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PARTICIPATION & RIGHTS LETTER



WORKER'S INFORMATION AND CONSULTATION RIGHTS IN EUROPE

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: RELAUNCHING SOCIAL MARKET ECONOMY



Since the European Multi-stakeholder Forum on Corporate Social Responsibility took place last February, a number of initiatives were launched by different institutions and stakeholders both at European and national level, in order to answer crucial questions such as: what if integrating environmental and social concerns in company strategies had always been “a way of doing business”? If business had always considered sustainable development as a priority, had always managed its operations in such a way as to enhance economic growth, increase competitiveness and ensure environmental protection and promotion of social rights at the same time, then would the effects of the crisis have been avoidable? A broad feeling is that a greater attention towards the respect of social and environmental values is widely considered as a key

ingredient for both the recovery and the prevention from further “casino capitalism” consequences. Moreover, “the socially and environmentally responsible way” can actually represent an opportunity for all the stakeholders. As far as the interests of business are concerned, companies and financial institutes do need to regain the trust, which was lost due to a lack of transparency and long term thought so far. Then the whole society would certainly benefit from real actions towards the reconstruction of a more just, responsible and trustful economic and social environment.

Fully integrating social and environmental responsibilities in all business activities nowadays represents a necessary commitment, having regard to the current and even more to the future economic and occupational context.

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In fact, the economic outlook for the years to come shows an even more challenging picture than the present one, also due, besides the contingencies of the crisis, to structural, technological, demographic, and climate change. In this perspective, anticipating and managing change is fundamental in order to reduce its social costs as much as possible. This change represents the ground on which social responsibility principles have to be implemented and rooted.

Of course, behaving in a socially responsible way requires a serious, committed and collaborative confrontation of the business with other stakeholders, in a process which grants transparency, monitoring and accountability of the concrete actions undertaken. In this sense, the ETUC affirms that the prime concern of CSR must be the quality of industrial relations within a company.

Promoting solid information, consultation and participation structures, particularly within European Works Councils, represents a crucial point, not only in terms of implementation of workers' fundamental rights. Social dialogue enacted through consultation procedures has demonstrated itself capable of high level, sustainable and innovative responsible solutions in times of change. ETUC and European Industry Federations are present in the European level debate, ready to support and promote workers' involvement in initiatives genuinely and concretely marked as "socially responsible".

It will be our concern, as editors of this newsletter, to follow the ongoing debate and highlight the most innovative developments that companies, employees, social partners, civil society and public institutions will be able to enact, in order to make "sustainable development" a central issue which Europe can no longer afford to ignore.

Claudio Stanzani,
Managing Director of Social Development Agency

worker-participation.eu
the gateway to information on worker participation issues in europe

etui.

**NEWS FROM EUROPEAN
COMPANIES (SE)**

THE LATEST FIGURES

As was reported in the last PARL Newsletter the European Company (SE) has developed over the past years into an attractive option for companies to organize their European business. This trend is supported by the latest figures of the SE Factsheet Database, a service of the European Trade Union Institute. By 20 July 2009 some 400 SEs had been founded in 19 countries, most often in the Czech Republic, Germany, the Netherlands, France and Slovakia. Albeit the majority of these SEs do not have any employees and/or business activities (see last PARL edition) at least 94 "normal" SEs prove that the SE is not a virtual issue but a reality offering new possibilities but also risks for worker involvement. Moreover some 20 more companies are currently on their way to transform into an SE, among them BP which recently announced its intention to convert an SE.

Further Links:

- [FAQ on the European Company](#), available in EN, FR and DE
- [ETUI European Company \(SE\) Factsheets](#), key data on all SEs registered



RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ETUC FOR THE SWEDISH PRESIDENCY

The ETUC memorandum calls upon the new rotating Presidency to tackle the important challenges facing the EU. The first and biggest challenge will be to steer Europe through the financial, economic and social crisis, to maintain existing jobs, to create the conditions for the creation of more and better jobs and to table regulation for the financial markets. A second major challenge is to ensure a successful outcome of the Irish referendum and a smooth transition from the Nice Treaty to the Lisbon Treaty. The third challenge is the climate change agenda with a view to the Copenhagen Conference. The time has come for Europe to invest in providing for more and better jobs, to promote innovation, research and development and employment in key industries, to invest in new, green and sustainable technologies, to sustain high quality public services, and to provide workers with the qualifications needed for tomorrow's low-carbon economy, within green technology and better qualified jobs.

