



## **EPSU European Works Councils (EWCs) and Company Policy Network Meeting**

**02 March 2023, 09:30 - 15:00 CET**

**HYBRID Meeting - ETF, Room 1**

### **Draft Report**

#### **Participants**

**VOJIKOVA Sarka**, FTUE (SOS Energie), Czech Republic (online)

**VOTAVA Michal Jan**, OS UNIOS, Czech Republic

**JOKINEN Sari**, JHL, Finland

**KOIVUNIEMI Sari**, TEHY, Finland

**ZAERENS Pia**, SuPer, Finland

**DUCH Cyrille**, FSS-CFDT, France (online)

**MARCILLOUX Muriel**, FNME-CGT, France

**NEAU Elizabeth**, CFE-CGC Energies, France

**KATTHOEFER Anja**, Ver.di, Germany

**PINCZES Erno**, EVDSZ, Hungary

**LOSETTI Antonio**, FLAEI-CISL, Italy

**PREITI Emanuela**, FLAEI CISL, Italy

**SCARPIELLO Luca**, FP-CGIL, Italy

**SEDRAN Luigi**, FLAEI-CISL, Italy (online)

**HENNUM Vidar**, EL&IT, Norway

**STENESTO Hans Kristian**, NUMGE, Norway

**POPESCU Raluca**, Gaz Rom., Romania

**MUSOI Catalin**, Gaz Rom., Romania

**GRASMAN Yvonne**, Kommunal, Sweden

**THOMPSON Kevin**, Kommunal, Sweden (online)

**LAY Matthew**, UNISON, UK

#### **SPEAKERS**

**SALSON Nadja**, EPSU

## **EPSU Secretariat**

**EMBACHER Jakob**  
**BELL Tuscany**  
**DONMEZ Yagmur**  
**GRASSO Gloria**  
**KAYA Can**

## **Apologies**

**CIBRARIO Daria**, PSI, France  
**LETTERIO Oceano**, FILCTEM-CGIL, Italy

### **1. Opening and approval of minutes**

*Jakob EMBACHER* (EPSU) welcomes the participants and present the agenda.

### **2. Report by the secretariat on ongoing/upcoming negotiations**

*Jakob EMBACHER* announces that we are heading for EWC negotiations with Prezero. The German waste company is expanding rapidly. The first meeting will be on the 5th of April in Frankfurt.

Colisée is a French care multinational company active in France, Italy and Spain. After initial refusal to meet with EPSU, we have now established a working communication. They will try to have an ETUI training in Paris, probably in April.

*Luca SCARPIELLO* comments that it's been a couple of years since we sent Colisée a letter. He asks whether it is a provocation from their part or a real lack of skills.

*Jakob EMBACHER* answers that it is not clear.

Besides, there was a meeting in Brussels with the head of HR of Veolia and their team to discuss an EWC agreement on diversity. A concept note is currently being drafted. We want to find a consensus among the unions involved on representation. The negotiations will start in the coming months.

Finally, the EWC revision of the agreement in Suez was finalised.

*Kevin THOMPSON* reports that Ramsey Santé is looking at negotiating an agreement on work life balance. The next goal is to extend them to all countries. The ambition is to have new negotiations in March, hopefully to sign a new agreement in June.

### 3. Discussion around EPSU Guidelines for EWC Coordinators

*Sarka VOJIKOVA* reports that in the Czech Republic approximately 250 employees joined the perimeter of RWE. The EWC of RWE has a higher threshold therefore the Czech Republic is not a member anymore. EPSU should try to get us involved. The EPSU EWC coordinator is not active anymore, we do not know if he has been replaced. It will be important to have some contact.

Regarding the MVM group, they are about to negotiate an agreement on a new EWC. In the Czech Republic several trade unions, Unios and SOS Energie are trying to agree on who should be sent to this EWC.

*Jakob EMBACHER* comments that it is important for the employers to find ways to inform trade unions. It seems that Leonard Zubrowski is not active anymore, the database is not updated on that. We are looking to work more systematically on this.

*Cyrille DUCH* reports that Orpea management has changed. New social elections are organised after a successful case against management.

In Korian there are difficulties in working together with UNSA, in particular before the background of their call for involvement of other European trade union federations.

*Tuscany BELL* adds that Korian wants to negotiate a transnational agreement. We are currently in the process of preparing our mandate.

*Luca SCARPIELLO* announces social dialogue was a problem in the past with Orpea, but hopes that the situation will now improve. The coordination of EPSU is helpful in this regard.

Concerning Korian, their change of status to a “company with mission” must actually be beneficial for workers. We should also look at improving the flow of information in the EWC.

*Jakob EMBACHER* agrees that the topic of creating a good flow of information could be the main topic of a next training with ETUI. The ETUI has good manuals on how to improve communication. However, ultimately it is responsibility of members of the works councils to foster communication.

