the working class appeared firstly in the construction, mining and in some administrative industrial sectors. From the industrialization point of view, the Empire was severely underdeveloped and therefore no working class movement in proper sense was materialised. However, the workers were in the low-paid jobs. For example, workers were hired in the constructions of mosques, big palaces, bridges, etc. It can be said that there was not a modern working class movement or struggle until the end of 19th century and the beginning of 20th century because there was a close and strong state control of the empire over the society. Early unions were closed down. The guild masters were not permitted to use large amounts of money in hiring new workers. The guilds were also very powerful. They could restrict the number of apprentices and journeymen and regulate the working conditions.

The first known strikes of modern wage earners in the 19th century were Ereğli Coal Mine workers in 1863 and telegraph workers in İstanbul in February 1872. (Koç, 1999a)

The first union organisation, which is known, is the Amele-i Osmani Cemiyeti (Ottoman Workers' Association). It was established in 1894. But, it was permitted to live only for about more than one year. In the beginning of the 20th century, the number of wage and salary earners was very small and they were not

totally alienated from their means of production and activities of workers were very limited (Koç, 1999a). Abdülhamit II did not let workers to organise. After 1908 with the declaration of the Second Meşrutiyet (Constitutional Monarchy), more unions emerged. In addition to that, labor movement was influenced by the socialist ideas. In 1908, there were about 100 strikes especially in İstanbul and Zonguldak. But, the new life of the labor movement was very short. In 1909, with the Tatil-i Eşgal Kanunu (The Law of Strikes), which was in force until 1936, public employees were prohibited to enter unions. In 1913, all trade union activities were prohibited. Because of the wars, the unions lost most of their strength. The number of workers in the unions was few, so they were suffering from the lack of conscious unification. We can not see an important labour activity until 1919. After 1919, several unions were established in İstanbul.

IV.2. Trade Unions in the Republican Era

IV.2.1. 1923-1946

The new Republic of Turkey started its life with a small population and resources because of losing population and territory in wars. The use of labour power was very limited because of a limited amount of capital accumulation in general and underdeveloped industrialisation in particular. Reforms followed one another and industrialisation had to be realised. The economy required skilled workforce and a new way of modernisation. The inherited labour power was not sufficient qualitatively. They had to create a new and skilled labour power. The government tried to clear the remnants of the Ottoman Empire. The main aim of modernisation process was to create the necessary preconditions for economic development, the parliamentary democracy and the republic. The government did not give permission

to labour movements without control. Labor power had to work for the sake of the Republic. During the period of 1925-1938, the formation and functioning of the trade unions were possible, but it was prevented in practice. The skilled blue-collar workers were employed in acceptable working conditions and with high wages. In 1931, civil servants had job security, social security, paid annual leave, etc. (Koç, 1999a)

Although there were representatives of the working class in the Economic Congress of İzmir in 1923 and they demanded the 8 hours work-day and some measures about social insurance, the unionisation had no strength during the Independence War and later until the multi-party political system. Because of the insurrections of 1925, the government declared the Takrir-i Sükun Kanunu (Martial Law) and gave to government the right of closing or prohibiting the formation of labour organisations. In 1932, a few organisations were established with the support of the government. But, they were too weak in organising the interests of working class. Besides, the Labor Law of 1936 permitted the establishment of workplace organizations and formation of an arbitration process in case of any problem. In 1938, with the Cemiyetler Kanunu (the Law of Associations), professional unionization were prohibited again. Strikes were also prohibited. However, the majority of the wage labour were public employees, ie working for the public enterprises. They had already been given some rights. Furthermore, there was not a high level of demand of people for jobs For these reasons, the consciousness of unionisation was not developed very much during those years. In that period, we can say that the working class was in the process of formation; thus, it could not play a crucial role in the economic and political life of Turkey.

IV.2.2- 1946-1960

In this period, Turkey passed through many political and social changes. After 1945, the phase of the multi-party political system was commenced. The Democrat Party was formed in 1946 and established close relations with workers and peasants. Then, the Socialist Party and the Socialist Labourers' and Peasants' Party of Turkey were formed. All of them played important roles in the establishments of trade unions. Some small associations were formed as formal funds, craft associations, mutual aid societies. But, with the coming of the Cold War atmosphere, ie the conflict between the USA and the USSR, all these associations and two socialist parties were closed. However, these associations would be the basic elements of the trade union movement later. In 1946, the prohibition of unionisation which was formulated in the Law of Associations (Cemiyetler Kanunu) was abolished and the act No. 5018 –concerning trade unions and employers unions and the other organisations- was issued in 1947. The Republican People's Party established a workers' bureau and started to organise trade unions. Turkey changed its basic economic policies in accordance with the economic development of the world and the union movement gained some strength during the period. The workers became very important for the politicians because of their votes. Trade unions were firstly established in the public sector. At the beginning, there were workplace unions and then, local unions were established. The main example is the İstanbul Trade Unions Council. (Koç, 1998)

Some years after the Second World War, the capitalism was in its “Golden Age” of economic performance and unemployment rate was very low in the developed economies. The concept of the welfare state was developed in many countries. Capitalists in general were not against the union movement.

But, in Turkey because of the influence of the Cold War, the prohibitions were put into practice again. In 1948, with the Law of Number 5018, employers and unions were put under the administrative control. But at the same time, some federations such as Türkiye Taşıt İşçileri Federasyonu (The Federation of the Turkish Transportation Union), was also established. In 1950, the government of Democrat Party was warm to workers but it did not permit the right to strike, despite the provision existed in the Party’s Program, the well known article 7. In 1952, the first nation-wide confederation of the labour unions, Türk- İş, was established. After 1955, these organisations were subjected to high political and legal pressures. In 1958, Maden- İş (The Miners Union) signed the first collective bargaining well before than this right was legalised in 1963 and the union movement continued to gain some strength. There was also quantitative improvements; in fact, in 1948, there were 73 trade unions with 52 000 members and in 1966, there were 704 trade unions and 374 000 members. (Koç, 1998). There was more than a six times increase in the number of unionised workers in such a relatively short period of time.

IV.2.3. 1961-1980

Turkey witnessed very rapid social, economic and political changes during this period. Because of a rapid phase of migration to the cities and urbanisation which was going on from 1950’s, the traditional structures of production and services were changed. From the early 1960’s, the economy was able to grow continuously.

The domestic market, which was protected against foreign competition, was expanding. Unemployment was at low levels. However, the golden age of the harmony between capital and labour based on the social welfare state was tried to be limited in early 1970s and almost totally finished in the late 1970's.

With the 1961 Constitution, workers and unions gained their most basic rights, which is the right to form union freely and right to strike (Articles 46, 47). In fact the 1961 Constitution states that (art. 47):

“Employees and employers have the right to establish unions, to be a member of unions and withdraw their membership from the union without taking permission (from anyone)”.

These rights of those that are providing public services as non-wage workers, ie. public employees will be formulated by law.

“All the legal rules and regulations, administrative practices and working mechanisms of unions and their associations can not be contrary to the democratic principles”.

This rule of the Constitution clearly stated that all types of employees, either wage or salary earners, included public employees have the basic rights of unionisation.

It also had to stated that these Constitutional rules about the trade unions were accompanied by the rules and regulations for a full scale democratic, social and economic rights. That is to say, the 1961 Constitution was a very comprehensive and complete document that provided political, social and economic rights totally. It is stated that the 1961 Constitution can easily be compared with the constitutions of the most advanced democracies of Europe. In other words, the basic political rights such as the freedom of speech, the freedom assembly, the freedom of expression of ideas,

the freedom of press, the freedom of academic work and independence of the university etc. were fully established by the Constitution.

These classical political rights were supplemented and supported by the idea of what is termed at that time “social justice”, ie social and economic rights and benefits. Thus, the right of free education, health services, as well as the “right to work”; the equal pay for the equal work, the provision about the minimum wage, the extension of the social security even to the rural areas were formulated constitutionally.

It should be stated that all modern aspects of free trade unionism were legalised within a truly democratic framework. This democratic atmosphere stimulated the process of unionism. In addition, the process of becoming wage worker has been enlarged and the total number of wage earners increased very rapidly during the following two decades, from 3.000.000 in 1965 to 6.200.000 in 1980) (Koç, 1998) The Turkish state is defined in the Constitution as a welfare state.

