



International  
Labour  
Office  
Geneva

# Global Labour University



**STRENGTHENING SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION THROUGH A  
GLOBAL NETWORK FOR DECENT WORK AND SOCIAL JUSTICE**

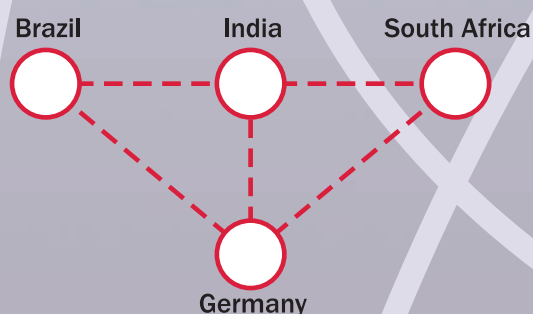


## The Global Labour University: meeting the challenge of globalisation.

The Global Labour University (GLU) is a network of universities, international and national trade unions, civil society organisations and the International Labour Organization (ILO) that was created as a partnership for international knowledge management, research, and capacity building. Primarily based on university campuses in Brazil, South Africa, India, and Germany, the GLU offers postgraduate programmes and research opportunities for trade unionists and labour activists. Combining academic studies with practical work through close cooperation with trade unions and field based internships, the GLU provides a true “one world” research and learning environment for labour to research, analyse, and identify effective policy measures to meet the labour challenges of today.

### A New Channel for the South

The GLU is the only network worldwide that offers a global cooperation between trade unions and academic institutions with a strong focus on South-South cooperation. Over the past five years it has strengthened the voice of the South in global debates, and many of its alumni have taken up new responsibilities and leadership functions in their organisations. The network creates new channels for trade unionists and researchers from the South, bringing a confident southern voice to a global labour discourse.



## Building the research and knowledge capacity of trade unions in the South

Trade unions are a vital proponent of social justice in many countries and a key element of civil society. As global production and manufacturing capacity moves to the South, workers in the South are increasing their organising to meet the challenge of globalisation and to achieve decent work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity for all. Improved international knowledge networks of trade unions, research institutions and universities are instrumental for creating the competence and capacity to address the needs for a social dimension of globalisation. Trade unions need to strengthen not only their organisational but also their analytical capacity at both the national and global levels. Solutions cannot be found through a North-South knowledge transfer but must be arrived at through a joint global research and deliberation process. The active role of labour organisations in Brazil, India and South Africa in shaping the future of their societies is an inspirational source for new ideas far beyond their own countries.

### How does the GLU build the research capacity and knowledge networks of trade unions?

Trade unions face and recognise the need to look beyond national borders and beyond institutional barriers in order to be vital actors within national and international civil society. Partnerships with academic institutions outside the labour movement and sharing experiences with people from other countries facing similar challenges not only helps to understand complex realities, but also generates new ideas and answers.

Though the core element of the GLU is a Master's programme, the GLU also includes a vast network of academics and trade unionists from around the world who both contribute their expertise to the network, and gain new knowledge and capacity from GLU research, conferences, and publications.

## 1/ Master's degree programmes in labour and globalisation

The Master's programmes are developed jointly by universities, the Global Unions, the ILOs' Bureau for Workers' activities, and workers organisations primarily from Brazil, South Africa, India and Germany. To date, the course has drawn students from over 40 countries from all over the Global South.

University	Location	Trade Union	Master's in
University of Witwatersrand	Johannesburg, South Africa	COSATU	Labour and Development, Economic Policy, Globalisation and Labour
State University of Campinas	Campinas, Brazil	CUT	Social Economy and Labour
Tata Institute of Social Sciences	Mumbai, India	AITUC, INTUC, HMS, SEWA	Globalisation and Labour
University of Kassel/ Berlin school of Economics and Law	Kassel and Berlin, Germany	DGB	Labour Policies and Globalisation

## 2/ Student Exchanges, Visiting Professors, Workshops and Internships

To bring added dialogue within the South, GLU Master's students have the opportunity to study for a semester at one of the other GLU campuses, or to conduct their internship with a trade union in another country. International workshops with global unions help students develop policy projects to transfer theoretical knowledge into the practical work of trade unions. Professors also travel to the other campuses as guest lecturers and visiting professors, sharing knowledge and expertise across the network.

