



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

05 October 2023, 09:30 - 15:00 CEST

The International Association Centre / La Maison des Associations Internationales (M.A.I.) - Room "Berlin", Brussels

IN PERSON Meeting

Draft Minutes

Participants

VOJIKOVA Sarka, FTUE, Czech Republic
VOTAVA Michal, OS UNIOS, Czech Republic
OHRT Jens Erik, OAO, Denmark
KOIVUNIEMI Sari, TEHY, Finland
MARCILLOUX Muriel, FNME-CGT, France
NEAU Elizabeth, CFE-CGC Energies, France
PINCZES Erno, EVDSZ, Hungary
LOSETTI Antonio, FLAEI-CISL, Italy
PREITI Emanuela, FLAEI-CISL, Belgium
RUSSO Andrea, FP-CGIL, Italy
SEDRAN Luigi, FLAEI-CISL, Italy
HENNUM Vidar, EL&IT, Norway
STENESTO Hans Kristian, NUMGE, Norway
POPESCU Raluca, Gaz Rom., Romania
COLAK Ozcan, FNV, the Netherlands

EPSU Secretariat

EMBACHER Jakob, EPSU
BELL Tuscany, EPSU
DRUG Roxana, EPSU
VIZZUSO Nicola, EPSU (Stagiaire)

Apologies

JOKINEN Sari, JHL, Finland
KATTHOFER Anja, Ver.di, Germany
KRIMPHOVE Martin, Ver.di, Germany
KONIG Astrid, Kommunal, Sweden

OLSSON Jan-Olov, Vision, Sweden
ROWE-MERRIMAN Donna, UNISON, United Kingdom

1. Opening and approval of minutes

Jakob EMBACHER welcomes all the members and announces that he is leaving and will be replaced by Tuscany Bell.

Sarka VOJIKOVA proposes to change point 3 of the minutes of the previous meeting. The minutes are approved with the correction.

2. Report by the Secretariat on ongoing/upcoming negotiations

Jakob EMBACHER: negotiations with Prezero are finalized. With Colisée, EPSU sent a letter to begin negotiations and led a training for the negotiation group. There has been a first negotiation meeting in Paris to discuss the negotiation process. EPSU has submitted a project to the European Commission for the establishment of EWCs in Domus Vi and Dibber. The European Commission is now evaluating it. It is important to start projects like these to help start negotiations.

Hans-Kristian STENESTO: asks how long it takes for the projects like this to be approved.

Jakob EMBACHER: usually one year. As soon as we get a response from the Commission, affiliates will be informed.

3. Open exchange on affiliates' work in EWCs

Sari KOIVUNIEMI: we now have an agreement with Attendo but the Directive is vague and doesn't have proper guidelines. For instance, if workers go the Court, who will pay for the trial? This is not specified. There are also problems with the languages and translations, as we have only three languages at the moment.

Jakob EMBACHER: refusal to pay for the interpretation is unacceptable, the EWC needs languages as a basic element to negotiate and find agreements.

Hans-Kristian STENESTO: agrees with the point raised by Sari. Starting the EWC work in the health sector is difficult. In Norlandia, we have to discuss how to elect people that will go to the Special Negotiation Body. We need help from EPSU to get contact persons. On the Norwegian side, we gathered all unions that have something to do with Norlandia. We have a common approach with the nurses' union and try to elect a representative.

Jakob EMBACHER: we found out that in some countries it is not clear how representatives are elected.

Andrea RUSSO: in Italy, Colisée is in the process of expansion and acquisitions, often with the use of contracts not signed by trade unions, especially in Northern Italy. What can be done on this aspect and what is the current state of the negotiation with Colisée?

Jakob EMBACHER: we are at the beginning of the negotiation. It was difficult at the beginning to get negotiations going. Now it is better, we have contact with all the members of the SNB and we started the negotiations last week. Unfortunately, no one from EPSU could attend but we have a report from a colleague who went there on behalf of EPSU.

Tuscany BELL: there is no draft agreement, the document just contains information of the meeting. We can pass on the details of the colleague who went to the meeting last week.

Andrea RUSSO: yes, please share the contact of this person because it would help a lot with strikes and other actions.

Tuscany BELL: updates on the negotiation of the Social Dialogue Ethics Charter negotiations with Clariane. The Charter has now been signed and must be implemented at national level.

Jakob EMBACHER: EPSU is organising a training session in Berlin which focuses on how to organize workers internally, inside companies.

Sarka VOJIKOVA: we have lost contact with the coordinator of the RWE EWC. We have tried to get in touch with them but have had no response since 2020. Coordination has to be reviewed because it is not always carried out in accordance with the rules. We receive information via the media or other ways rather than from the EWC. We will continue trying to make sure that the EWC goes towards its objectives but it is hard because we are not members anymore. RWE was sold to ČEPS in the Czech Republic.

Erno PINCZES: updates on the activity of E.ON in Hungary and OPUS, a new Hungarian private company, active in the gas and electricity sectors.

Jakob EMBACHER: agrees with Sarka about the problem of non-active coordinators. EPSU is preparing an updated list of coordinators.

Vidar HENNUM: there have been two meetings per year with Statkraft (with the next one coming in three weeks) with representatives from the Netherlands, United Kingdom and Sweden. Statkraft is the largest supplier of renewable energy in Europe, and it is expanding in the solar and wind energy areas in other countries, such as Brazil. We need to bring more people in the EWC (the working language is English).

Jakob EMBACHER: asks if there is a global agreement already.

Vidar HENNUM: replies no but they have started discussions.

Jakob EMBACHER: comments that it could be interesting to have a global forum, as companies like ENEL and ENGIE have.

Raluca POPESCU: E.ON is about to re-establish the EWC. Next week there will be a vote on the agreement for the next five years and the EWC Chair is likely to change.

Luigi SEDRAN: ENEL EWC will have to re-negotiate the agreement but there is no fixed interlocutor. ENEL is remodelling its activities in the gas and electricity sectors in order to reduce its 60 billion € debt. The plan is to sell the gas activities abroad and continue to operate

in the sector only in Italy and Spain. This process will have consequences on the workers, for this reason we are pushing to have a meeting to understand how to react to defend workers.

Elizabeth NEAU: on the with work with EDF, we feel reassured at the moment because of the change of group, but we are staying vigilant. The group is now investing renewable energy. On the ENGIE side, there is nothing major to report.

4. Negotiating European Framework Agreements

Jakob EMBACHER presents the work of EPSU in the negotiation of European Framework Agreements. See the document on the procedure for negotiation at MNC level on the [meeting webpage](#) (please log-in first).

Emanuela PREITI: asks if there is a list of agreements and actors involved on the EPSU website, also to help those who entering into negotiations for the first time.

Jakob EMBACHER: EPSU will look into possibilities about making a list available. At the moment, EPSU is an EFA agreement with Suez health and safety risks. Negotiating with some companies can inspire other companies to do the same.

Emanuela PREITI: an issue that is not discussed enough in trade unions debates is digitalization. This process has to be followed closely and monitored because it can have many risks, such as personal isolation and at distance control of workers.

Jakob EMBACHER agrees.

Emanuela PREITI: we should insist for a modification in the European legislation on the European Works Councils to avoid companies acting without consulting the trade unions. This is essential otherwise the agreements we sign won't be effective.

5. Update on the Social Partner Consultation on a possible revision of the EWC Directive

Item to be discussed at the next meeting.

6. Company policy: Corporate sustainability reporting standard

Jakob EMBACHER: unfortunately, the ETUC representative who was invited to present this topic is not available. It will be discussed at the next meeting.

As no member comments this last point, the meeting is closed.