In 1963, with the law 274 and 275- Collective Bargaining Agreements and the Right to Strike and Lockout- some limitations on the union practice were put on. With the act 624, public employees got the right to establish unions but had no right to either collective bargaining or the right to strike. However, the number of unions and the membership increased sharply. Collective bargaining became the main way of getting rights. Many unions in the public sector were established and also more private attempts for the private sectors were made. These places were very important for the organisation of the working class. Developments of unions also brought new political and social developments into the society. In 1961, Turkish Labor Party was formed. In 1967, DİSK was established. In addition to that, MİSK (The Nationalist

Labour Confederation) in 1970 and Hak- İş (The Right Religious Labor Confederation) in 1976 were established.

There were also unionisation attempts in the public sectors. İlk-Sen (The Union of Elementary School Teachers) was established in 1965. Two main confederations related with public employers were established: Türkpersen (Confederation of Public Personnel Trade Unions of Turkey) and Confederation of State Economic Establishments and Enterprises Personnel Trade Unions of Turkey). This period can be considered as the strongest and the most influential period of trade unions.

Until 1980, trade union membership increased rapidly. The membership of trade unions grew rapidly and many industrial actions began to appear. The number of workers that participated in the strikes increased steadily. All classes of the society acted in these actions together, ie workers, some students, some politicians, etc The social sensitivity at that time was very high in Turkey. The union movement began to be much more influential in the political life of Turkey.

After the coup d'état of 1971, the union rights of the public workers were again banned completely by a constitutional amendment and the public employers tried to get organised in associations. Because of the developments of conflicts between the political right and left, the whole society went through a social, political and economic crisis. These developments resulted in a more depressing political atmosphere. DİSK had many struggles with the governments. Its leaders were taken into courts. The events, especially strikes, had many unwanted results, ie. events of 15-16 June. The power of union movement was diminished due to the inner ideological segmentation or that among the unions. The political tendencies gained a strong dominance over the unions and used politicians for their aims. In the second

half of 1970, the economic crisis deepened and improper policies for restructuring the Turkish economy– these were made with the help of IMF- led Turkey to take a new role, ie. country of cheap labour. The political life and economy of Turkey became worse day by day. The struggles between left and right became more violent. The stabilisation program of 24 January 1980 was one of the turning points of Turkish economic and political history. Some unions and intellectuals tried to resist to that program unsuccessfully.

IV.2.4. 1980- Present

At the end of 1970's, Turkish economic and political scene was in a chaotic situation. There were many bloody events between the radical right and left. Many union leaders were assassinated. And the economy was also in a crisis. After the economic stabilization measures of January 24 and the coup d'état of September 12, Turkey entered a dark era from the point of political and economic rights. Not only all wage earners but also other employees have lost most of their democratic and economic rights. Turkey was no more a democratic country.

With the coup d'état, the activities of unions were taken under control and limited. Many trade unions, such as DİSK, HAK-İŞ and MİSK, were closed. Only TÜRK-İŞ was not banned, but its activities were limited. In 1982, with restrictive legal regulations (#2821 about trade unions and #2822 about Collective Bargainings, Strikes and Lockouts), all kinds of union activities were limited further. HAK-İŞ was reopened on February 20, 1981 and MİSK on May 23, 1984 respectively. The activities of all public employees were banned and their associations were closed. The bargains began again in 1984 under very strict conditions. (Koç, 1999a)

However, between 1980 and 1988 period, the number of workers employed in urban services, including trade and tourism increased considerably, since people in the rural areas were getting poorer with the economic measures or practices. Thus, a high rate of migration from rural to urban areas was the result and a basis for lowering the wage rate was created.

Trade unions were endangered from every aspect in that period. Because of the systematic attacks of the employers and their organisations, which were left completely free during this period with the help of repressive governments, unions lost much of their power. In addition to this, the ability to organise was also decreased. In due process a serious and potential danger emerged: illegal working. To diminish the strength of unions, workers were employed illegally, ie not registering them to social security scheme, avoiding even the payment of the minimum wages and legal prohibitions about working hours etc. For facilitating the practice, the process of subcontracting is utilised. One of the main consequences of high rate of the migration to the metropolitan areas, which was supported by the government, was the practice of illegal workers. It is estimated today that, the number of illegal workers was about 4.5 million. In 1989-90 period, unions tried to get some of their rights back. After the 1989 bargains, the direction of the real wages changed and began to rise. Unions were successful in this sense. Public workers got the right to establish unions without the right to strike. Mass actions about the workers' rights and economic demands about 1990's were mainly directed by TÜRK- İŞ. In public sector, in 1991, the struggle about the economic gains resulted within success and with more democratic behaviour of the government, the purchasing power of workers more than doubled in one year. In addition to that,

Turkey had the largest legal strikes in her history in 1990 and 1991. These strikes were mainly held in the private sector.

It should also be added that during the years of 1992-93 some very important international agreements of ILO (International Labour Organisation) were ratified with some reservations, however. These are Agreement 87 which formulates the freedom of establishing and organising unions, the Agreement 59 on the protection of the child labour in industry, Agreement 135 on the protection of workers' representatives in the work places, Agreement 412 on the development of human resources, on the job training and directing, Agreement 151 on the unionisation of the public employees.

Before realising fully the benefits of these agreements, the economic conditions were worsened again. With the speedy privatisation which was initiated in 1994, unions were pushed into another crisis. Establishments were divided and work places became more small scale and the possibility of unionisation became almost impossible. The rights for collective bargaining were limited. Compulsory retirement was put through and the social or welfare rights were almost abolished.

IV.3. Some Facts and Figures on the Turkish Trade Unions

Turkish unions are established and operated according to the economic activity or on the sectoral basis. Legally, 28 economic activities are determined for this purpose, ranging from agriculture, forestry and hunting to general services as given on Table.1. Although unions are established according to these economic activities, the content of some activities is always questioned and brought to the court. Because the extent of the union rights and practices differ from one sector to the other, the determination of economic activity within the sectoral framework is

continuously disputed. For example, there are some prohibitions in these activities, such as prohibition of strike, etc. After 1983, the shop floor unions were closed. Only trade unions of these activities were allowed. At the same economic activity, different unions can be established if they are active all over Turkey.

According to the existing Union Law, in order to make collective bargaining, unions have to register more than half of all the workers of the same workplace and more than 10 per cent of the total workers of that economic activity. This qualifier is the most argued and criticised aspect of the law, because unionists claimed that the organisation of workers cannot be powerful due to that barrage. A trade union of one economic activity should work under one confederation or can activate by itself. A confederation of one economic activity is not allowed. According to law, trade unions or confederations have to form these units (Baydar, 1998):

- general assembly
- council of managers
- council of supervisor
- council of discipline

Trade unions are allowed to open branch offices. If they cannot create necessary conditions for a branch office, the representative offices can be established.

As of the beginning of 2001, there are four confederations in Turkey, namely Türk-İş, DİSK, Hak-İş and MİSK and one confederation of employers TİSK. There are also independent unions that are not affiliated to these confederations. Türk-İş, which has about more than 72 per cent of the unionised labour by far is the largest one of them, whereas the share of DİSK is about 13 per cent and Hak- İş has more

than 11 per cent according to the latest figures. Independent unions have more than three per cent of the unionised workers. The share of MİSK is quite negligible. (Table.2)

There are three confederations of the unions of public employees, which are KESK, Memur-Sen and Türkiye Kamu-Sen and there is only one confederation of employers: TİSK. The detailed statistics on the numbers of the unions and confederations are presented on Table.3.

According to laws, everybody, who gains the status of worker can be a member of a union. The minimum age for membership is 16. A worker cannot be a member of more than one union at the same time. A member of armed forces cannot be a member of unions.

Every member pays a membership fee according to the check-off system. These fees are the most crucial aspects of the financial incomes of the unions. A worker's membership ends if he is retired or leaves work.

IV.4. Main Problems of the Turkish Unions

Since this study is directed at analysing the effect of technological changes on trade unions, it will be appropriate to give the reasons of problems which the Turkish trade unions face.

Today unionisation has many problems. To group only the most important ones will help to clear some points that are discussed below.