## 3/ Research cooperation

Whether they are back with their trade unions, continuing their studies, or aiding the labour movement in other ways, GLU alumni continue to develop their skills and knowledge through ongoing research projects. Projects are jointly developed at annual GLU Alumni summer schools and include research on:

- Global sporting events and local labour rights
- Minimum wage
- Role of women in trade unions
- Migrant domestic worker empowerment strategies
- Global industrial relations
- The effectiveness of international framework agreements between trade unions and multinational companies
- Trade union strategies to influence national trade policies
- Organizing the unorganised – closing the representational gap in MSEs.



### Work, Livelihoods and economic security in the 21st Century: Comparing India, Brazil and South Africa

*This GLU alumni research project that is currently underway provides a typical example of the GLU research agenda. This South-South interdisciplinary research project examines how the governments of these three countries are responding to economic insecurity through innovative social protection and public work programmes, and the role of civil society and trade unions in formulating and implementing these policies.*



## 4/ Conferences and workshops

GLU conferences and workshops provide GLU members, alumni and students with the opportunity to meet to debate new ideas, present their research, strengthen networks, and increase horizontal communication within the growing community of labour activists and researchers from the South. The Annual GLU Conference chooses a cutting edge topic and takes place at each GLU campus on a rotating basis. Regional and global GLU Alumni Workshops and an annual Alumni Applied Research Summer School provide a platform for further research and collaboration. In 2011, the GLU Conference takes place in Johannesburg, South Africa with a focus on trade union and social movement policy and mobilising strategies.



2009 GLU Alumni “Decent Work” Workshop, Johannesburg, South Africa.



2008 GLU Conference, “What Ladder? What Tree? Global Development: Challenges for Union Strategies”, Campinas, Brazil.

## 5/ ENGAGE

A short term Diploma Course on Labour Policies and Globalisation that was designed for those trade unionists who are not able to take an entire year off for the Master’s programme, but who still stand to benefit from the quality and specificity of the GLU curriculum. ENGAGE integrates practice with theory by including an 8 week internship with a trade union. During the programme, students partner with a national or international trade union center to develop policy projects that will be implemented when they return home.



2009 GLU Conference “Financialization of Capital – Deterioration of Working Conditions”, Mumbai, India.

## 6/ International Center for Development and Decent Work (ICDD)

To strengthen the debate and research around the social dimension of globalisation and the Decent Work agenda, the GLU became a key partner in the newly established International Research Centre on Development and Decent Work (ICDD). Strongly based on the GLU network and funded by the German Academic Exchange Service, the ICDD offers an international PhD programme located within 6 universities in the South and the University of Kassel in Germany.



2010 GLU conference – “Sharing the burden! Shaping the future? – labour responses to the global crisis”, Berlin, Germany

## GLU Alumni: In their own words

Crispen Chinguno (Zimbabwe), University of Wits, South Africa, Class of 2009



*"The Global Labour University offered me the utmost opportunity that can ever be available to a trade unionist. It tremendously enhanced my intellectual and research capacity and understanding of the current challenges facing labour in the neoliberal globalisation era. I am now very confident and strongly believe I can make a difference not only for the labour movement in my home country of Zimbabwe but also for the global labour movement."*

Daniela Sampaio de Carvalho (Brazil), University of Wits, South Africa, Class of 2008



*"While at the GLU, I increased my knowledge of development, labour relations, foreign investment, and the impacts of globalization, as well as the socio-political conditions of the African continent. But beyond the academics, the GLU also broadened my understanding of the world through exchanges with people facing the difficult realities of the Global South."*

Abhishek Sawant (India), Tata Institute of Social Sciences, India, Class of 2008



*"During the GLU course in Mumbai I learnt to see trade unionism as going beyond just shop floor economics and gained a better understanding of global macro economics, which has improved mine and my union's organizing efforts. The GLU network has provided me with the confidence and opportunities to make linkages that strengthen my union and the labour movement at large."*

## Alumni composition

**TOTAL GRADUATED (SEPT. 2010): 132**

- 74 female (56%) / 58 male (44%)
- 15% went on to PHD or TU related research
- 80% went back to the labour movement
- 5% - other

### NATIONALITIES:

Since 2004, students have come from 49 countries across the globe.