The ETUC regrets that the social dimension of Europe does not seem to be amongst the priorities of the Swedish Presidency. In order to regain workers' support for the EU, the primacy of fundamental rights over the single market rules needs urgently to be asserted. The ETUC expects the Swedish Presidency to correct the European Court of Justice (ECJ) rulings which have elevated free movement above upholding collective agreements and allowed undercutting and unequal pay to develop.

The ETUC appeals to the Presidency to attach a social progress protocol to the Treaties. If not, the pressure on trade unions to turn against the single market will intensify; this will only add to the difficulties in the current crisis. The impression that 'laissez faire' is the guiding principle on these matters is spreading, and the ETUC hopes it can find enough support to correct that perception. The Trade union memorandum to the Swedish Presidency of the European Union is available on the [ETUC website](http://www.etuc.org). If you wish more information about the Swedish Presidency, consult the website <http://www.se2009.eu/en>.

STRENGTHENING TRANSNATIONAL TRADE UNION COORDINATION WITHIN MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES FACING CRISIS AND RESTRUCTURING

The new project "Multinational company restructuring: tackling the impact of the crisis through stronger transnational trade union coordination" has recently been approved by the European Commission under the 03 budget line. With this project ETUC and the EIF will identify companies which are faced with restructuring measures due to the crisis in order to support workers representatives and European works councils and to strengthen transnational trade union cooperation. In fact, the current economic crisis has major impact for labour markets in Europe. Unemployment is on the increase and the employment situation in the forthcoming month is extremely concerning. According to current drops in production, at least 20% of the European workforce is at direct risk. As an undeniable consequence of the current economic crisis an accelerating pace of company restructuring is expected, which will be a major challenge for workers representation, especially in transnational companies. In addition due to the high interdependence of the economy the supply industries will be affected significantly and other factors, such as climate change will have impacts for company policies. All the sectors of the economy will have to deal, very often in difficult conditions, with restructuring measures in their various forms: reorganisation of production, relocation, mergers, take-overs, outsourcing of activities, dismissals and mass redundancies and so on. The impact for employment and working conditions will be significant and a major challenge for workers representatives, European works councils and their trade unions. In practice, the project plans to finance 32 company-level coordination meetings, with the overall aim of strengthening transnational trade union coordination in cases of company restructuring. It runs from 20 June 2009 until 19 June 2010. Further information and a regular update on the coordination meetings will be available on the [website of the SDA](http://www.sda-asbl.org) and on PaRL, Participation & Rights Letter.

NEWS FROM EUROPEAN INDUSTRY FEDERATIONS



EFFAT- EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND TOURISM TRADE UNIONS

UNHAPPY COKE WORKERS FIGHT 'COLD REDUNDANCIES' IN GERMANY

Coca-Cola plans to go ahead with the cuts despite the fact that they have an agreement with the NGG saying that nobody will be made redundant until the end of 2009. CCEAG says it will propose alternative workplaces but these can be up to 120 km further away from workers homes. Union's lawyers says that this is "what we call 'cold redundancies', because the objective is to make people leave despite the current agreement" The social consequences of forcing workers, many of whom have been working for decades at Coca-Cola, into unemployment in these crisis-ridden regions would be severe: especially for workers over 40 who would find it practically impossible to get new jobs. 1000 demonstrators gathered at Berlin's Brandenburg Gate on Saturday, May 9, and headed for the headquarters of CCEAG, Germany's Coca-Cola Bottler. Coca-Cola workers were joined by fellow NGG trade unionists, as well as solidarity delegations from workers of other companies whose jobs are under threat. Together, they brought a clear message to management that it must behave more honorably and that the decision to close production sites in Kaiserslautern and Münster is both two-faced and unacceptable. General works council chairman and member of the EFFAT Coca-Cola Coordination Group, Johan Botella, said – "We are here representing all the other locations that are threatened with closure as well. We are preparing for difficult negotiations next year in order to defend employment security, and we are sending a strong message to management – prepare for that fight, because we will stand united in solidarity!" Similar feelings from Coke workers in other European countries may mean this will not be such a happy summer for Coke if it does not start to take its social responsibilities more seriously. Further information of the [EFFAT website](#).