The first is the problems stemming from the overall political and economic conditions; the second is the policies such as the limitations on economic and social rights, privatisation and limitations on public sector unions; the third group is related to the unemployment problem, ie the increase in subcontracting, employing illegal

workers, the fourth group of problems is related to the flexibility of work practices and the practice of small business establishments, where employers do not permit the unionisation and job security and sanitary conditions in the working places.

The main reasons that lie behind the problems mentioned above are the recent economic developments, which also affect the whole world, such as globalisation, a concept that includes the internationalisation of money capital, the rise of information and communication technologies, the expansion of the multinational companies and the new work-processes as mentioned above. However, there are also more specific problems that are created by purely domestic conditions. The problems of Turkish trade unions are much more related to the political situation of the country as well as economic ones. Within a general framework, in addition to the insufficient democratic processes and institutional set-up, the problem of insufficient rate of economic growth, i.e. capital accumulation, the low level of national income, the extremely uneven income distribution, the rapid increase of population, the excess supply of unskilled labour, the problems related to educational and health systems, the reduction of public money even in basic services can be mentioned.

As mentioned before, at the beginning of 1980, the economic, social and especially political conditions of Turkey changed dramatically with the coup d'état of September 12th. The democratisation processes were suddenly cut. The freedoms of individual and also associations, institutions and the social classes were extremely limited

These limitations are formulated by the Constitution of 1982 and by other laws. Although there are some changes of those laws to improve rights and freedoms, the essential limiting elements are still in practice. One of the most related example is the labour laws, such as the Law of Trade Unions (No.2821) and the Law of

Collective Bargaining, Strike and Lock-out(No. 2822). It can be said that the Turkish unions have lost their power in making collective bargaining at the beginning of 1980s and never obtained fully later. Unlike the developed economies, in Turkey, within this framework, the industrial relations are also extremely anti-democratic. In short, the inadequacy of Turkish democratic life, for example, the acts about the trade unions, has many limitations over the unions and even the constitution brings about adverse clauses on organising unions. For example, in some sectors like banking and energy, the right to strike is prohibited partly or wholly.

Within this legal framework, effective unionisation practice becomes very difficult, if not totally impossible. Additionally, the practices and policies of employers -with the support of government- against unions and union activities help to worsen the conditions for labour.

Turkey became low-wage country in the late 1990s. Real wages decreased from 100 –in 1994- to 80.9 –in 1999- (Yeldan, 2001). Besides, the changes in the world market, in production process, ie. with the coming of globalisation, the union movement of Turkey entered to a period of decline. Besides, Turkey is already faced with a huge labour surplus that limits the ability of functioning of unions, because there are many waiting at outside for jobs. Unsuccessful macroeconomic policies of the Turkish governments especially in the case of taxation, creates a situation where the unregistered economy is on the rise. Underground economy means underground labour in which unionisation is a dream. (Koç, 1999b)

Although, these problems become more burdensome with the process of globalisation, the Turkish governments and the private sector do almost nothing for the solutions. Among other things, for example, the unemployment insurance

scheme, which the unions have fought for, for many years, is finally taken into consideration by the government with a very limited scope and benefits.

As the characteristics of respective confederations do indicate, unions of Turkey have never worked hand in hand because of competing and ideological differences. For example, on the question or idea of privatisation, unions are completely disunited; the same behaviour is the case for some other aspects of globalisation.

In the past, the main struggle among unions was to gain dominance in the public sector. The reasons are obvious, as can be seen from the wage differentials between workers of the public and private sectors and the other benefits that the public sector could provide. However, with overall economic policies, the privatisation practice and other measures, the level of employment in the public sector is declining.

Severe limitations on the union rights and other economic and political developments have resulted in a situation where the share of organised labour is not increasing, but decreasing day by day. The growing of information sector and the service sector changed the composition of labour demand, so that it is not easy to be a member of the unions. With new types of management, the workers have also been included in the new model and become more harmonious. They could not resist the change. Trade unions cannot deal with these changes. Their scope of struggle has become narrow. They cannot make proper policies against the changes. For these reasons, they lost their power considerably.

With the introduction of different wage policies on the individual or group basis, the collectivity between the workers is broken down. Besides, new types of workers are used, ie unqualified workers, woman workers, migrants, the young and

children. Today, there are 761344 female workers and %50.6 are unionized. (Labour Stats. 2001) These are the workers that are not easy to get organised. Instead of mass unionisation, workplace unionisation has been supported. That is to say, the bargains are realised with workers of that place, not with the whole branch. The unions and confederations cannot move down to that workplace base and the collectivity of unions break down. Because, the workplace became small and spread, unions cannot establish a whole and strong organisation. In workplace bargains, the firm prefers to bargain with workers directly. The relatively highly skilled workers are employed for a longer time. But, in that case, firing the worker is very easy. In addition to that, while the workers cannot establish that collectivity, they can establish social policies as well and they cannot protect their interest on the class basis.

There are new barriers that hamper the growing of unions. For instance,

- the distinction between formal and informal sectors is getting wider. Finding a job has become a very hard task. Job security is diminishing. Wages are not adequate for acceptable living standards. With the coming of a new type of production process, the type of workers is beginning to change and some new types of work come into existence: part-time work, hired work, house work. The absence of social security and security of work can also be mentioned. Because of these new types of workers and work practices, a process of stabilisation in employment cannot be established. (Koç, 1999b)

There are some constraints in this context. Namely, the informal and illegal or underground sector is estimated as huge and enlarging; there are organisational inadequacies of unions, such as establishing sub-branches and the lack of educational programs for the new system of technologies or on the job training. Trade unions use

only a one-sided policy: wage unionism. They do not attach importance to other aspects of work, such as the job training, increased job security...etc

In addition to general or common problems the defects in the structure of trade unions also create many problems. The union leaders do not devote themselves to obtaining the economic and social rights of workers seriously. Instead of fighting for the rights of their members, unions in many cases, are used for individual gains. The inadequacies in the structure of the process of participation of members in the decision making process also help in preventing the proper establishment of the union movement.

It can be argued that the participation of members of unions in decision making process of the organization is extremely limited. The reasons for this lack of collective decision are many fold. First, overall educational level of workers is lower. Second, traditionally unions are organized and functioned from the above, not with a process of mass participation. Thus, removal of union officials from their posts is very difficult. These and other factors create a situation where democratization processes within unions, is needed.

CHAPTER V

UNIONS IN ACTION

V.1. Introduction

In this chapter of the study, reactions of trade unions to the globalisation process will be summarised. The chapter is divided into two main parts. First, following the sequence of the study, an international union response to the process will be outlined. Second part is the results of the interviews that are made with three Turkish unions. Since the Turkish unions are influenced primarily by the European

unions and also a candidate for the EU membership, it is considered appropriate to select ETUC (European Trade Union Confederation) for this purpose..

V.2- “Resolutions” of ETUC

The statement of ETUC, which will be summarized is from their publication named “Resolutions” which was published after their 9th Congress, which was held in Helsinki (from 29 June to 2 July 1999).

According to ETUC, the trade union movement in Europe, as in other parts of the world is faced with the need to change its policies and its organisational forms, to meet both the challenges of a new environment, marked by the globalisation of the economy, the advent of the information society, and the demands of a largely new world of work. However, they know that they need to maintain the representative strength of trade unionism and its future legitimacy as the voice of organized labor. While doing that, ETUC will never forget its basic values: democracy, peace, social justice, full employment and solidarity.

European unions are now aware of a big challenge: The European integration process gives way to multi-national businesses and finance to shift the point of decision-making away from national level. It is obvious that this has reduced the capability of trade unions to influence the political decisions and business behavior in the national framework. In other words, the trade unions at national level have lost their power considerably. For ETUC, the only means of recovering this capacity is to create a trade union counter-weight, in order to establish the necessary influence on the employers and policy makers at European level. They should also go beyond the national borders.

Many changes are taking place in the European working life. The impact of technology can be seen better in these days. According to European unions, the change can be felt very much in the organization of work and in the nature of workforce. Labor market has changed. More women and child-labourers began to take place in market. The number of black and workers from ethnic minorities in small enterprises have increased as well as non-standart employment contracts. ETUC believes that taking account of the need to adopt and to modernise social regulations are not sufficient for a proper working life in Europe. The adoption process should be done properly. That is to say, it should be done with the involvement of the workers and the trade unions. Reforms must be negotiated at all appropriate levels. In addition to that, a European perspective which guarantees a social harmonisation and upward convergence in the integrated economic area is necessary. The 9th congress commits ETUC to:

“ensure the adaptation and modernisation of the European Social Model on the basis of balance between economic efficiency, competitiveness and social rights of working people.”

