

PROSJEKT

FORBUNDSalliansen 

Key points of the reports

Basis for consultation
hearing on union merger
11. september 2012



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Introduction

This summary emphasises a number of individual points raised in the consultation documents. The fact that certain points are emphasised might be thought to suggest that they are considered to be of more importance than others. This is not the case. They are being emphasised because they involve issues that we assume will be of interest. All points raised in the consultation document are of importance and must, of course, be viewed in context. A summary can never do full justice or provide a sufficient basis for an in-depth debate. The reader is therefore urged to read the reports in their entirety. A collection of the reports can be downloaded from the websites of the individual unions and from www.forbundsalliansen.no.

Taking an extensive project description as the point of departure, a number of issues of significance to a possible merger have been investigated. The reports were drafted by working groups comprising representatives of the unions, all the unions having equal representation. Since Industry Energy joined the project in June 2012, the reports have been revised and now cover all four unions in the Trade Unions' Alliance. A total of 56 people have participated in subprojects since the autumn of 2011.

The following reports are on the table:

- Action programme and membership benefits
- Statutes
- Financial issues and membership subscriptions
- Shared premises at national level and shared administrative systems
- Information activities
- The decision-making process leading up to the formation of a new union

In addition to these reports, four working groups have worked on information and involvement.

Why merge?

Far-reaching change in trade unions is a rare occurrence. Although the merger would represent a major step, renewal is important if the challenges of the future are to be met. We could become a union with 132,000 members and the resources to do an even better job for our members. We would strengthen our position within LO (Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions) and vis-a-vis our counterparties and the authorities. They must become even more responsive to our demands and points of view. In this way we would be able to strengthen our efforts in key areas of policy, both safeguarding existing jobs and creating new jobs within all our occupations.

A merged union would have at its disposal extensive financial and human resources. Concentrating functions that at present are conducted in parallel by the four individual unions would make for greater efficiency. Recruitment, training, shared publications, administration are just some examples of this. We would have more specialists on negotiation, law, politics etc., and be in a position to provide even better membership services and exert more influence on Norwegian society. We would see related collective agreements in context and demand increases for groups that are lagging behind.

132,000 members also means stronger regional organisation with increased scope for follow-up and higher attendance figures at courses and meetings. Although the elected representation and organisation at the individual workplace will remain the same, the increased strength inherent in a merged union would be felt throughout the country.

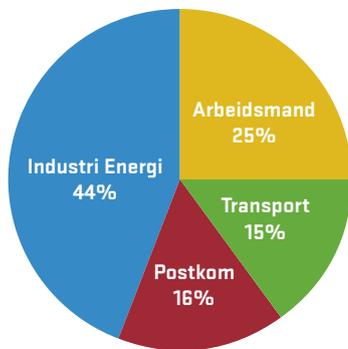
In the longer term, the everyday working lives of our members are defined and safeguarded by our overall political and organisational strength. The reports show that a strong, merged union is consistent with the ambition of offering good service and improved membership benefits.



1. The unions

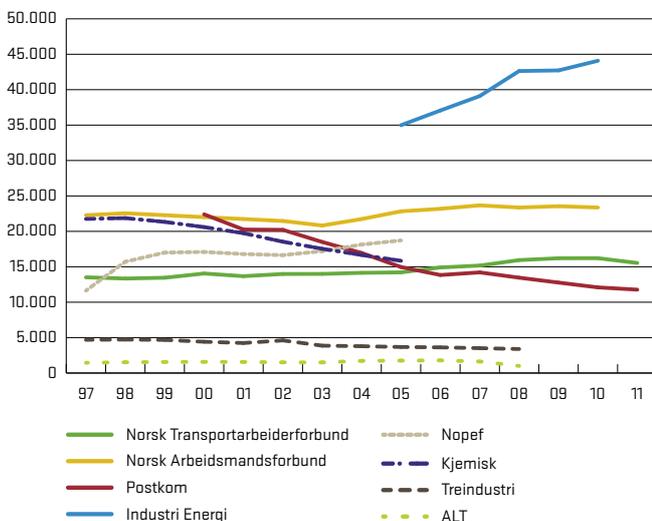
In total, the four unions in the Alliance comprise 132,000¹ members. Of these, Industry Energy has 58,000 members, the Norwegian Union of General Workers (NAF) 32,466, the Norwegian Post and Communications Union (referred to in the following as Postkom) 21,000 and the Norwegian Transport Workers' Union (NTF) 20,000 members. (Of this figure there are a total of 95,607 members in active employment².) Accordingly, the memberships of the individual unions make up the following percentages of the Alliance as a whole:

Membership breaks down as follows:



Three of the unions: Industry Energy, NTF and NAF, have registered increases in the number of members in employment, whereas Postkom has registered a decline. The graph below shows the development in the number of members in employment between 1997 and 2011³.