EMF - EUROPEAN METALWORKERS FEDERATION

TRANSNATIONAL TRADE UNION COORDINATION TO TACKLE RESTRUCTURING RELATED ISSUES: WORKERS' REPRESENTATIVES WITHIN BOSCH MEET IN BRUSSELS TO DRAW A COMMON STRATEGY AND SPEAK OUT WITH ONE VOICE

Workers of the Break Division at the Robert Bosch Group all over Europe are deeply concerned about the future of their jobs. The division is undergoing deep restructuring. Several job cuts and plant closures have already taken place. A trade union coordination meeting was organised at the EMF premises last June, in the framework of the major project "Multinational company restructuring: tackling the impact of the crisis through stronger transnational trade union coordination". Workers' representatives of different Bosch sites in Europe (France, Spain, Italy, Portugal and Germany), EMF and IG Metall coordinators as well as the chair of the Bosch European Works Council gathered together expressed their opposition to any job cut and any attempt by the company's general management to play off the different sites in Europe against each other as regards wages and working conditions. So far, the division management has still not provided any clear and univocal information about the restructuring process, any idea for a long term strategy, any proactive proposal. On the contrary, facing systematic lack, delay and incompleteness of information to workers' representatives - both at European and at national level- it seems clear that the company is applying a sort of "salami-strategy" which does not leave

any room for workers' consultation and joint planning of long term and less socially costly solutions.

Workers' representatives within Bosch had already met once in January 2009. In that occasion, they had discussed the development of an internal communication structure to facilitate the rapid dissemination of information between all sites - a precondition for successful European-wide solidarity. In January they had also agreed on a joint statement, unanimously addressing specific demands to the top management.

However, in June nothing had changed, and workers representatives still considered that the information policy on sites, production allocation and possible developments is unsatisfactory, and that management is still not willing to provide details on future strategies. Therefore the January joint statement was reprinted and integrated during the last June meeting with stronger and more precise demands.

As reported in the statement, Bosch unions and workers' representatives at global and local levels strongly request for a long term investment policy allowing to conserve hundreds of jobs. Moreover, they demand to remedy the open breach of all information and consultation rights granted to European workers at different levels, and therefore to be involved in the discussions and in the drawing up of future plans for the CB division (break systems) to be implemented. This means that management must communicate information in a timely manner, before decisions are made and enforced and early enough to allow for a meaningful contribution from workers' side; in addition, information must cover a significative upcoming period, 24 to 36 months at least, must be regularly renewed, and at the same time at European and national level. In case of non-respect of these demands, and persistence of incomplete or inaccurate information flow, all the Bosch workers' and trade union representatives agreed on taking joint measures in order to make widely public the details on the state of industrial relations within the company. They also envisage to repeat the general mobilization of Bosch workers all over Europe, as already occurred during the action day launched for 16th February.

As a consequence of this meeting, the workers now have obtained a more clear engagement from the central management to be informed in a timely manner, with a comprehensive appraisal of the prospect for at least 24 months in advance (as a sliding time frame). This gives them the means to anticipate any modification in their situation, and to prepare their response.

For further information, please visit the [EMF webpage dedicated to the Bosch case](#).