The ETUC says that working people’s support for European integration depends substantially upon the extent to which the process reflects their aspirations, meets their needs and enhances their rights. In the light of industrial and technical change, the improvement of workers’ rights, both individual and collective, have to include trade union rights. The ETUC demands the recognition by the EU of the right to “cross-border sympathy action”, including strikes.

Unions will face the rapid growth of precarious jobs, widespread insecurity and exploitation. These developments, the deregulation of labor market and

disappearance of workers' rights must be stopped. "Re-regulation" is needed through negotiated agreements, and this should take into account the needs of workers.

One of the important tasks that has to be taken into consideration is the sexual equality among workers. There are unequal treatments of men and women in all elements of the industrial relationship, i.e. wage, working hours, career development, etc. These inequalities between men and women are mutually reinforcing in society. In addition to that, sexual harassment is also an important task for trade unions. Women also face unequal power relations at the workplace.

On the other hand, gender is not the only basis of unequal practices of discrimination at the workplace. Race, ethnic origin, religion, disability, age and sexual preferences are the other problematic issues. The ETUC wants the elimination of discrimination in all of these areas. All workers deserve equal working rights.

Trade unions should also want their workers to join the decision process within the companies. This may change in countries at the national level. At European level, the legislation to establish the European Company is of particular importance. The ETUC believes that the European legislation must require companies which choose to become European Companies to respect rights to information, consultation and to workers' participation. The ETUC will work very hard to keep that right.

With respect to relations with employers, the European Social Dialogue, especially in its negotiating dimension, remains crucial. This is the responsibility of the Confederation at cross-industry level and of the European industrial federations at sectoral level.

The Europeanisation of industrial relations requires a Europeanisation of the trade unions. The ETUC believes that only an European industrial relations system,

supported by a strong and independent trade union movement, can protect the social interests of workers of both sexes that to be defended effectively. This requires not only a collective bargaining policy co-ordinated at European level but also the modernisation and consolidation of national trade union structures. Modernised trade unions at national level, which are open to new groups of workers and able to adjust to the new labor market realities, are a fundamental prerequisite for a Europeanisation of industrial relations.

In the 19th Congress commits the ETUC to:

“press for the recognition by the EU of basic trade union rights and for the establishment of a legal framework for industrial relations at European level”

The Europeanisation process is the most important movement for ETUC. They are aware of the problems of the workers and the trade unions in general and they stress that the solutions should be found under the Europeanisation process. The development of cross-border solidarity in order to keep the rights of workers is required. Strong co-operation and mutual assistance should be established.

That solidarity can be established easily within the EU countries. But, what about the others? That is to say the ETUC says nothing about the trade unions out of the E.U. They just stress that the relation at international level should be kept without indicating how and in what degree that relation will be established. As it is known, E.U. does not accept every country easily. It is a long process. That is to say the membership process may influence also the relations of trade unions of E.U. and the others. In addition to that, the idea of Europeanisation can be considered also as the legal name of expentionary policies. In that respect, there will be no difference between USA and Europe.

V.3. Samples From Turkish Trade Unions and Adversial Impacts of Technology

In this part, I will summarize the direct interviews that have been conducted with the officials of three unions: Ahmet Asena (DİSK), Erhan Bilgin(Petrol-İş) and Kemal Özkan (Lastik-İş).

Every unionists says that trade unions are the most important organizations for the life of a workers. Economic, social and democratic life can not be thought without them.

During interviews, some interesting points are deduced. The most important one is that trade unions in Turkey are heavily under the pressure of politics and social structure and thus are faced with democratisation problems in addition to economic difficulties that cannot be seen in developed countries. Because of the pressures and impediments, unions cannot obtain democratic rights fully. In a country in which there is no political stabilization and well-established democratic process is cut off in every ten years, one can not talk about a stable political life. In Turkey, staying away from these problems, especially for democratic and civil institutions, is not possible. After the coup d'état of 1980, the union movement was faced with a big blow. Union rights were almost totally cut off by the military government. But, they have never given up the struggle. The unions are always in the struggle for a more democratic life. Turkey has been transformed to a democratic life gradually and the unions are one of the main actors in that process. Today, they still feel the effects of coup d'état of 1980. But, they try to fight for eliminating these adversial effects.

The problems that unionists pointed out in the interviews can be summarized as follows:

Our world is faced with such a big process of change that all countries and societies are affected willingly or not. The working environment is also influenced and its structure is changed. For that reason, the basic elements of the formation of union movement has also begun to be transformed.

Through globalization, capital movements have gained a big momentum via liberalization and are breaking all the barriers to increase its profits. It is obvious that the main actors that are affected by these capital movements are the working life, the workers' unions and thus workers. In addition to that, with the wide introduction of ICT (Information and Commercial Technologies) technology into the production process, workers have found themselves in a chaotic condition. Today, one of the main problems that the trade unions is faced with is "How will the benefits of technological developments be shared?" Who will take and how much? An important problem has come out in this context. With the introduction of technology, the working life and the relations of production started to change. The labour process becomes so intense that the exploitation also increases. By keeping the facts in mind, the dimensions of exploitation should be determined. This is the main area of the union struggle. As a matter of fact, historically, the struggle has always been on that point: sharing the surplus value.

Another point stressed in the interviews, which is caused by technology is the problem of unemployment. For example a work place which employed 2000 workers before, now employs about 400- 500 workers. And this reduction is made under the control of employers and something should be done to stop firings caused by the introduction of the new technology. That is to say, the initiation should be taken by

employees. The technological changes have also influenced the type of workers. The separation of hand work and brain work has become blurred. The importance given to brain work is increasing day by day. New management techniques have begun to be used in the firms. With these new production and management techniques, the necessity of trade unions is always being questioned and workers are influenced accordingly. After these management processes, more and more workers lost their confidence in trade unions.

Interviewers has also emphasized that technological developments are also changing the relations of production. With the new system, the production process has changed. Fordist type of production is replaced by the post-fordism and flexible specialization, because the old type of production was unable to respond to new market processes. In some sectors, the optimum scale of firms has been diminished. The production process is divided into different pieces. The production is not realized in only one place. New types of working applications are being used. Sub-contracting for hiring work is becoming very wide. Putting out system and part-time work are added to the system. All these types of working practices have divided the working class. The relations among workers are very limited. That is to say, collectivity and solidarity among workers are lessened. In addition to that, new types of worker which are hard to be organized, started to be utilized, such as women workers, young and child workers. All of these developments have decreased the capability of labour unions to get organized.

In addition to these new developments, problems in the democratic life that come from the constitution and other laws are creating many problems for trade unions in Turkey. According to the law of Collective Bargaining, to make collective bargaining agreement in working place, 51% of workers should be the member of the

union. Moreover, to establish a new union in a work branch, 10% of workers should be unionized. All of these laws create problems in organizing workers. Besides, the workers who want to be members of trade unions, face a huge pressure in work place from the employer. He or she may lose his or her job easily. Especially those workers that are attempting for organizing in other unions can be dismissed. Since the rate of unemployment is too high, the workers cannot join unions even though they want to be a member of the relevant unions.

The problem of unregistered workers is a very crucial issue for trade unions. The workers that come from abroad and the migration from rural to metropolitan areas are the main causes of the problem of unregistered worker. They are ready to work for any level of wage and at any condition. This process decreases the wages all over the country and worsens the working conditions. Preventing this situation is not always possible. Since there are more employments and poverty, the employer can always find new workers according to his arbitrary terms and conditions. Employers can employ cheap labour force and can reduce the cost of production. For instance, one firm may seem to employ 10 registered workers, but, it actually employs 20 workers. Thus, employers pay low level of taxes and social security contributions. The unregistered workers are obliged to work in difficult conditions without any social benefit and job security. It is obvious that organizing such workers in unions is not an easy task. Trade unions believe that the problem of unregistered workers should be included to the union policies.

Sub-contracting is also another important problem for labour organizations. Especially, after the coming of flexible specialization, the extent of working through sub-contraction is increasing. Large firms are able to force the small firms to make their business. By that, they can decrease the cost of production as well as the

transaction costs. It is well known that the sub-contracting firms do use unregistered workers extensively. Trade unions have always searched for ways to prevent the employment of unregistered workers. Workers of these firms should also be included into the unionization processes.