Membership numbers, in employment, 1997-2011



The Alliance website contains extensive data on the composition of the memberships of the individual unions (www.forbundsalliansen.no).

Collective agreements and membership groups

In total, the four unions are parties to 89 collective agreements (NTF: 22 agreements, Industry Energy: 26 agreements, NAF: 33 agreements and Postkom: eight agreements). These collective agreements have a total of 10 basic agreements as their first parts. In addition to the four unions, LO (and in some cases, other unions) is also an employee party to the agreements. A large number of employers' organisations are counterparties to these agreements. The merger of the unions would not change these collective agreements. They would remain as they are, but could, if applicable, be amended jointly by the parties, subject to negotiations. The collective agreements follow the demarcation lines drawn up within LO.

The unions are made up of large and small groups or scopes of agreement. The smallest comprise fewer than 100 members. Member groups with more than 1000 members in employment are (ranked by size, union given in brackets): postal workers (Postkom), the electrochemical industry (Industry Energy), cleaners (NAF), mobile offshore installations (Industry Energy), oilfield services (Industry Energy) bus personnel (NTF), security guards (NAF), collective agreement 130 (Industry Energy), engine (NAF), chemical/technical industry (Industry Energy), private facilities (NAF), wholesalers (NTF), offshore operating agreement (Industry Energy), mining industry (NAF), furniture, interiors and wooden goods (Industry Energy), forwarding (NAF), tarmac and road maintenance (NAF), forwarding/transport (NAF), agreement on work on on-shore bases (Industry Energy), and newspaper delivery personnel (NTF).

The organisational structure of the unions

The project description for the Alliance suggested that in organisational terms the project should take the form of an amalgamation that primarily involves the organisational and physical unification of central elements.

The table on next page shows the number of employees and paid shop stewards as at November 2011 (not stated as man-years)⁴:

¹ Figures provided by individual unions (rounded off to whole thousands), June 2012. ² Register of members, Compendia, June 2012. ³ Figures from the annual reports of the unions. [Other method of calculation than used for the Compendia figures. Accordingly these figures are somewhat lower.] The line for Industry Energy does not start until 2007 when the union was formed as a merger of Chemical and Nopef. As the graph shows, Treindustri and ALT joined at a later stage.

| | Total national level | Elected ⁵ | Total employees | Employees national level | Employees local level | Total |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Norsk Arbeidsmandsforbund ⁶ | 23 | 8 | 48 | 15 | 33 | 56 |
| Norsk Transportarbeiderforbund | 18 | 8 | 10 | 10 | 0 | 18 |
| Postkom | 17 | 11 | 6 | 6 | 0 | 17 |
| Industri Energi | 82 | 10 | 72 | 72 | 0 | 82 |
| Sum | 140 | 37 | 136 | 103 | 33 | 173 |

Regional and local⁷

NAF has 11 regional branches. Employees at the branch offices are paid by the national union. The operating grant covers office expenses, rent, clerical work, members' meetings, recruitment measures, membership care, annual meetings, local courses and the like. Members who belong to the individual regional branch elect their branch committee, which is responsible for issues within its area.

NTF has 20 branches at various locations in Norway. These branches are independent legal entities; elected representatives and employees at the branch offices are employed by the individual branch. Membership subscriptions cover pay, local courses, clerical work, members' meetings, membership care, recruitment measures, office expenses, rent, annual meetings and the like. Members who belong to a branch elect their branch committee, which is responsible for issues within its area.

Postkom has seven geographical branches at various locations throughout the country as well as two national branches.

Shop stewards in the branches are paid by Posten Norge. Branch membership subscriptions cover membership care, recruitment efforts, clerical work, local courses, members' meetings, annual meetings and the like. Members who belong to a branch elect their branch committee, which is responsible for issues within its area.

Industry Energy has 508 local branches throughout the country. In most locations, the local branch is equivalent to the workplace branch in a company, elsewhere there are group branches for multiple workplace branches in the same area (especially with regard to the former Chemical Workers Union of Norway and the Norwegian Union of Woodworkers). In some cases there may also be multiple local branches within the same company if the company is spread over multiple geographic locations or if there are separate branches for senior personnel. Where branches have employees, the individual branch will be the employer. In large-scale enterprises there will be multiple full-time shop stewards.