SIGNATURE OF THE IDEA AGREEMENT (IMPROVING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH EFFECTIVE ANTICIPATION) BY THALES

A European agreement was signed by Thales on 11th June 2009 in Paris. Sponsored by Jacques Delors, former President of the European Commission, it has been established on the basis of good practice identified within the group and will cover 56,000 Thales employees in 11 European countries. It aims to

improve the professional development of its employees through effective anticipation (IDEA) and insists on continuing training. This agreement will therefore allow each employee to become the main actor in relation to his/her professional future. This is the first transnational agreement signed by Thales in the field of human resources and it is innovatory because it covers a lot of topics, provides for concrete action and a joint follow-up by the two parties (employer/trade unions and works councils).

According to Yves Barou, the Thales HRD, the European agreement IDEA “constitutes a first and successful experience. In the course of the negotiations, the European trade union delegation led by the EMF showed a high degree of open-mindedness and responsibility regarding the implementation of a negotiated European social policy.” Bart Samyn, Deputy General Secretary of EMF also said, “the agreement constitutes a milestone in the construction of Social Europe because of its rich and detailed content. This European agreement clearly illustrates the fact that employee representatives have an important role to play in the future management of employment trends.” The text of the IDEA agreement can be found on the [EMF website](#).

SUPPORT FOR AEES (ALCOA) PROTEST

OS Kovo workers at the AEES plant in Střibro (Czech Republic) are faced with a sudden and unexpected management decision to close the plant and transfer production to Romania following Alcoa’s sale of the business to Platinum Equity (PE). 613 employees will lose their jobs by the end of September and the remaining 120 employees by the end of the year despite previous verbal assurances to the Alcoa EWC that no closure was planned. This is certainly very poor behaviour on the part of PE and the parent company Alcoa. OS Kovo’s call for a suspension of the decision until such time as proper consultation has taken place with the interim works council (composed of former AEES members of the Alcoa EWC). This information and consultation procedure would be in line with the provisions of the Alcoa EWC agreement, which management had confirmed would continue to be respected until a PE EWC came into being. On the basis of these reasons and on appeals of employees, OS KOVO Company Organisation Trade Union Committee decided to organise a protest meeting in front of the Company AEES Czech Platinum Equity on 1st July 2009. For further information consult the [EMF website](#).



ETF – EUROPEAN TRANSPORT WORKERS' FEDERATION

BRITISH AIRWAYS EWC AND THE BA MANAGEMENT AGREE ON A SET OF INFORMATION AND CONSULTATION PRINCIPLES ON BUSINESS REORGANISATION AT NATIONAL LEVEL

On 30th June, the British Airways European Works’ Council signed, at their plenary meeting, a set of principles that will enable the EWC to be informed and consulted on national reorganisation measures. The EWC select committee will be entitled to attend local meetings with staff of countries subject to restructuring in an advisory role in order to mitigate the impact of any foreseeable redundancies. The situation is quite difficult in the UK, though, where it is very unlikely that BA management will succeed in securing a 'survival' deal on job cuts (about 4000), pay and perks with its 14,000 cabin crew. For further information you can check the news on the [ETF website](#) or contact the ETF EWC coordinator c.tilling@etf-europe.org.



EFBWW – EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF BUILDING AND WOODWORKERS

MULTIPROJECT COORDINATORS GROUP (MCG)

The EFBWW has created a network of national EWC coordinators, the Multiproject Coordinators Group (MCG), which meets twice a year to coordinate the EWC work in progress and ensure a proper exchange of information. The preparation and follow up of MCG activities is carried out by the EFBWW EWC Steering Committee. Further information can be obtained from the [EFBWW secretariat](#).

EUROPEAN CONSTRUCTION MOBILITY INFORMATION NET (ECMIN)

While the internal markets in finances, goods and even services are on the way to become a reality, the mobility of workers within the EU is still rather the exception than the rule. One of the most important factors is the lack of precise and at the same time concise information about the specific working conditions in specific sectors in the other member states in a language one is able to understand. EFBWW is coordinating a project funded by the European Commission. The main goal of the project is to provide potential and future migrant workers in the EU with precise, concise and easily-accessible information about the sector-specific working conditions in the main countries of destination ("know before you go") as well as with trade union contact information. The Polish/English website has been published in June 2009, and contains information about 15 European countries. For further information please consult the [ECMIN website](#). Contact and information are also available in [English](#) and in [Polish](#).