On the other hand, lack of democracy and human rights in the society in general is also another problem for trade unions. The lack of proper laws and appropriate measures on agricultural activities causes migration flows to the metropolises. This creates unacceptable living conditions in the cities and unemployment.

All of these problems do not come out separately. They are the outcome of a big process of change. At the basis of this change, it is argued that the free flow of capital or “globalization” lies. To exploit the opportunities for new profits, capital will try to move into every part of the world. It even intervenes in the social and democratic lives of countries. For example, with the law of international arbitration, if the international capitalists face a problem in Turkey, it has the right not to deal with Turkish law in the Turkish courts. In that condition, how can one talk about a full democracy and freedom? Standing in front of capital movement is becoming difficult day by day.

With globalisation, the world has become more polarized. The USA and Japan have taken the leadership by their big firms. Besides, the USA always wants to control the economies of developing and third world countries by some international organizations such as IMF and the World Bank, which are the under control of US in some extent. Even if the industrialised (G-8) countries have stressed that globalization will bring democracy and social cohesion to these societies, it seems that the type of democracy will function for the benefits of the democracy of these

big capitals. The other countries can not establish their own social life without intervention.

The Turkish trade unions do face the problem of job security. The subject that is discussed is that when a worker is dismissed, the firm is free whether to give the reason or not. According to ILO standards, the employer has to give the reason for his action. Although Turkey signed the ILO standards, the worker should prove which type of reason is used for his/her dismissal. But, how can he do that? That is to say, the employer has all the power. With the new legislation, this will be prevented. More specifically unions also face the problem of dismissal of their members. A worker who wants to be a member of a union may be fired. But, how can the worker prove that he is dismissed because of union membership? The government also support the capitalists. During my interviews, the law has not been prepared yet. But, the law was established last month. That is to say, the expectations are now on the point of realization. This will also help organizational problems.

If we want to give sectoral example to the technological change, the effects of technology are newly understood in the petro-chemical sector. The production process is modernized. The intensity of capital is widened, especially in pharmaceuticals. The main aim is to increase the profit while decreasing the labour costs by increasing the intensity of the capital. In the sector of chemicals, the main effect on the production process is the increase of import of the chemical inputs. The structure of firms has changed. The Turkish firms are trying to merge with international firms, especially in pharmaceuticals. But, in petroleum, the situation is different. As of now, the control in that sector is still in the hands of the state. The influence of private sector is negligible. However, because of the pressure of privatization, the necessary investments cannot be made. For that reason, some

factories and refineries have become unprofitable. In addition to that, many chemical factories that produce for the domestic market, have changed their policies and begun to export. The main reason behind that is the introduction of new technology. The international pharmaceutical companies use Turkish firms as their sub-contractors. They support them technologically. They force the Turkish firms to use their own processes. They cannot escape from the technological dependency. Thus, a proper development of this sector cannot be realized.

There are many results, which should be discussed, of the introduction of new technology. In the past, one type of pen was produced and people bought it. But, later consumers demanded different types of pen. Demand structures changed as did the market. The old type of production became unprofitable. Therefore, the production process has to change. It is obvious that the main actor is the development of new technology. While the type of production changes, the type of worker also changes. In the old type, a worker was used as a machine. In the new model, the importance of worker and his brain increased. For this reason, the introduction of technology should be done in agreement with the worker. To use the new technology the producer should also consult with the worker. One should not harm the workers with the introduction of new technology. Trade unions do not want to prevent the technological change, but technological change should have some qualifications. The main question is this: "When the technology is introduced, what will happen to the worker?" As emphasized, this is a very important point for Lastik-İş.

As the unionists have stated, with the coming of technology, the composition of labour demand has changed. In Fordist type, the worker was often employed as the manufacturer using hands essentially and on the other hand highly-educated people were employed in offices. But, the new production system requires highly

qualified workforce. That is to say, the existing work force should either be educated or ones should be employed instead. The former less qualified workers can begin to work with computers and take responsibilities in the production process. For example, in 1980's, an electro-mechanics firm employed 400 workers and about 5 engineers. In 1986, they changed their techniques and passed to micro-electronics and the quality of workforce also changed. The number of engineers increased to more than 100 and high school graduates were not employed at all. Engineers and those that obtained on the job training were employed.

A new system called "quality control" began to be used and the ideas of workers also changed in that new system. Workers considered themselves different from the old type of worker. Their relative wages increased and also more differentiated. Therefore, their ideas about trade union also transformed. New individualized workers were also forced to cut relation with trade unions. In the public sector, many workers were forced to retire.

Technological development decreased the difference between muscle work and brain work. Instead of the intensity, the quality of the work gained importance. For a proper working life, these two types of workers should share the same ideas in terms of the way of sharing the surplus value, ie they must become aware that they should get benefits with a common determination.

Technology has also created many changes in the work organization. In the old system, the positions between the shop floor worker and the director differed very much. Now, the number of positions have been reduced the supporting personnel is eliminated and the directors have begun to work with only his/her secretary. New management policies have been established in the firms. The managers now directly communicate with workers. The "Total Quality Management

(TQM)" is the famous name. The relations of managers with their worker differs extensively. According to unionists, these new management applications have created more differentiation among workers. The workers, now, are not considered at the same level. That differentiation have created an alienation of workers and decreased solidarity among them. Managers have always tried to diminish that solidarity. Workers are included into the production process by using work circles. They are given separate responsibilities. Therefore, workers have gained the ability to use their own consciousness in the production process. They have also become more dependent on the job and thus the firm and the influence of trade union is decreased. More workers are not aware of the necessity of trade unions any more. Obviously, this creates a problem in organization for unions. In addition to that, trade unions are now facing with highly qualified, more educated and more talented workers and the classic trade unions cannot know how to organize them since workers are not classic type of workers. Their level of consciousness is now different.

Especially, organizational problems have mainly appeared in multinational firms. For example, in the past, a car factory produced almost all the necessary pieces of car in one place. But now, all processes are realized in different places by different firms. BMW and OPEL have an agreement with Packard in terms of making electronic parts of their cars. If you go on strike in Packard, these two firms can go easily to another Packard factory located in another part of the world and have their supplies. Hence, the strike in one factory becomes meaningless. In addition, Packard can also close its factories and move to another place. For that reason, the organization in such firms has become very difficult.

After 1990's, new production methods were increasingly applied by capitalists. But, union leaders and intellectuals were not ready to cope with these problems and could not give responses to them properly. In the beginning of 1990's, the real wages were increased comparatively. For unions, this was a big success. In addition to that, unions gained many advantages from the insufficiencies of the related legislation. Under those circumstances, they could not be aware of the danger. Unionists cannot create new advantages. Moreover, unions cannot intervene in unofficial applications of the firms, such as unregistered workers, sub-contracting firms etc.

Trade unions have also problems within their own structure. They cannot realize necessary changes the new production system requires in their own structures. Unions cannot catch up fast changes. They also have democratic problems. Besides, they cannot include young and women workers to their movement. They are now aware of that insufficiency. They should update their targets in accordance with these changes.

V.4. Advantages of Technology for Turkish Labour

Technology has brought flexibility to working hours. For example, Lastik-İş prepared a weekly time schedule for a factory. In the past, the workers were in factory for 6 days and had a rest on Sundays. But with the new program, 5+2, they are working for 5 days and they get a rest for two days. But these two days can also be in the middle of the week. By that way, the firm gain the flexibility of working on Sundays and weekly working hours have decreased by about three hours. This practice did not result lowering the existing wage levels but probably is reflected in new wage negotiations.

It can be stated that if the production capacity and profit of the firm increase in some degree, the power of unions in wage negotiations can be higher or remain at the same level. In other words, a worker can get benefit from the increased surplus value created because of the new technology. This has to be the main right of the worker. He has to get a higher wage for the surplus value created by himself.

For the work accidents, the unions do not have a proper data; ie they do not have statistics that is related to the introduction of new technology. But, the unions can feel the decrease in numbers of work accidents. Beyond that, with the coming of the new technology, the number of workers decreased, so the numbers of accidents may be smaller naturally. During education activities, workers are warned very much about the accidents. In addition to that, in sub-contracted firms, workers have really difficult conditions. It is obvious that the unions cannot make researches in these firms, because there is no way of collecting data about unregistered workers.