Summarised, the structures of the unions can be described as follows:

| | Norsk Arbeidsmandsforbund | Norsk Transportarbeiderforbund | Postkom | Industri Energi | |
|-------------------------------|---|--|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| National (Union) | Union Head Office in Oslo | Union Head Office in Oslo | Union Head Office in Oslo | Head Office split between Oslo/Stavanger. General Secretary in Oslo. | |
| Regional (Branches) | 9 geographical branches 9 branch offices | 16 geographical trade unions. 2 nationwide trade unions | 7 geographical districts 2 nationwide | | |
| Local (Branches) | | | | 508 branches | |
| Enterprise (Workplace/branch) | 2 branches Local branches | 2 branches Workplace branches | Shop stewards | 435 branches = w/place branches | 73 branches with 275 w/place branches |

⁴ Taken from the report entitled «Økonomi i et nytt forbund» (The Economics of a New Union), 2012. ⁵ All union-paid elected reps. are national. ⁶ In addition, NAF has 13 regional safety representatives (RSRs) for plants. They are employed by the union and are appointed as RSRs for four-year periods. They are largely paid from a fund that the companies pay into, although the union does have some wage and personnel costs, as well as expenses for pensions and maintaining offices. ⁷ Taken from the report entitled «Økonomi i et nytt forbund» (The Economics of a New Union), 2012



The working group that considered the financial position of a new union has identified excellent scope for synergies, including at regional and local levels:

«The difference at local level is not as great as might at first appear to be the case. It seems clear to us that the local organisational structures could profit from collaboration and derive mutual benefit from the available expertise. We believe that greater strength and better utilisation of combined resources could rapidly be achieved

in areas such as:

- Recruitment
- Local courses
- Membership care

Moreover, co-localisation and administrative cooperation could make for improved exploitation of resources and cost savings.»

2. Proposal for a new action programme

The proposal for an action programme is extensive in terms of both its political content and the volume of pages. In addition to discussing fundamental political views and principles, the action programme lays down the merged union's policy on a total of 35 areas. We will confine ourselves here to quoting parts of the introduction on issues of principle and policy.

The action programme and the Trade Unions' Alliance

The action programme is a general document containing issues of principle. The programme reviews important areas of activity and social challenges on which the Alliance will work during the four-year period following the national congress to found the new union. The action programme will be followed up in the form of annual action plans which the statutes propose should be adopted by the national committee of the Alliance. The measures will be concretised and implemented within the Alliance, the branches, or where required by our members.

Fundamental principles

The Alliance is a solidary trade union, which bases its activities on collective agreements and solutions. The Alliance will strive to be a dynamic, unifying and accessible organisation. The Alliance will work to achieve a society that is based on equality, solidarity and democracy to promote a just distribution of the wealth of that society.

Freedom, equality and solidarity are the fundamental ideas of the Labour movement and the activities of the union will be founded on these ideas. Based on these principles the union will safeguard the interests of the members both through active union work in the enterpri-

ses in which its members are employed and through its social and political commitment. The Alliance rejects racism in any form as well as all and any forms of discrimination, harassment and bullying.

Freedom is not simply the absence of compulsion. Freedom also involves opportunity and rights and is predicated on safety and security. Safeguarding job security, safety at work and decent terms of pay and employment for the membership represent the main tasks of the union.

Equality is the heart of human freedom. The union will work to achieve equal life conditions and opportunities for all, irrespective of background, class, education, sex, age, ethnicity, nationality, religion, sexual orientation or whether or not they have a disability. Work for all is a prerequisite for creating equality of life conditions.

Solidarity knows no national borders. A more just redistributive policy and democratic rights in social and working life play a key part in this work. The union will work to achieve a society characterised by economic equality with equal entitlement to social benefits, paid for by taxation according to the ability to pay.

Areas of policy in the proposed action programme:

- Working life
- Health, safety and environment
- Industry policy
- Own organisation
- Social and welfare policy
- Education policy
- International issues
- Membership benefits





3. Subscriptions and membership benefits in the union

In today's society, many of the rights and benefits that have been won by the trade union movement over a period of many years are taken for granted. Employees and managers believe that various provisions are anchored in Norwegian law and are therefore "immovable". For this reason the working group that drafted the membership benefits for the new union wishes to draw attention to the following:

The members will receive:

- The support of experienced negotiators
- Legal assistance with employment issues
- Deductions for the trade union subscription on their tax returns
- Membership journal
- Membership information on the Internet
- Contents insurance
- Favourable offers on insurance cover as well as other membership benefits
- Courses and grants
- Influence on Norwegian society through membership of the LO family of unions

The following will apply to members in companies with collective agreements:

- Orderly conditions of pay and employment
- Influence and negotiating rights at their workplace/company
- Contractually determined pay and higher overtime pay
- Contractually stipulated working hours and working-in arrangements
- Contractual early retirement scheme and severance pay
- Paid welfare leave
- Longer holidays and more holiday pay
- Financial support in the event of strikes or lockouts

One of the tasks allotted to the group working on "The economics of a new union" was to review the matter of subscriptions and to propose how amended rates could be implemented, if applicable. In the assessment of the working group it would be entirely possible to implement an equal subscription from day one without any member suffering an increase in subscriptions as a consequence of the merger of the unions.