900 STRIKING WORKERS DISMISSED AT LINDSEY

The French energy group Total has dismissed nearly 900 workers at Lindsey oil refinery in Lincolnshire after a wildcat strike last week. The workers claim that an agreement not to cut jobs was broken. Already in January, Lindsey was hit by mass industrial actions over an alleged undercutting of collective agreement by the use of foreign posted workers. EFBWW, EMF and EMCEF have issued a Joint Statement in support for the striking workers. The three federations call on Total management to act in a socially responsible manner and sit down with all parties, and using ACAS, the arbitration and conciliation service, to resolve the dispute. In the Statement, the federations also call on politicians at national and EU level to redress the imbalance created by the recent ECJ cases between fundamental workers' rights and internal market freedoms, by revising the EU legislation allowing for the equal treatment of domestic and foreign workers. The Joint Statement is available on the [EFBWW website](#).

 **UNI-EUROPA**

NEW AXA EWC AGREEMENT: TOWARDS TRANSNATIONAL INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS



"Axa's revised agreement builds on the excellent practice of its European works council," said Oliver Roethig, Head of UNI Finance, at the signing ceremony. "The new provisions and increased scope entrench Axa's role as a leader in transnational industrial relations in Europe. It provides a model for other companies in Europe, but also for social dialogue in a multinational company in other parts of the world." The agreement is based on the revised EWC directive of 2009, and new elements include principles on social dialogue and labour rights. For further information check the web page of the [AXA EWC](#), or the [UniEuropa webpage](#). The text of the new EWC agreement, signed on 29th June 2009, is also available on line in [English](#) and [French](#).

 **ETUF:TCL - EUROPEAN TRADE UNION FEDERATION : TEXTILE, CLOTHING, LEATHER AND SHOES**

DBA (DIM BRANDED APPAREL): PRE-AGREEMENT ABOUT ANTICIPATION JOINT RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the announcement of further redundancies in May 2008, the EWC of DBA had asked the setting up of a specific working group which would deal with a better anticipation/management of transfers (the 1996 agreement allows explicitly this possibility).

A joint training was organised in July 2008 and allowed a first exchange on a number of good practices for a projected management of jobs and competences in the sector but also in other fields of activity. End of last year, it was decided to create the working group and to send an anonymous questionnaire to every Human Resources Director and employees' representatives (EWC members) of the European plants (7 EU countries). The analysis of the answers was very informative for both parties. On March 4 2009, the working group handed in to the EWC a first series of 10 recommendations for a better anticipation at DBA, working evolutions, needs in terms of professional development and trainings. They were adopted by the EWC and then transmitted to the Human Resources Directors, asking them to set up collectively action plans. An overall assessment should take place next Fall.



EMCEF – EUROPEAN MINE, CHEMICAL AND ENERGY WORKERS FEDERATION

ITALY - ENI EWC STATEMENT ON ITALIAN NATIONAL STRIKE

An ordinary annual meeting of the European Works Council of ENI with the company management took place at the end of June in Lisbon. The EWC took note of the concerns expressed by the Italian delegates and Italian trade unions on the situation of the chemical sector in Italy. There is a need for a commitment by ENI for a more efficient strategy of sustainable development in all of its sectors. The ENI EWC expresses its support and solidarity to all the Italian workers, as it is convinced that this mobilization will lead to a better and more favorable evolution at ENI, both, in Italy and in other countries. For further information please check the [webpage](#) or contact [EMCEF secretariat](#).