*Emanuela PREITI* reports on the EWC on Enel, which has been relatively inactive. The last meeting was one year ago, there is a new coordinator for the trade unions side. Antonio was replaced by a colleague from Uiltem. Enel is looking to withdraw from several south American countries remain with just Italy and Spain.

In Europe the new agreement is laying out the values of industrial relations that concern Enel. The focus is on the well-being of the workers, training, work-life balance and safety at work.

*Jakob EMBACHER* thanks everyone for the updates and shares the EPSU guidelines.

*Erno PINCZES* updates on the situation in EON Hungary. It is expected that EON will reduce their activities in the coming years.

Regarding MVM, the members of the Hungarian part are quite happy with the agreement. And as we heard from the Czech colleague, we are still waiting for the appointment of the unions representatives.

Veolia is extending its activity in Hungary with more units. The only issue is that in these units there is not a operational union.

*Muriel MARCILLOUX* comments that negotiations are on the way on the works councils of Engie and EDF. Management is looking to negotiate downwards.

At the same time, the companies saw a very successful year, but all profits go to shareholders.

In the EDF EWC agreement there are no deputy members anymore and the training days amount has been reduced. The travel agreements are much more stringent and the freedom of union has been reduced.

*Elizabeth NEAU* adds that management seems to want to slow down the union's actions.

In EDF, some units were closed even though they were profitable, for electoral reasons. We protest a restructuring of our pension scheme. It seems that the end of the scheme is on the agenda.

*Raluca POPESCU* comments that she will participate in the meeting of the executive of EON, it will be in March. The company is very profitable. The aim of unions in EON is to strengthen collective agreement at a national level.

*Emanuela PREITI* suggests that some work should be done on suggesting how to proceed. In the past year companies made lots of profits and workers have seen any of that.

*Hans Kristian STENESTO* gives updates on Norlandia. They established contact on a national level. There was a meeting the previous week but there has not been any contact since then.

*Sari JOKINEN* adds that unfortunately due to these negotiations she could not participate in the Norlandia meeting last week so there are no concrete updates.

*Sari KOIVUNIEMI* reports that Attendo is not willing to provide interpretation, but expects EWC members to be able to speak in English. This makes effective work very difficult.

#### **4. European Parliament Report on Democracy at Work adopted**

##### **a. Presentation by Stefan Gran, ETUC**

*Stefan GRAN* reports that the new report at the European Parliament calling for a revision of the EWC directives has been adopted. This marks a new beginning. The European Parliament has no right of initiative, but the report can be used by the European Commission, which responded that they welcomed the report. They will be starting the preparations for the legislative actions.

The focus is on sanctions for breaches of the Directive. The current ones are by far not sufficient.

*Emanuela PREITI* thanks him for giving the latest updates. She asks whether there is a risk that negotiations might actually end up making the situation worse.

*Luca SCARPIELLO* shares Emanuela's doubts. There is always this risk of downsizing the agreements when something is done at the European level.

*Stefan GRAN* answers that the results are unpredictable, there is no proof of bad behaviour. We have always been a step further. So far he sees no problems.

## **5. Adoption of EPSU Guidelines for EWC Coordinators**

### **a. Presentation of the revised guidelines**

*Matthew LAY* asks how many people are aware of the existence of this guidelines. We have seen a growth in small EWC with unions trying to make an impact, having seen this document can be very useful. Perhaps there should be a briefing note for affiliates.

*Luca SCARPIELLO* proposes to restructure the document to make it more compact, the first two points are redundant, the fifth point can become the first, the second becomes the third and the fourth becomes the third.

*Muriel MARCILLOUX* agrees on the proposals made by Luca and adds one remark in the difficulties to find coordinators. The coordinators must be trained by the directives, and they should know about the operations and it takes time. This people need time, it is complex for the union.

*Jakob EMBACHER* agrees with the proposals made by Luca.

*Luca SCARPIELLO* adds that we need to specify the EPSU role. He suggests more meeting both online and offline for the EWC to strengthen the political role of the EWC.

*Jakob EMBACHER* announces that we included this possibility, but EPSU's funds for such meetings is very limited.

## **6. Company policy: Due Diligence and Whistleblowing Legislation – how can unions use these tools in multinational companies?**

### **a. Presentation by Nadja Salson (see presentation)**

*Muriel MARCILLOUX* comments that there has been a recent legislation that covers a system of alert and notification throughout the value chain. However, unions are not involved in the mapping of the risks.

*Nadja SALSON* answers that the directive imposes a negotiation with the union. For the risk assessment of health risk unions must be involved. There is no role under European law for unions in terms of monitoring.

*Anja KATTHOEFER* comments that since last year there is a social dialogue on due diligence in the power sector. Most of the companies appear aware of this issue. Several companies with human rights breaches, especially in China and the Gulf countries.

*Sari KOIVUNIEMI* adds that the Finnish law covers 11 sectors, excluded social and health care.

*Nadja SALSON* answers that the exclusion is likely not in line with the directive.

After the discussion the meeting is closed.