The working group's proposal on subscriptions

1. Allocation of the subscription to branch, local branch/workplace branch, union and regional branch will be continued in accordance with the existing practices of the four individual unions.

2. The subscription

- The subscription will be calculated on the basis of gross pay and holiday pay up to a maximum ceiling. The basis for calculating the ceiling will be fixed as at 1 January 2014 at kr 37,450 per month.
- Members in employment will pay 1.3% to the union at national level, this includes four insurance policies (see separate section on insurance cover).
- In addition, a local subscription will be payable to the branch at the rate of 0.25% or the rate decided by the branch.
- The subscription is for the 12 months of the year.
- Postkom: the subscription payable by Postkom members will be calculated on the basis of salary according to scale.
- Taxi drivers and lorry owners: taxi drivers and lorry owners have their own rates. The basis for calculating the percentage subscription for taxi drivers is NOK 24,242 and for lorry owners NOK 25,197 per month (current rates) effective from 1 January 2014.

3. Minimum subscription fee

- Non-working members will pay a minimum subscription of NOK 110 per month. This applies to for example jobseekers/laid off members, old-age pensioners, members on disability pension, members receiving early retirement pensions, members receiving a work assessment allowance (e.g. rehabilitation allowance and sick leave in excess of one year), members on unpaid leave not performing other paid work during the period of leave.
- Exceptions: members who at the time of the merger have been granted exemption from payment of the subscription will retain this exemption.

The working group's proposal for insurance cover to be included in the subscription

The subscription includes the following mandatory insurance policies: LOfavør Group home insurance cover,

LOfavør Basic insurance cover, LOfavør Holiday accident cover and Industrial accident cover⁹.

Other insurance cover

- Help legal protection insurance⁹: Help legal protection at kr 50,- per month. This cover is mandatory for all members. As at the time of introduction Industry Energy, Postkom and NTF had reserved the right for existing members to opt out, a corresponding right to opt out will apply to NAF members.
- Topp travel insurance¹⁰: Travel insurance at kr 75,- per month (current rate). Applies to members who have not reserved the right to opt out. In the case of students/pupils/apprentices and non-working members the travel insurance cover applies to those who have signed up for the insurance cover. In order to take advantage of this cover the premium must either be docked from pay or paid by monthly direct debit.
- Group disability insurance and whole life assurance¹¹: Reasonably-priced and sound insurance cover that provides for disability cover without a personal statement of health. Applies to members who have not reserved the right to opt out. Current prices will be renegotiated.

The working group’s proposal for membership with exemption from subscription payment

- Students: student membership is offered to students at universities and university colleges and technical schools in full-time study. Membership includes LOfavør Group home insurance cover.
- Apprentices: apprentice membership is offered to members on an approved apprenticeship scheme. Membership includes LOfavør Group home insurance cover, LOfavør Basic insurance cover, LOfavør Holiday accident cover and Industrial accident cover.
- Members serving their basic military service: members called up to serve their basic military service are eligible for free membership if they are not being paid by their employer. Membership includes LOfavør Group home insurance cover, LOfavør Basic insurance cover, LOfavør Holiday accident cover and Industrial accident cover.

- Pensioners aged over 75 years: members aged over 75 are eligible for free membership, which includes LOfavør Group home insurance cover and LOfavør Basic insurance cover.
- School pupil membership: school pupil membership is free and is available to school pupils. The upper age limit is 20 years. Membership includes the members’ magazine, the right to guidance on issues relating to pay and conditions of employment, participation on courses and the LOfavør Card, with the right to take out LOfavør insurance cover. No insurance cover included in this membership.

Insurance such as Help legal protection insurance, travel insurance, and group insurance/disability and whole life assurance are not included in free memberships and will need to be taken out by the individual member on a voluntary basis.

Financial positions of the unions and the economic benefits of a merger

Values

Combined assets of all four unions

- Estim. purchase cost of flats, buildings, cabins, holiday homes, furnishings etc¹². 206 mill.
- Equities and other financial assets 108 mill.
- Bank deposits and accts receivable from customers 847 mill.

These figures do not include the assets of the local branches of Industry Energy and NTF. These are financially independent entities.

Equity and funds

The strike funds of NAF, Postkom, NTF and Industry Energy stand at NOK 65 million, NOK 40 million, NOK 38 million and NOK 250 million, respectively.