EPSU – EMCEF

GDF-SUEZ EWC AGREEMENT

The SNB of the European Works Council of Gdf and the Instance Européenne de Dialogue of Suez reached the final result on the new text of an EWC agreement with management on 7 April 2009, and signed the final version, under the supervision of their trade unions and works councils, in May. "An excellent job of the negotiators to make sure that the European Works Council agreement reflects the positive experience of the EWCs of both companies" stated EPSU Deputy General Secretary Jan Willem Goudriaan, who participated as expert to the SNB. "The agreement marks the start of something new and is a milestone as regards information and consultation rights and facilities for the EWC" he added. Peter Kerckhofs, EMCEF EWC coordinator declared that "the newly merged energy multinational has already been hailed as a "benchmark", not least because it reflects some of the changes recently made to the EWCs Directive. Noteworthy are the issues considered transnational (transnational issues to be questions concerning a subsidiary located outside France falling within the scope of a decision of the dominant company, or which are a direct consequence of one of the strategies of the Group), the scope of the companies and the manner of consultation of the EWC." The agreement includes provisions regarding training for EWC members, who have been granted the right to training for 5 days per year. This training can be provided by European industry federations (EMCEF and EPSU) and their affiliates. Additionally, EWC members will be given language training by the company. Experience and skills acquired throughout the EWC member's mandate can be recognized in their career development. For further information please visit the [EMCEF website](#), with a detailed description of the innovative contents of the agreement and links to the text itself in several languages, or contact [EMCEF EWC political secretary's office](#); additional information are also available on the [EPSU webpage](#), with further links on the matter or via contacts with the [EPSU secretariat](#).



SDA “03 PROJECT SETTING-UP” WORKSHOP

Brussels on 14 October 2009

A “project setting-up” workshop will take place in Brussels on 14 October 2009. It is particularly targeted at trade union coordinators of EWCs, EWC chairmen/chairwomen who intend to set-up a project for their EWC, trade union-related training centres who are mandated to submit a project on behalf of EWCs. This workshop, of which the working languages will be French, English and German, will give participants the possibility to set-up project application dossiers to be presented at the Commission. SDA will be able to reimburse the travel and subsistence costs for 20 participants. If interested, please contact SDA by e-mail at the address: sda-asbl@etuc.org by 30th September 2009 (places allocated on a “first come-first served” basis).

ETF PROJECT ON “EXPLORING OPPORTUNITIES FOR AN INFORMATION AND CONSULTATION BODY FOR KÜHNE & NAGEL”

The ETF will run an EU-funded project on “Exploring opportunities for an information and consultation body for Kühne + Nagel” from November 2009 till October 2010. The objective of the project is to bring together trade union and unionised employee representatives from all EU Member States where Kühne + Nagel operates and to set up a European Works Council in Kühne + Nagel. The project will provide trade union and workers’ representatives with training, information and tools needed for: 1) the negotiation of a EWC agreement; 2) the future functioning of the EWC. In the implementation of the project, the ETF will work closely together with ver.di and the German works’ council of K+N.

A first step towards the establishing of a EWC in the Swiss-based company dates back to 1996. This led to a series of four court cases, which till present make it impossible to set up a EWC in K+N. This state of play will come to an end once the recast EWC Directive comes into force by mid 2011.

The project’s main activities are two seminars. By doing so, the project will for the first time ever foster exchanges between K+N employees from the various company sites in the EU and thus enable them to establish a network of unionised K+ N workers, which will allow them, beyond the project, to assess circumstances and initiate the procedure for the setting up of an EWC in K+N once the recast EWC Directive came into force. Further information can be found soon on the specifically dedicated project page on the ETF web site, which will be online in November 2009.

The link is as follows: www.etf-europe.org.

RECENT EVENTS



DGB INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON CAPITALISM: ALTERNATIVES TO MARKET RADICALISM

“We can’t go on like this” – the economy and the society need a substantial change. This statement was met with unanimous agreement from the over 500 participants, coming from all over the world, who met in Berlin mid-May on the occasion of the International congress on capitalism promoted by the Confederation of German Trade Unions (DGB).