## Key GLU Publications

### Global Labour Column

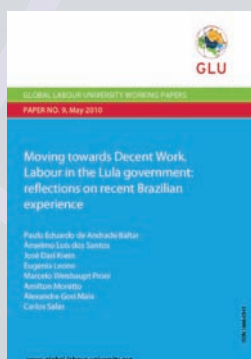
Edited out of the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa, the Global Labour Column provides a forum in which labour movements and their allies around the world can connect, debate, and share knowledge and experiences. By drawing on leading academic researchers and trade union leaders and activists, the Column is a unique platform for debate on responses to the crisis and, more broadly, to the challenges of globalisation. <http://column.global-labour-university.org/>

### "Don't Waste the Crisis: Critical Perspectives for a new Economic Model"



This collection of short articles published in the Global Labour Column examines the causes and consequences of the global financial crisis, with a focus on labour. The articles suggest ways to strengthen labour's capacity to influence policy debate, offering inspiration to those who feel that national and international policies must change and who are convinced that the labour movement has much to contribute after years of declining influence.

### GLU Working Papers



**No.6:** The Theoretical Debate about Minimum Wages; February 2009; by Hansjörg Herr, Milka Kazandziska, Silke Mahnkopf-Praprotnik

**No.7:** Servitude with a Smile: An Anti-Oppression Analysis of Emotional Labour; March 2009; by Patricia Chong

**No.8:** Developing a Labour Voice in Trade Policy at the National Level; February 2010; by Donna McGuire, Christoph Scherrer et al

**No.9:** Moving towards Decent Work. Labour in the Lula government: reflections on recent Brazilian experience; May 2010; by Paulo Eduardo de Andrade Baltar, Anselmo Luís dos Santos et al

**No.10:** Trabalho no governo Lula: uma reflexão sobre a recente experiência brasileira; May 2010; by Paulo Eduardo de Andrade Baltar, Anselmo Luís dos Santos et al

## Getting Involved

For application and other information on each programme, please visit the GLU website or contact the programme coordinators at the following addresses:

### GLU Master's Programme

[www.global-labour-university.org](http://www.global-labour-university.org)

Brazil: [glu.brazil@eco.unicamp.br](mailto:glu.brazil@eco.unicamp.br)

Germany: [glu.germany@uni-kassel.de](mailto:glu.germany@uni-kassel.de)

India: [glu.india@tiss.edu](mailto:glu.india@tiss.edu)

South Africa: [glu.southafrica@wits.ac.za](mailto:glu.southafrica@wits.ac.za)

### GLU International Secretariat:

ILO Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV)

Frank Hoffer: [hoffer@ilo.org](mailto:hoffer@ilo.org)

### ENGAGE

[engage@uni-kassel.de](mailto:engage@uni-kassel.de)

[www.global-labour-university.org/216.html](http://www.global-labour-university.org/216.html)

### ICDD

[icdd@uni-kassel.de](mailto:icdd@uni-kassel.de)

<http://cms.uni-kassel.de/unicms/index.php?id=icdd>

### Global Labour Column

The Global Labour Column is published weekly on the following website:

<http://column.global-labour-university.org/>

To receive a weekly email announcing the new article, please send an email to the column editor, Nicolas Pons-Vignon: [Nicolas.Pons-Vignon@wits.ac.za](mailto:Nicolas.Pons-Vignon@wits.ac.za)

### GLU Mailing List

For programme updates, sign-up to the GLU Info mailing list by sending an email to Claire Hobden: [hobden@ilo.org](mailto:hobden@ilo.org)



## Partners

### Universities

- Universidade Estadual de Campinas, Brazil
- University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa
- Tata Institute of Social Sciences, India
- Universität Kassel, Germany
- Hochschule für Wirtschaft und Recht Berlin (HWR), Germany
- Ruskin College, Oxford, U.K.

### Global Unions

<http://www.global-unions.org/>

### National Trade Unions

- Central Única dos Trabalhadores (CUT) / Observatorio Social, Brazil
- Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) / National Labour and Economic Development Institute (Naledi), South Africa
- Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (DGB) / DGB Bildungswerk, Germany
- Industriegewerkschaft Metall (IG Metall), Germany
- Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA), India
- Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS), India
- Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC), India
- All India Trade Union Confederation (AITUC), India

### International Organisations and NGOs

- International Labour Organisation (ILO) / Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV)
- Global Union Research Network (GURN)
- International Institute for Labour Studies (IILS), ILO
- Hans-Böckler-Stiftung (HBS), Germany
- Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), Germany

The GLU is grateful to the German Ministry for Development Cooperation, the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Inwent, the ILO and national and international trade union organisations for their generous financial support.