NAF has its own educational fund which stands at NOK 7.7 million, Postkom has an educational fund which stands at NOK 20 million and Industry Energy has a skills development fund which stands at NOK 2.5 million. These are additional to the educational funds of LO and LO Stat.

⁹ Industrial accident insurance cover: Accidental injury resulting in a lower level of medical invalidity than 15 per cent will normally not be covered under an employer’s insurance cover. This insurance covers treatment costs and pays compensation in the event of accidents at work during working hours involving a degree of medical disability of less than 15 per cent.

⁹ The insurance cover gives members and their families the right to specialist legal assistance on private matters. The insurance cover applies to members who have not opted out and covers essential legal issues such as identity theft, sale of goods, inheritance, cohabitee agreements or prenuptial agreements, divorce or child custody issues, property or neighbour issues, or assistance with drawing up a will. Find out more at www.help.no

¹⁰ The insurance cover applies on all holiday, leisure and business travel – worldwide, with a duration of up to 45 days. No requirements as to overnight stays or that travel must be by air. A journey commences when the policyholder leaves home and lasts until she/he returns. Insurance policy covers you and your family – irrespective of whether the family is travelling together or individually.

¹¹ Insurance is intended to safeguard members financially in the event of permanent occupational disability caused by accident or illness. The amount of indemnity is up to 4G (G=basic NI amount) for disability. The cover applies to members who have not opted out.

¹² The market price is far higher



Other funds

Industry Energy has a benevolent fund for divers which stands at NOK 1.8 million, the OSA supervisory which stands at kr 13 million, the Tom Nordahl Fund which stands at NOK 1.1 million, pension, a restructuring fund of NOK 22.4 million and an International Solidarity Fund which stands at NOK 10.9 mill.

Equity

The combined equity of the unions including the above funds amounts to approx. NOK 1.16 billion.

Provisions

Total national congress provisions amount to NOK 10.6 million.

Liabilities

Total liabilities amount to approximately NOK 41 million. This largely consists of holiday pay, taxes and special taxes. There is no long-term debt.

Pay costs

Total pay expenses (employees and elected representati-

ves) for the four unions as at the end of 2011 amounted to NOK 114.8 million. To this must be added employer's National Insurance contributions and pension fund premiums.

Economic savings

The working group has identified economic gains in the following areas:

- **Premises:** Rent, office expenses, postage/forwarding
- **Administrative expenses:** Computer systems, organisation and structure
- **Decision-making bodies:** Executive committee, council of representatives, national committee, congress, misc. councils and committees

One fundamental assumption underlying the project was that the employees of the individual unions could be confident that there would be no terminations as a consequence of the process. This assumption continues to apply. The number of employees and elected representatives of any new union will correspond to the number of personnel employed by the four individual unions at the time of the merger. Accordingly there will be no economic savings on pay costs associated with the merger.

4. Statutes

The four unions as they exist today are fairly traditional in their structures. In the discussion around the size of the decision-making bodies it has been agreed that efforts should be made to ensure that the relationship between the size of decision-making bodies is such that decisions adopted by lower bodies can be reviewed by other bodies. The working group that has been considering the statutes accordingly recommends that the national committee must be three times the size of the executive committee. As regards the national congress, the working group proposes that a maximum ceiling should be placed on the number of delegates (including the national committee and the executive committee).

The following organisational structure is therefore proposed:

- National congress every four years, 400 delegates
- National committee (58: 39 freely elected + 19 on executive committee)
- Executive committee (19)
- Local organisations

The National Congress

Our proposal is that the national congress should convene every fourth year. The number of delegates at congress should be allocated between the local organisations on the basis of the number of paying members, calculated in accordance with the average number of paying members in the last quarter year prior to the national congress.

The National Committee

The working group proposes that the new union should have a national committee. We have discussed both a council of representatives and a national committee.

In its strictest sense, a council of representatives represents someone. With this solution it is natural to distribute delegates between the local organisations, which will appoint their representatives on the council of representatives. In this process it has been decided that there should be a merger at national level and development at local level. In a process of this nature it will be difficult to find a formula for representation on the council of representatives, because the number and composition of the



FOTO: PAL ANDREASSEN

local organisations may change during the term of the national congress, i.e. some may opt to merge, while others may continue in the old unions/branches/chapters.

The working group therefore proposes that that a national committee should be elected at congress, with members and deputies being freely elected. We propose 39 representatives. This would reflect the relative sizes in relation to the executive committee.

Executive committee

We propose an executive committee comprising 19 representatives, i.e. the general secretary and an additional four members of the management (we have not considered functions), as well as 14 representatives and four deputy representatives elected by the membership. The four deputy representatives have right of attendance at all meetings. In addition, it is our proposal that one representative of the youth committee and two representatives of the employees should attend meetings of the executive committee as observers.