The conference was opened with a keynote address by an expert who boasts an insider’s knowledge of the workings of the financial economy fuelled by the spirit of profit: former investment banker Sony Kapoor, Executive Director of Re-Define, a think tank that critically analyses the financial markets, and currently one of the fiercest opponents of that system. “For years we explained to everyone what we are fighting against,” he said. “Now we have to explain what financial system and what type of capitalism we want.” Kapoor left no doubt as to what kind of financial market would be desirable for the future: what is certain is that it will have to be a market with a much

more regulated organisation. During the two days of the proceedings, trade union representatives and experts from all over the world discussed in depth the causes of the crisis and the possibilities for acting at the social and trade union levels. On one point the opinion was unanimous: "We can't go on like this". Moreover, it seems that the crisis is allowing us a short time span during which fundamental reforms can be undertaken. The more the reversal of the trend is delayed, the more harmful the consequences will be, explained DGB Michael Sommer, the supporter of a profound and systematic transformation as the third way that can be taken as an alternative to neoliberalism. "We want a market economy that is politically controlled and socially committed," Sommer explained. Countries' democracy and the economy would be linked to this. "We are changing our way of thinking; we will not give up until we see a serious change of course." www.kapitalismuskongress.de

LARRGE LABOUR – RIGHTS – RESPONSIBILITIES – GUIDE: WORKING CONFERENCE "CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY, DECENT WORK AND HUMAN RIGHTS"

Vienna 1st-2 September 2009

The Austrian Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights (BIM), the Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR) and the Centre for the Study of Global Ethics (University of Birmingham) are currently implementing an EU PROGRESS funded project on CSR. The project aims at providing an impact analysis of CSR tools as to their factual contribution to anchoring human rights and core labour standards in business practice. As a part of the research work, a two days working conference have recently been held in Vienna. It assembled CSR tool developing organisations, companies, civil society, scholars and practitioners. The purpose of the conference was twofold: on the one hand it aimed at promoting first-hand experience and best practice exchange among tool developing institutions concerning e.g. the elaboration, implementation and monitoring of their tools. On the other hand, it offered the opportunity to learn more about and discuss current business issues with international experts and interested companies. The project outcomes will consist in a comprehensive guide on international and European CSR tools, which will outline the main features of these tools and the practical experiences of businesses and other stakeholders with them, meant to be gained through various forms of consultation. The "Labour-Rights-Responsibilities-Guide" (LARRGE) will be available at the [project website](#), which will equally serve as a permanent platform for exchange in spring 2010.

For further information, you can also contact [Sylvia Hoellrigl](#) and [Barbara Linder](#).



The research network on worker participation in the European Company (SE)

CONFERENCE "CORPORATE STRATEGY AND MONITORING IN THE EUROPEAN COMPANY (SE) AT A TIME OF CRISIS"

Vienna, 21-22 September 2009

The Vienna Chamber of Labour, The Hans Böckler Foundation and The European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) organized a two-day seminar attended by academics, experts, legal advisers, researchers of the SEEurope network, practitioners and trade union press representatives from all over Europe. The main purpose of the conference was to enhance and encourage the exchange of experiences and views among worker and trade union delegates, in particular those sitting in supervisory boards or works councils of "old" and more recently established SEs. Company delegates have underlined some characteristics and also difficulties connected to the functioning of the SE they work for. One of the most important issues raised concerned the necessity to enhance the culture of worker participation in a specific form, which is closer to the industrial relation schemes of

certain countries but not so close to the participation structures of other EU member states. In this sense, once again the transnational dimension in which EU companies mostly operate nowadays poses challenges to European workers, called at developing participative mentality and culture more and more.

Responding to this integration challenge means to realize that SEs propose a set of possibilities to be known and explained not only to trade union and worker representatives but to the whole company workforce.

Reiner Hoffmann underlined that, especially in time of crisis, it is really urgent to coordinate different worker involvement contexts and promote collaboration, as a step forward in the Europeanization process of the workers.