One of the main effects that globalization and capital flow bring to firms is that the firms have reduced their size in order to cope with the competition in the market. The free movements of goods and services have also changed the structure of competition in the market. The duration of production process is shortened. That is to say, the time of production of a good and its return to the firm as profit is smaller now. For this reason, the firms should give response to the market quickly and the firms which decrease the cost of production are able to take the advantages. The easiest way to reduce the cost is to reduce wages instead of diminishing the unit input of a product. In order to do that, firms have created many practices such as de-unionization, over time work, sub-contracting and the use of unregistered worker. These are the main negative effects of the global capital movement on unions.

According to Petrol-İş, privatization that is created by the globalization process has many negative effects on the union movement. The organizational power of the union in the public sector has diminished quickly. Besides, as union officials argued the foreign debt of Turkey has continuously been increasing because of inappropriate government policies. Therefore, Turkey has become more dependent on developed countries.

Education is a very important subject for the trade unions. But, they can only provide education facilities when the worker is out of work. They can not intervene in the training programs of the firms. As a matter of fact, to increase productivity and make more profit, firms also take the training of their employees into consideration very much, because, with the change of the production process, workers should be adjusted to that new system properly. The training of the firms is crucial in that respect. But, firms do not allow trade unions to interfere in their training programs. The most important reason is that unions try to create an atmosphere of solidarity among workers while employers will resist that.

V.5- Are There Solutions?

Although trade unions are the most important institutions for workers, and they can raise their grievances through these organizations, nowadays, the union movement faces too many problems. In addition to that, the intellectual views that defend the union movement have changed. These developments have worried the unionists very much. But, they argue that they will always continue to be in the struggle. In these days, the globalization process is questioned, since the positive expectations of unions from globalization are not realized. Contrarily, problems are created and are deepened day by day. The ideas have become pessimistic about

globalization. On the other hand, this is also a sign of hope for the working class because their warnings have now become reality. Trade unions are now aware of the dangers very much. That indicates that the struggle against the harmful effects of globalization will continue altogether.

Today, the most important concern of trade unions is to preserve the existing organizational capacity. In order to do that, they have to create new ways for organizing. The workers' consciousness has to be revitalized and unions do need new methods, new negotiations, new ideas for the work organization. The production process has changed and the quality of worker has also changed. The number of workers in service sector has increased. This situation has also changed the views of workers about trade unions. Trade unions also have to fight against this type of misunderstanding.

The workers have begun to question what is happening in the world. They want to know why they cannot benefit from that change although the technological change is bringing many benefits. The labour process is now so intense, ie. the labor productivity is increasing, but the workers' rewards are not as much as it should be. These questions give hope to unionists. They want to educate their workers along that way.

The international solidarity of unions is also an important subject. That solidarity have gained strength very much. But, the main problem is the ability to move simultaneously. That is to say, if you go on a strike in a factory like Netaş in Turkey, it has to be supported by workers of factories which are affiliated within other places. To solve this problem, many international confederations are established. But that movement is very new and is not so strong against the capitalists. In additon, now, the workers are also aware of the need of international

solidarity. That also gives a hope for trade unionists. Unions also provide education on this subject. It is stated emphatically that for DİSK, international solidarity is very important. It should be brought into life very quickly. When you go on a strike in Turkey, the other workers who are working at a related job around the world should support that strike. Other workers should not allow their firms to make business with the firm in Turkey. As a matter of fact, borders should be removed from this point of view. For this reason, the union movement should also go beyond its national borders, ie. internationalised. It means that since capital is globalised with an increasing pace, the working class all around the world should also do the same to fight against the capital.

According to DİSK, the main struggle areas in the future will be in employment, working hours and working conditions. In some sectors like iron and steel, the effect of technology is being felt only in some degree. Since unions have always been busy in struggling for the basic democratic and social rights, they have been unable to follow and deal with the changes in technology. In addition to that, they have lost their power, so they cannot bear political interventions very much. Unions are afraid of being unable to deal with the new technological developments.

Lastik-İş and Petrol-İş believe that the problems can be solved by establishing strong communications and dialog at all levels. They know the importance of changing ideas with firms. The employers should also continue their businesses. As a result, a mutual, strong, rational and optimistic relation can be established.

Consequently, it is known that trade unions are indispensable for the working life, and social and democratic life of societies. Workers can raise their voices by these institutions. But, if one cannot find a condition in which the workers can talk and express their ideas, there is no democracy at the place. The democratic problems

are faced in Turkey as it is not in other countries. Turkey follows the technological changes after the developed and democratic countries. It is a country which imports or transfers technology from abroad.

The effects of the introduction of technology have only recently been felt by the workers. Besides, workers still feel the anti-democratic rules that were initiated by the coup of September, 12. The limitation of the union activities are so strongly stated by laws that the unions cannot solve these problems. The public employees have still do not have the right to strike and to have a proper collective bargaining process and still they have no legal unions. Such a union movement that has no right to strike or cannot search for their rights in a democratic way, cannot be beneficial for their members.

In my opinion, the unions in Turkey still have to fight with anti-democratic practices. Nevertheless, they are aware of the effects of technological progress. Unions know that it is impossible to prevent the introduction of the new technologies, but they cannot accept it totally. The most important thing for them is the conditions and benefits of their members. Everything should work for that idea. But, they have to fight in different areas at the same time. The trade union movement should be realised in their own structures. They still continue for their struggle. They still have hope. As a matter of fact, they find their own power from this confidence and conviction.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Trade unions have always been important institutions of democratic societies, because, they have helped to deliver significant outcomes in terms of improved living standards, equity and cohesion of workers all over the world. However, they now face a dangerous situation created by the international movement of liberalization of economic and political regimes. New conditions require new approaches and policies if the trade unions still wants to be major social actors for the well-being of the society. Mosca and Pressman (1995) stated that “The 21st Century holds in store for unions an image of reduced health care costs, greater participation by previously unorganized segments of the work force, and better understanding and an adaption to technological changes”

In recent decades, the political and economic environment have significantly changed and many of them have had negative effects on the trade union movement. It can be said that one of the main factor behind these changes is the development of new technologies. Especially, after the Second World War, the USA took the leadership in the capitalist world from both economic and political points. The USA has made large amount of investments into technological progress. The use of computers and electronics has widened rapidly. Thus, the flow of knowledge and information have accelerated. This has helped to countries to develop their production process and their economic well beings. However, at the beginning there was a very smooth condition for both capitalists and trade unions, because the social

welfare state policies were well established. Especially in Europe, trade unions had gained many advantages with these policies. That period is named as “the golden age of capitalism”. The production capabilities had increased and the economies had developed. Every societal group could take some benefits from these developments since the social policies were well designed for the society as a whole. That is to say, capitalism could find necessary conditions for its development. With welfare state policies, it could fight with so called the “danger” of communism easily. Trade unions could also get what they wanted. For that reason, they had very smooth policies and rested in a harmonical way within the system. Unions had no problems in terms organization and increasing the number of members. Moreover, full employment was realized in those economies.

Turkish trade unions were also in a good condition during these years. In about 1950s, many unions and a confederation were established. The worker movement had taken many steps. After 1960, for a while, we can say that trade unions had their golden period in Turkey. With the Constitution of 1961, Turkey had entered into a very democratic era. In every aspect of society, democratization process could be seen. Trade unions have also gained important rights in terms of organization and practices.

But after 1970, everything has changed. The capitalist economies were with a big economic crisis. Production could not adequately respond to the market demand. The USA began to loose its technological leadership in the world economy. First Germany and Japan, later South Korea entered the world market. An intensified competition began. The economies found out new policies and new strategies and also searched for new sources. For profit making, the scales of production were decreased and unemployment became a permanent problem. First of all, the public

spendings were cut, especially, with the Reagan and Thatcher administrations. The welfare state spendings were reduced. The barriers in front of the capital had begun to be removed. The role of state in economy diminished. In that period, the new applications in the production process began to be used with the help of technological developments. The problems of Fordist production process could be solved with technology. The Post-Fordist era started. In addition to that, the scale and scope of the capital movement also changed and went beyond its national borders. Internationalization process could be seen in every aspect. The name of that new era was “globalization”.

