Cooperation of the Trade-Union Central Committee with related organizations in socialist countries expands year by year. An example of such contacts was the visit in the summer of 1976 to Rumania by a delegation of Soviet metallurgists, including a Hero of Socialist Labor, leading factory workers and innovators, and trade-union workers. The delegation was invited by the Associated Trade Union of the Engineering and Metallurgical Industries of the Socialist Republic of Rumania.

During their stay the delegation visited the special steel factory at Targviste, the metallurgical combine at Hunedoara, the trade-union health and treatment complex "Kagulata," and talked with the Associated Trade-Union Committee.

Visits to the factory workshops, and also talks with the trade-union leaders, with workers and trade-union activists on the shop floor, and with representatives of the trade-union committees, gave rise to a broader understanding of their form and method of working, their rules and duties, and also familiarization with work conditions, medical services, the pay and bonus systems used.

The Associated Trade Union of the Engineering and Metallurgical Industries is one of the largest trade unions, coming under the General Trade-Union Association of Rumania. It unites about 900,000 trade-union members, including 200,000 workers in organizations and enterprises of the metallurgical industry, which are united in 120 primary organizations.

In accordance with the decisions of the General Trade-Union Association conference, the tasks currently before the Associated Trade-Union of Metal Workers in the building of socialism cover a wide range of problems. In carrying out these resolutions the Associated Trade Union has mainly concentrated its effort on developing the initiative of workers in the search for production capacity, training personnel, and reinforcing production discipline. In this way considerable attention is devoted to increasing the responsibility of workers and management in fulfilling the tasks of the state plan. Under particular control are those forms of metal production which the Socialist Republic of Rumania currently needs to import.

The Associated Trade Union also exercises control over the maintenance of labor legislation on pay and labor protection; however, the main functions are carried out by the Commission for Production (it also has authority for pay), and the Commission for Training Personnel.

In accordance with existing legislation, the Associated Trade Union, in the person of its committee, concludes five-year work agreements with the Ministry of Engineering and Metallurgy. These agreements make provision for developments in the near future and implementation of the management organization's obligations over a wide range of production and social questions.

In 1975 13 million tons of steel were smelted in the enterprises of the Rumanian metallurgical industry. The main growth in production was achieved as a result of introducing new capacity at Targviste and Hunedoara. It should be noted that the management of both enterprises in talks with the Soviet delegation highly praised the quality of Krivoi Rog iron-ore concentrate, and also the operation of the 50-ton electric furnace and other metallurgical equipment made in the Soviet Union, and sincerely thanked Soviet specialists and workers in these enterprises.

Alongside the trade-union organizations workers' committees have been set up, the members of which are appointed from among engineering, technical and service workers, management, and representatives of social and mass organizations. According to the present position, the trade-union committee is accountable to the workers' committee. Judging from information obtained about the activities of the workers' committee, participation in it by the trade-union committee has no marked effect on the nature of decisions taken.

The Associated Trade-Union Committee and the Ministry of the Metallurgical Industry are devoting considerable attention to training highly qualified personnel, particularly among younger workers. The Ministry has organized a directorate for training personnel. The system will include 39 2- and 3-yr schools for technical and professional education, involving about 150,000 people. The teaching establishment's operation is based on the metallurgical enterprises where the final-year students are obliged to work for not less than 5 years.

In order to obtain stability among working groups, workers receive a monthly addition to their pay in relation to the length of continuous service in one enterprise, at the rate of up to 10% of the standard pay. This applies to all workers, engineers and professionals. However, despite this, the fluctuation in manpower is about 14%.

The Commission for Production of the Associated Trade-Union Committee together with the Ministry work out the pay scales. Particular attention is paid to stimulating economy and thrift in the use of energy, materials and fuel. With these objectives in mind, consumable materials are divided into two or three categories in each factory, and 30-50% of any economy is paid to the workers.

Enterprises are made responsible for any substandard products.

Defective products are not paid for in full, they are excluded from the production plan of a workshop, and the whole collective loses its bonus. The funds released in this way are transferred to the bonuses of other workshops. A worker who is repeatedly at fault may be dismissed from the enterprise by order of the director, for not conforming to the requirements of the work. Agreement of the trade union is not required in this case. High-quality production is stimulated by a piecework payment system, with occasional incentives and continuing bonuses.

Metal workers are paid on a six-stage scale, assessed with due consideration to the interest of workers in higher qualification, theoretical knowledge and carrying out more complicated work. With this objective in mind, there are three levels of payment within each stage. In this system the pay at the next stage is always higher than the maximum of the previous stage.

In order to carry out the planned production tasks in the required volume and quality, bonuses are awarded for the majority of basic products from the pay fund according to the quarterly work targets and from the material incentive fund according to the annual work targets. The total bonus and payments do not exceed 10-15% of the basic pay.

In 1975 the metallurgical industry enterprises completed a transfer to a new pay scale and official payments with a simultaneous increase in the minimum pay. As a result of this, the pay levels of metal workers moved into second place behind workers in the coal industry.

The visit of the Soviet metallurgical delegation to Rumania coincided with completion of the preparations and proceedings of the National Congress for Political Education and Socialist Culture, in which 6500 people took part. It should be pointed out that questions of worker political education and party propaganda are at the center of attention, not only of the party, but also of the management and union organs. In both the Associated Trade Union and in the trade-union committees of the enterprises, propaganda decisions of the party and political education of the workers stand at the same level in their list of priorities as questions of production development.

The Soviet delegation displayed considerable interest in all of the meetings and discussions in educational work experience, management structure, and trade-union activity.

At the Hunedoara Combine, following discussion of questions on the role of the union in introducing advanced production practice, members of the delegation, steelmakers L. M. Samokish and Yu. S. Kartashev, gave their production "secrets" to the workers in the open-hearth workshop.

In the electric steel-melting workshop for special steels, and in the open-hearth and blast-furnace areas, members of the delegation had short but numerous meetings with groups and individual workers operating nearby, who displayed friendliness and greeted the Soviet delegation in both Russian and Rumanian.