For further information please contact Etui: nkluge@etui.org - mstollt@etui.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

ETUC CONFERENCE ON CLIMATE CHANGE, NEW INDUSTRIAL POLICIES AND EXITING THE CRISIS

The acceleration of climate change, together with food and water poverty and the rising cost of energy, will provoke cross-border conflict and mass migration. Europe must therefore place its economic recovery plans within the framework of developing an industrial policy centred on the development of clean technologies in order to convert our society to a low carbon economy. The ETUC conference, to be held in London on 5 and 6 October 2009, will be the basis of discussing trade unions' contribution regarding the role of industrial policy in the view of the December 2009 international conference on climate change in Copenhagen. In this framework, the ETUC, in partnership with the EMF and the EMCEF, is conducting a study on sustainable development strategies in industrial policies on European and national levels, and the influence of the trade unions in the conception and application of these policies.

The draft programme of the conference is available on the [ETUC website](#).

If you want more information about the conference, feel free to contact [Hélène Cipriano](#)

CONFERENCE "CSR - AN ISSUE FOR EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION IN TRANSNATIONAL COMPANIES?"

Frankfurt am Main, 4-5 November 2009

Hans Böckler Foundation in cooperation with the ETUI and the Confederation of German Trade Unions (DGB) have organised this event being more and more clear that workforce representatives are increasingly being touched by the issue of corporate social responsibility (CSR). Therefore the conference aims to develop the debate as to whether CSR can and should play a role in the activities of workforce representation bodies. Representatives of European Works Councils and Works Councils in transnational companies will report on how they are becoming involved in specific CSR issues and what the opportunities and the risks are. The conference is targeted at members of national and European works councils and representatives of national and European trade unions as well as industry, politics and the academic world.

Please download the draft programme and the registration form from the ETUI website <http://www.etui.org/en/Events/2009/CSR-employee-participation>.

PUBLICATIONS AND LINKS

EWC HANDBOOK

The Austrian Trade Union Confederation (ÖGB) has published the first handbook in German on the drafting of the directive on European Works Councils (EWC). The text presents, in detail, the novelties of the legal status. Wolfgang Greif, head of the European department of the private employees' trade union of Vienna, describes the legal and political bases of the EWCs, proposes checklists for the agreements to be reached in the EWCs, and provides numerous suggestions on the setting up and management of the European worker representation bodies (Vienna 2009, ÖGB-Verlag, 320 pages, 28.50 Euro). www.oegbverlag.at

European Trade Union Institute's Report

THE IMPACT OF SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES ON OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH. A EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE
María Menéndez, Joan Benach, Laurent Vogel (coordinators)

Does the presence of union officials in a workplace actually help to improve safety and health protection for workers? To try and answer this question, three researchers reviewed the studies done on the matter in Europe. They conclude that having trade union representation leads to better observance of the rules, lower accident rates and fewer work-related health problems. The findings of the study, done under the European EPSARE project, have just been published in this ETUI report. The report starts with a status review of safety reps in the European Union, followed by an analysis of the conditions and factors for effective representation, and concludes by attempting to pinpoint the key needs and challenges for trade unions, safety reps, researchers, policy-makers and government agencies (ETUI 2009, 32 pages, 20 Euro).

More information: <http://hesa.etui.org>

EMF FILM "MITTAL'S GAIN, WORKERS' PAIN"

The EMF film "Mittal's Gain, Workers' Pain" was presented at the third Geneva Labour Film Shorts film festival. This festival features films by, for, and about unions and working people. The EMF film is part of a series about industrial actions taken by the European Metalworkers' Federation with the aim to highlight the difficult state the metalworking industry is in and to show that workers are stronger together. The EMF uses it with affiliates and work council members to strengthen moral and to show that the struggle is not about only one plant but that the fight concerns all workers at ArcelorMittal.

EFFAT: EMPLOYMENT IN SOCIAL TOURISM

The final report of the study "Employment in social tourism in Europe", carried out, on behalf of EFFAT and BITS (International Bureau of Social Tourism) and with the financial support of the European Commission, by a research team at the Free University of Brussels (ULB), is now available. The first results of this study were presented at the EFFAT- BITS conference on 24-25 November 2008 in Blankenberge (Belgium). The report, the minutes of the Blankenberge conference, and the Press Release issued in November 2008 are now available on the EFFAT website.

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