An executive committee comprising 19 representatives may be on the large side, but the working group is of the opinion that during the early phases of a new union it is important that representation be as broad as possible so that no one will feel excluded.

Management committee

We also propose that the five members of the management of the new union, the general secretary and the four others, should make up the management committee of the new union.

Local organisations

The working group has chosen the term «local organisa-

tions» to describe the local entities of the new union. It is proposed that this term should be used for the new units that are established locally as they merge.

While the local structures continue in their existing form it will be necessary to continue the template for statutes established by NTF for its branches and the statutes that NAF applies to its branches. It will also be necessary to determine who is empowered to approve the statutes of Postkom branches.

Industrial councils

Industrial councils have not been proposed as part of the organisational structure of the union, but because we believe that this represents an important element of the new union we have chosen to discuss the issue here.

The working group proposes that industrial councils should be established for all industries with more than 200 members. In the case of the smaller industries it will be necessary to establish pay councils.

Where it is considered expedient to establish collaboration committees, this may be an alternative.

The industrial councils will serve as advisory bodies on issues relating to the industry in question and will play a prominent role in collective bargaining.

The assessments of the steering group

On certain points, the working group on the statutes for a merged union did not reach any conclusions, including on the following issues:

- Associate membership
- Youth secretaries
- Financial support for political parties

The steering group, which comprises the four general



secretaries, has accordingly addressed these issues. An excerpt from the assessment of the steering group is provided below. The full text can be found on the websites of the individual unions and at www.forbundsalliansen.no.

Associate membership

The statutes of Industry Energy provide that the executive committee may in certain cases open the way for associate membership of the union. In such cases the associate members will enjoy the same rights as other members.

At the present time, Industry Energy has some 1000 associate members following the conclusion of a collaboration agreement with the ALT union (Administrative, Management and Technical Positions). The agreement with ALT is an important alliance for Industry Energy. The union has expended a great deal of effort in finding an organisational solution for this collaboration that will be acceptable to ALT. It is important that a solution also be found for these members should the merger of the unions go ahead.

Industry Energy's collaboration agreement entails that ALT will continue to exist as a separate union for as long as this is necessary for technical/agreement purposes. The members of ALT have the status of associate members of Industry Energy. The statutes of Industry Energy contain provisions under which a separate membership subscription arrangement may be agreed for associate members.

When Industry Energy forms a new union together with unions that already have collective agreements in force at a workplace, ALT's members at this workplace will join the new union. They will also become full LO members.

Several unions have concluded various forms of collaboration agreement with competing unions outside LO. In LO's assessment, associate members of an LO union who at the same time are signed up to a union outside LO, will not be regarded as ordinary members for the purpose of membership benefit entitlements from LO. They are accordingly not encompassed by LO's insurance cover or benefits programme, although Industry Energy nevertheless offers equivalent schemes involving group insurance cover to the associate members of the ALT union outside the LOfavør scheme. This cover is provided in collaboration with SpareBank1 and to some extent through other suppliers.

If following the merger the Alliance has a collective agreement at a workplace the ALT members will be encompassed by the Alliance in the same way as our ordinary members. This entails that ALT members at, for example, Hustad Marmor (where NAF has an agreement) would become members were the Alliance to be established as a new union.

The working groups have not considered in detail how associate membership should be handled by a merged union. Views on this question will be sought during the consultation process.

Youth secretaries

The steering group has noted that practice varies between the four unions as regards the election of youth secretaries. The question of whether the youth secretaries should be elected by a youth conference or by the National Congress of the union has been debated. The steering group is of the view that these two approaches could be combined with a youth conference electing a youth committee. The chair of the committee could then be nominated as the youth representative on the executive committee and elected as such at the National Congress. In other words, the steering group proposes that the youth representative should have full rights as a member of the executive committee.

The following wording has been included as point 2 in Article 11 The Executive Committee in the proposal for statutes: "One of the members of the executive shall be nominated by the youth committee as youth representative."

Financial support for political parties

The steering group for the Alliance project has discussed the question of financial support for political parties.

The Union of General Workers has a long tradition of donating financial support to the Labour Party, the Socialist Left Party and the youth wings of the political parties. Postkom has never given direct financial support to any political party, while the Transport Workers' Union has a national congress stating that support should not be given to political parties. The statutes of Industry Energy provide that the central bodies of the union are not authorised to grant such support.

The steering group notes that the majority of the unions do not provide financial support to political parties but at the same time that the granting of such support constitutes a long-standing tradition within the Union of General Workers. The question here is accordingly whether it would be appropriate or necessary to provide for a prohibition against such support in the statutes, given that any financial support to political parties would have to be adopted in the highest decision-making bodies of a union alliance.