Globalization brought about many things, both positive and negative to the world. According to Jones first of all, globalization intensifies the competitive pressure in markets, accelerated the mobility of capital, and added to the vulnerability of labor. Second, technological changes made it possible to reshape production through new forms of industrial organization, including sub-contracting and the spatial reorganization of production the systems. Third, there were changes in the skill composition of the workforce along with the large scale entry of women into labour markets.(Jones, 1999)

The large enterprises have decreased their production scales. They have created new units of production while employing small number of workers for each unit and have also geographically diversified the production process. These new enterprises are small in size and decentralized administratively. The production units that require highly skilled work force rest on their own country; on the other hand, the other units, that require less qualified work force are brought to underdeveloped or developing countries. (Çetik, Akkaya, 1999)

The scale of production is very much related to the scale of the firm. In these firms, the managers can get greater autonomy in the workplace interrelations. With the new system, many new managerial practices have been created, such as total quality management, quality control processes, working circles, etc. New departments have been seen; ie human resources, public relations and future developments for creating new strategies in the firm. All of these new ideas are also considered as the hidden way to keep the authority (or dominance) in the firm and new names of the exploitation process of workers. All of them create problems for trade unions. Unions are trying to adapt themselves to these new practices while maintaining their role in the firm.

The composition of workers has changed. Instead of manual-workers, the new ones tend to be better educated, individualistic and less motivated by class interests and the labour solidarity. Thus, they are differentiated in terms job, wage and position. New workers have been included in the process that let them use their minds for the production. Hence, they have become more dependent on the job and on the firm and less dependent on the workers' solidarity and trade unions. Because, the workers have been imposed the differentiation and they cannot see them at the same level with other workers. Thus, the level of solidarity between them tend to decrease. This is an important problem that trade unions are facing in terms of organizing workers.

While, the composition of workers have changed, the highly educated workers have been employed, education have also become an important subject for both firms and trade unions. But the firms never allow trade unions to join their training programs. Trade unions prepare their own education programs.

The labour market has become more flexible. Many different applications are used, such as sub-contracting, hiring the temporary and part-time workers, employing unregistered workers, etc. All these practices have also gained the political legitimacy and support. In addition to that, women workers, children and migrant workers are employed. For trade unions, it is very hard to keep the solidarity between them and to organize them under one roof.

Especially, after 1980s, the globalization process gained momentum. The liberalization have been seen in many areas. The role of state has been diminished. With the huge pressure from the developed countries, many developing nations cannot resist the globalization process. The USA, for example, has always intervened in policies of the countries with international institutions like IMF, World Bank and World Trade Organization (WTO). In addition to the huge level of competition in the world market, high economic and political pressures are created over the developing and less-developed countries. For this reason, developing countries are forced to open their borders and accept liberal economic and free trade policies. States are forced to stay away from the economic activities and cut the public spendings. They are also forced to implement the privatization programs. That is to say, the capital backed by the US and other developed governments do everything to remove the barriers for the valorization of capital and profits.

In Turkey, the union movement developed essentially after 1950's. Because of a limited amount of capital accumulation and industrialisation, there was no possibility for the development of working class idea. The trade union practices could not be developed until the multi-party period. After that, some laws were promulgated. In 1952, the first trade union federation of Turkey, TÜRK-İŞ, was established. Some big unions were also established in those years. However, at that

time, there was high political pressure on the unions. After 1960, with the new constitution, all the democratic rights of trade union activities were legalized. Turkey lived its most democratic period. Trade union movements gained the right to strike and to make collective bargainings. In 1961, the Labour Party was formed. This was followed by the establishment of DİSK-1967, MİSK-1970 and HAK-İŞ-1976. All three federations were established by three different political ideas, yet, the Turkish unions were also influenced much from the crisis of 1970's. In addition to that, the country faced economic and political unrest very much. After the coup d'état of March 1970, the democratic rights were limited. The struggle between two political wings, the left and the right intensified day by day. The political turbulence continued until 1980. After the coup d'état of September, 12, 1980, Turkey entered its darkest era of democracy. With the constitution of 1982, all the democratic processes of the Turkish society were heavily limited if not totally ended. The military regime intervened in every aspect of the political and social rights. All the political parties were closed. Every nongovernmental social institutions were closed. Many writers, intellectuals, journalists were put into prisons. Trade union movement has also affected by these developments. Many trade unions and all confederations were closed, except TÜRK-İŞ. All the rights were prohibited with new the laws (#2821 and #2822) However, the number of unionised workers increased. Turkey faced a big migration from rural areas to big cities because of severe economic conditions in rural areas. At the end of 1980s, unions gained some of their rights. The wages increased. Many unions were reopened. Turkey had its largest legal strikes in 1990. Unfortunately, the economy and production processes were adversely influenced vey much from the globalization process and the international flow of capital. Turkey became more dependent on developed countries and international

capital; thus, its foreign debt increased fast; the flow of money capital was intensified. After the increases in wages, the capitalists tried to find new ways to increase profits. Sub-contracting applications, unregistered workers were used extensively.

At the beginning of 2001, there were 106 workers' unions, 52 employers' unions and 4 confederations in 28 economic activities determined in both public and private sectors.

Today, it is obvious that trade unions face with many problems in Turkey. In order to solve them, it can be stated in brief that:

First of all, the existing situation and problems should be clearly defined and analysed. Proper policies should be formulated and established according to these analyses. Problems should be discussed with the extensive participation of workers and if possible, interested others, like farmers, environmentalists, feminists and intellectuals within a democratic environment. In addition to that, they have to find new goals and policies in order to cope with the changing world situation and domestic conditions. A determined fight can now be considered as the *raison d'être* for unions. The old policies become insufficient to tackle with the existing situation. All of these policies should be properly re-established. In that respect, new understandings should be used in the union movement. In order to avoid new mistakes, the historical background should also be properly analysed.

The rights of workers, of course, are very crucial for unions in terms of their living. For this reason, bargaining should be made in order to increase the living standards. In other words, as well as wage policy, they have to prepare strong policies for the other issues also, such as development of the level of work force or

social life of workers etc. The demands of workers have to be taken into more consideration in that respect.

The solidarity between the workers and the other organisations is extremely important for any civil society. Communication and sharing ideas may be effective in the determination of policies. Besides, solidarity should be kept within the whole working class.

Trade unions should work very much about the technology and the results of the introduction of the new technologies. After that, they can establish new policies and can also involve in the decision-making process which are vital aspects for the working conditions under the new global regime.

It can be stated that the education of workers on these issues is the most important aspect of this restructuring. The unionists should arrange necessary educational programs for their workers. These programs should be directed towards, not only their workers, but, if possible, to the society as a whole.

The scope of union organisation should change. Additionally, unions have to target areas in which the organisation is not easy; such as women, child-labour, unregistered workers, etc. Especially unregistered workers cannot take the same rights as the other workers. By formulating a new legal provision, they should also be included in bargaining. That is to say, all illegal workers should be registered.

More democratic laws concerning workers and unions should be a continuous subject and immediate demand of all unions. All means must be used to achieve this target. These laws should not only be democratic and but also take the workers' problems created in the new production system into consideration, and obviously trade unions should force the government in that respect.

Researches may play a crucial role in the establishment of policies. Research centres of the unions should work very properly. The solutions should be negotiated with different institutions and policies should be established according to these negotiations. Academicians should be more helpful to trade unions.

Finally, I want to express that the success of the struggle is determined by the level of knowledge. Only the level of consciousness and education can adequately respond the problems of the changing world. Awareness and raising activities are inseparable elements of union policies. The problems change, so the policies should be altered. Trade unions should be aware of and be ready to adjust for these changes. Last but not the least international cooperation is becoming vital in almost all fronts. In addition to the international movements of capital, the increasing importance of multi- national corporations, new issues, such as technological developments, environment, migrant workers, employment of women and children are becoming international problems. Even bribery in governments is internationalised. Thus, unions must cooperate their foreign counterparts on more concrete terms.

In every society, trade unions play a crucial role in terms of social cohesion and democratic life. In Turkey, this role is much more crucial. Not only the trade unions, but also all the other non-governmental organizations are important actors for that role, because, Turkey has always lived democratic and social problems throughout its history.