The steering group has not come to any conclusion on this question.

5. Information activities in a new union

Based on knowledge on the suitability of media channels as carriers of market communication information for the trade union, the information activities must leave the impression of a strong and vigorous LO trade union.

In addition to disseminating information and debate on issues of trade union policy the information activities of the union should therefore play a central role in the development of the union as a "brand". A large number of members, and the "gravity" that this represents, will be essential to the development of a new brand. All influence will be anchored in this "gravity".

A key issue will be the recruitment of new members through a clear brand. A higher proportion of recruitment to all LO unions will take place as early as at school, through a local presence, in the media and through recruitment campaigns in schools, technical schools, business schools, or university colleges. A greater proportion of new employees will have higher levels of education than past cohorts. This will necessitate a greater degree of coordination with other unions within LO.

Trade union journals

The trade union journals enjoy a strong position with a high readership. Editorial responsibility in the existing journals is clear, and three of the unions purchase services from LO Media.

A merged union should establish its own editorial board with primary responsibility for publishing one common national trade union journal. The journal could comprise a common part and individual sections with scope for separate supplements to be issued. The four journals could be merged to create a single national journal with for example 10 editions each year. A common national journal should be in place immediately after the merger.

In order to clarify the concrete possibilities offered by a single common journal the working group asked LO Media to provide an assessment. It is proposed that LO Media's model for a union journal should be implemented as the journal for a merged union:

- a. An extended editorial board for the Alliance's union journal on paper and on the Internet.
- b. A 56 or 64 page journal. 8 of the pages could if preferred take the form of exchangeable pages tailored to various occupational groups. As an alternative the main journal could be supplemented with pull-out supple-

ments 2-4 times a year; either for all members, or targeted specifically at strategically prioritised groups.

- c. The demands as regards the quality of pictures and simple video production are becoming ever more stringent. Greater photographic expertise than the existing editorial boards have at present will therefore be needed for the paper and digital versions of the journal.
- d. Scope for producing separate union magazines as a supplement to the journal, modelled on the LO Finance journal.
- e. Extra resources during the start-up phase when the new brand is being built.

Web/Internet

A new joint web solution for the union (in addition to the solution being produced for the union magazine) should play a central role and be up and running by the time the merger is implemented. Other channels should be built up around the primary channels, i.e. the web and the union magazine.

At local level there are major variations in the use of the Web. It will be necessary to streamline and create a common profile externally. The trick will be to establish a central web solution for the new union in combination with local web solutions. We must not lose the local identity.

Conferences and meetings

Irrespective of channel, nothing can replace meetings with members and local recruitment. Web conferences and video conferences must play a more central part in the future and should be given a prominent role in the first action plan for the new organisation. Gains will come in the form of less travel and possibilities for coordinating meetings digitally, horizontally and vertically.



6. The national offices of the unions

At present the four unions have the following premises at their disposal:

| OFFICE PREMISES | Norsk Transport-arbeiderforbund | Postkom | Norsk Arbeidsmands-forbund | Industri Energi | Totalt |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| Total rental area in m ² | 700 | 1100 | 1100 | 1016 | 3916 |
| Address | Hammersborg torg 3 | Møllergt. 10 | Møllergt. 3 | Youngsgt. 11 | |
| Rent p.a. | 957 848 | 1 352 384 | 1 000 000 | 1 309 440 | |
| Shared costs | 620 480 | 1 229 310 | 1 106 250 | 679 812 | |
| Total costs | 1 578 328 | 2 581 694 | 2 106 250 | 1 989 252 | 8 255 524 |
| Notice | 1 year | 4 months | Owner (none) | 6 months (negotiable) | |

Future office requirements

As at the present time, the unions have approximately 4000 m² of office space at their disposal, and, based on the number of elected and employed personnel in the unions at the present date we have estimated that somewhere between 3000 and 3500 m² will be required. This includes cell offices for all personnel, a large conference hall that can be divided up into smaller conference rooms as required, common areas, reception, storage space for materials and archives etc. This estimate does not incorporate a canteen.

In our assessment, it is important that any new office premises should lie in the same area as the unions are located at present and within walking distance of public transport (Oslo Central Station/Bus Terminal). Clearly, this will impose certain restrictions, but even so, we are of the view that this would be the most appropriate location.

The process of finding premises should start at an early stage since we must expect to have to scale up/adjust our organisation. The work on finding new premises should therefore start in the autumn of 2012.

Total annual costs as at January 2012

Rental costs as at January 2012 amount to approximately NOK 8.3 million p.a.

The unions probably enjoy a lower m²-price under their current contracts than would be the case were we to have to find premises on the open market. SpareBank 1 has indicated a rental price of approximately NOK 2 300 per m² p.a.

In the short term a merger would involve extra costs because of the expense involved in adapting office premises and developing/adapting ICT tools. However, in the longer term a merger would offer financial benefits, in the form of savings on rent and on operating costs, licences and the upgrading of ICT equipment. In addition, we would probably also achieve economies of scale on procurements etc.

Furthermore, a merger would generate a variety of gains that cannot be measured directly in monetary terms, but that involve the transfer of experience and the development of the employees of the organisation.

7. Timetable for process leading up to the possible formation of a new union

| | From | To |
|---|----------|----------|
| Consultation (consultation letter + proposal document) | 20.09.12 | 14.12.12 |
| Preparation of merger document | 01.12.12 | 01.01.13 |
| Discussion of consultation responses by executive committees | 10.01.13 | 20.01.13 |
| Proposal for merger agreement | 05.01.13 | 30.01.13 |
| Review of agreement proposal by executives committees | 01.02.13 | 15.02.13 |
| Recommendation by national committee of Postkom concerning merger agreement | 15.02.13 | 28.02.13 |
| Ballot of members of Postkom on proposal for merger agreement | 01.04.13 | 15.04.13 |
| Review of outcome of ballot by executive committee of Postkom | 15.04.13 | 30.04.13 |
| National committees/council of representatives: - Resolution on the convening of an extraordinary national congress - Agenda - Adoption of recommendation - Delegates | 15.04.13 | 30.04.13 |
| Extraordinary national congress | 17.06.13 | 17.06.13 |
| National congress to found union | 18.06.13 | 19.06.13 |
| First ordinary national congress | 20.05.17 | 01.07.17 |



FOTO: KAI JACOBSEN

Facts about the four trade unions

NORSK TRANSPORTARBEIDERFORBUND

- › Norsk Transportarbeiderforbund is an affiliate of the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO) and organises approximately 20,000 transport and logistics employees throughout Norway, some 16,000 of whom are in active employment.
- › The union was founded in 1896.
- › Norsk Transportarbeiderforbund has 20 member unions throughout Norway. At the individual workplace, members are organised into workplace branches with their own shop stewards who assist the members.
- › The head office of the union is located at Hammersborg Torg in Oslo.
- › Roger Hansen is the president of the union.



SOURCE: WWW.TRANSPORTARBEIDER.NO

NORSK POST- OG KOMMUNIKASJONSFORBUND

- › Postkom was founded in 2000 with the merger of the two LO affiliates the Norwegian Postal Organisation and the Norwegian Union of Postmen. Postkom can trace its history as far back as 1881 and the founding of the original union for postmen - Christiania Postbudforening.
- › Postkom organises some 21,000 union members, approximately 12,000 of whom are in active employment, primarily within the postal, logistics and financial services industries.
- › Postkom is affiliated with LO and LO State.
- › Postkom's head office is located at Møllergata in Oslo.
- › Odd Christian Øverland is the president of the union.



SOURCE: WWW.POSTKOM.NO

NORSK ARBEIDSMANDSFORBUND

- › Norsk Arbeidsmandsforbund was founded in 1895. The union now has some 33,000 members, approximately 25,000 of whom are in active employments, within a wide range of industries, including cleaning, security companies, construction, the mining industry, privately-owned and -operated skiing resorts and leisure and amusement facilities.
- › The union is affiliated with LO.
- › The primary goal of the union is to organise employees and to establish collective agreements to safeguard fair conditions of pay and employment for its membership.
- › Erna Hagensen is the president of the union.



SOURCE: WWW.ARBEIDSMANDSFORBUNDET.NO

INDUSTRI ENERGI

- › With its 58,000 members, Industri Energi is the fourth largest union affiliated with LO.
- › The union organises members within the industrial and energy sectors, approximately 42,000 of whom are in active employment.
- › Industri Energi was founded in 2006 with the merger of the Norwegian Union of Chemical Industry Workers and the Norwegian Oil and Petrochemical Union. On 1 June 2008 the union for senior administrative, management and technical positions (ALT) became an affiliate of Industri Energi, followed on 1 January 2009 by the Norwegian Union of Wood Workers.
- › The head office of the union is located in Folkets Hus in Oslo.
- › Leif Sande is the president of the union.



SOURCE: WWW.INDUSTRIENERGI.NO



What should the new union be called?

The winning proposal will be announced after the closing of the competition on 15 October at www.forbundsalliansen.no

Go to the website to read the consultation document in full and to find out more about the new union.

www.forbundsalliansen.no