It can be stated that trade union movement all over the world was influenced from the technological developments very much, so did Turkish trade unions. But, there is a big difference. They are also affected very much from the political and democratic problems at home. Even more, they are affected by these problems much more than technological developments, because they have always faced political

pressures from politicians and capitalists. Turkish governments have almost continuously taken side with the capitalists. The social consensus has never been established properly.

In terms of technological progress, Turkey is a developing country. That is to say, it cannot produce its own technology. Turkey uses imported technology and is dependent on developed countries in this context. I think that the main reason that lies behind that dependency, is not only the recent crises of the economy but also the limited level of industrialization, capital formation and lack of technology creation domestically. For this reason, adoption of the new production processes and creating new technologies are becoming very difficult and costly. Thus, in order to gain its economic well being again, Turkey has to create its own investment priorities and establish its own economic, social and political policies by itself.

Because of the political unrest during the last 20 years, Turkey was unable to realise its economic developments. Today, Turkey is ruled with the anti-democratic constitution of 1982. Nowadays, a new law concerning public employees' trade unions has been promulgated. However, public workers did not get their right to strike and collective bargaining which are the main ways for workers to seek their basic rights. After that law, one wonders how the public workers will seek their rights and how they can raise their voices and basic democratic demands. Under these conditions, it cannot be claimed that Turkey is a modern and democratic country. For this reason, Turkish trade unions will still combat against democratic problems more than technological ones.

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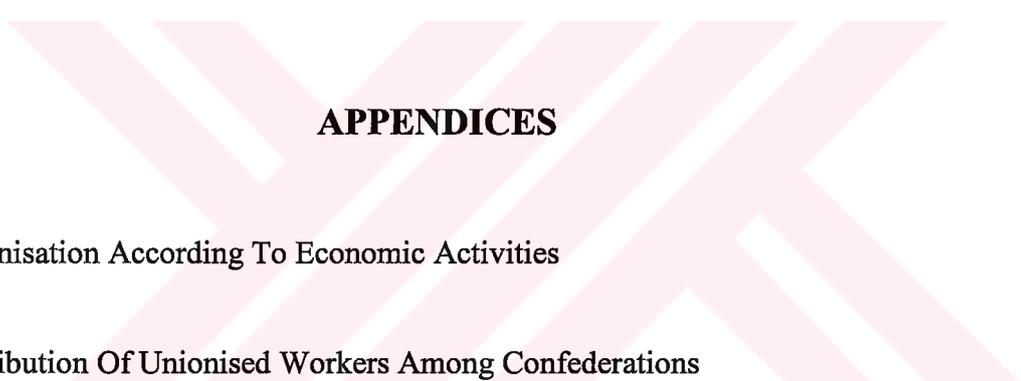
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APPENDICES

- 1- Unionisation According To Economic Activities
- 2- Distribution Of Unionised Workers Among Confederations
- 3- Trade Unions and Confederations

TABLE 1: UNIONISATION ACCORDING TO ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES (JAN. 2001)

Economic Activity Number	Name	Total Workers	Number of Unions	Union Members	Membership Rate-Percent
1	Agri.Forest,Fishing	135 690	5	120 471	88,8
2	Mining	120 058	3	79 221	66,0
3	Petrol.,Chem. Rubber	213 918	3	105 106	49,1
4	Food Industry	328 060	5	256 784	78,2
5	Sugar	32 .849	1	31 945	97,2
6	Textile	503.211	8	407.268	80,9
7	Leather	61.309	1	15 .370	25,1
8	Wood	80 931	4	18 147	22,4
9	Paper	30 299	2	17 290	57,1
10	Press	37 654	2	7 485	19,9
11	Banking-Insura.	116 995	5	114 783	98,1
12	Cement, Clay-Glass	132 886	3	69 671	52,4
13	Metal	538 488	7	358 466	66,6
14	Ship Building	9 496	2	4 602	48,5
15	Construction	689 312	5	179 489	26,0
16	Energy	137 136	4	109 .931	80,1
17	Comm. Office, Edu., Arts	430 708	5	141 549	32,8
18	Highway Transport	94 641	2	20 288	21,4
19	Railway Transport	36 768	1	20 167	54,9
20	Sea Transport	37 224	1	12 .018	32,3
21	Air Transport	21.383	3	12 488	58,4
22	Storage-Warehousing	18 021	2	6.467	35,9
23	Communication	48 753	2	46 414	95,2
24	Health	53. 255	3	13 .357	25,1
25	Accom.,Enterta.	216 .688	4	70 294	32,4
26	National Defence	34 777	1	32 611	93,8
27	Journalism	9 228	2	3 683	39,9
28	General Services	367 806	8	305 742	83,1
	TOTAL	4 537 544	84	2 580 927	56,9

Notes:

1.Economic activities are grouped and numbered officially.

2.Total workers are those that documented according to the Union Law of 2821 and sent to the Ministry of Labor and Social Security.

3.Numbers of trade unions show the amount of the unions which are active in the respective activity , without indicating their relative shares in the total.. Out of 84 unions that are active, 47 or only about half of them are able to have more than 10 per cent of workers that legally required for making collective bargaining agreements.

Source: Ministry of Labour and Social Security (2001) *Labour Statistics*. Ankara.

**TABLE.2.DISTRIBUTION of UNIONISED WORKERS AMONG
CONFEDERATIONS(Selected Years)**

Year	TÜRK-İŞ	%	DİSK	%	HAK-İŞ	%	İNDEP.	%	TOTAL
1984	1 147 749	80,8	---	---	105 858	7,5	166 612	11,7	1 420 219
1990	1 567 501	78,5	---	---	189 090	9,6	241 288	12,1	1 997 564
1991	1 675 301	78,6	---	---	249 637	11,7	205 873	9,7	2 130 811
1992	1 766 535	78,4	19 378	0,1	268 035	11,9	200 323	8,9	2 254 271
1993	1 815 271	73,0	208 266	8,4	272 338	11,0	189 806	7,6	2 485 681
1994	1 967 260	74,4	334 765	12,7	283 292	10,7	53 141	2,0	2 644 417
1995	1 978 035	74,2	329 337	12,3	295 729	11,1	59 704	2,2	2 667 014
1996	2 014 452	74,4	313 046	11,6	317 265	11,7	60 098	2,2	2 708 784
1997	2 047 708	74,6	325 504	11,7	335 577	12,1	64 128	2,3	2 774 622
1998	2 134 593	73,0	358 325	12,3	356 642	12,2	71 119	2,4	2 923 546
1999	2 217 105	73,0	371 926	12,2	367 377	12,1	77 033	2,4	3 037 172
2000	1 789 873	72,5	314 321	12,7	283 908	11,5	76 955	3,1	2 568 591
2001	1 861 146	72,1	343 718	13,3	293 212	11,4	79 044	3,1	2 580 927

Notes:1. Figures are published in the *Official Gazette of Turkey* in January and July of each year.Excep 2001, the figures are of July.

2. The number of unions (or federations) that are member of
 -TÜRK-İŞ was 32 until January 1994, after that date the number is 33;
 -DİSK has started in mid 1992 with 2 unions, in January 1993 its members were 28 until July 1994, afterward the number was 25 for one year and later unions that are members of DİSK amount to 26.
 -Total number of unions that are member of Hak-İş is 7 and its stable over the years.
 -Two unions are members of MİSK which has started in 1994 with total numbers of workers of less that 6 000 and decreased steadily to about 1500 in recent years. The relative share of MİSK is less that one per cent, ie. negligible.

-Finally the number of Independent Unions was 46 in 1984 and decreased to about 25 in later years.

Source.Ministry of Labour and Social Security (2001) *Labour Statistics* Ankara.
 and www.calisma.gov.tr.

TABLE 3: TRADE UNIONS AND CONFEDERATIONS
(selected years)

Years	Number of trade unions		Number of confederations	
	Workers'	Employers'	Workers'	Employers'
1963	565	78	1	1
1964	595	92	2	1
1965	668	95	2	1
1973	637	104	3	1
1974	675	101	3	1
1980	733	106	7	1
1982	676	102	2	1
1984	138	60	3	1
1985	99	48	3	1
1992	106	51	3	1
1993	116	54	3	1
1994	118	54	4	1
1999	107	53	4	1
2000	106	52	4	1

Source: *<http://www.calisma.gov.tr>