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Training and Consulting

EWC News

Welcome to issue no. 4 / 2009 of EWC News.

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### Der EBR-Fachinformationsdienst

The training and consultancy network "euro-workscouncil.net" is there to inform you about the activities of European Works Councils and related subjects.

EWC News appears four times a year.  
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## 1. Injunctions in company restructuring

### French work council halts bank merger for three months

Once again a large merger has been put on hold in France following legal proceedings for incomplete consultation of the works councils. As a consequence of the financial market crisis and under pressure from the French government the controlling bodies of 20 people's banks (Banque Populaire) and 17 savings banks (Caisses d'Épargne) merged on 31st July 2009 to form France's second largest bank, BPCE. 10.000 of the 120.000 employees are likely to lose their jobs.



On 4th June 2009, in a meeting of the national works council of the savings bank group “Caisse d’Epargne”, employee representatives requested information on planned workforce reductions, on possible wage-cuts and on any deterioration of working conditions. Following management’s refusal to disclose its strategic plans, the work councils in two regions (Île de France and Midi Pyrénées) took legal action.

On 31st July 2009 the district court in Paris provisionally ruled to prohibit management from implementing any measures related to the merger as long as the information and consultation process with the work councils on the consequences of the merger had not been correctly accomplished and finalized. For any violation the company would have to pay a fine of € 100,000 per day. Similarly to the “Gaz de France” case (see [report in EWC News 1/2008](#)) this temporarily brought a halt to important steps of the merger and put considerable pressure on central management to start negotiations with trade unions for a compensation agreement. The court lifted the interim injunction on 27th October, 2009 only after the completion of another consultation procedure. The following texts are available in French only:

- [CGT trade union flyer](#)
- [Verdict of 31st July, 2009 for download](#)
- [Full text of the 27th October, 2009 verdict](#)
- [Interview on the background with a union representative](#)

A European Works Council has not yet been established in either of the banking groups. Although the lawsuit was won by a French works council it can nevertheless serve as an example for EWC rights since the principles of information and consultation, as found in many EU legislations, have their origin in French labour law.

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### Goodyear severance plan cannot be implemented



Since 2007 the management of the Goodyear tyre plant in Amiens in the North of France has been trying in vain to cut 827 jobs through a severance plan. Up to now, trade unions and works councils have been able to prevent this happening since management has not provided them with all the required information. As a consequence, and as pleaded to the court, a correct consultation process can not have been carried out, thus preventing the French employer from taking any unilateral measures until its completion. The central works council was able to obtain an injunction which will again come up for negotiation, on 27th January 2010 before the appeal court in Versailles. In the meantime an unsuccessful attempt at mediation took place chaired by a director of Secafi-Alpha, a consultancy company for works councils.

Employees are demanding a compensation of € 100,000 per person for voluntary early-retirement.

- [Further information on the Goodyear case](#) (in French)

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### Controversial injunction rights in Germany

In comparison, injunction rights for German works council are rudimentary. There have been recently however several verdicts which follow the French example and prevent employers taking unilateral measures during company restructuring; e.g. the decision of the Munich county industrial tribunal (LAG) of 22nd December 2008 in the case of Nokia Siemens Networks (see also [report in EWC News 2/2007](#)). In this respect the judges particularly refer to EU consultation rights which are not completely fulfilled by German Labour Law. The following texts are available in German only:

- [The legal discussion in Germany](#)
- [Background to the Munich Court verdict](#)
- [Full text of the Munich verdict](#)

## 2. Further recent court rulings

## Negotiation rights for minority trade unions come under test



On 27th October, 2009, the French FO trade-union won a dispute for the recognition of its trade union delegate in the machine manufacturer SDMO before the industrial tribunal of Brest (Brittany). According to new labour representativity laws which came into force on 1st January, 2009 (see [report in EWC News 4/2008](#)) and, following its bad works council election results, the union would have no longer been allowed to appoint any delegates. With this verdict not only is the validity of the new French law at stake but also the rights of minority groups in other countries.

The new French labour law regulates trade union rights within companies. This governs which of the competing trade unions may conclude collective bargaining agreements. For the first time in French history the legislator has defined a threshold value for their representativity. As a result, trade unions with less than 10% of the votes in works council elections can neither conclude shop-floor collective agreements nor appoint trade union delegates within the company. Trade union delegates are not elected in France but appointed by the trade unions and negotiate collective bargaining agreements with the employer. The Brest ruling therefore gives negotiation rights to the Force Ouvrière (FO) trade union within the company.

The verdict will now be re-examined by the European Court of Justice. Should the judges in Luxembourg come to the conclusion that a legislative threshold value violates the freedom of association and EU rights, then in the future every minority group in any EU country will be able to obtain negotiation rights within companies. The following texts are available in French only:

- [Further information on the Brest court ruling](#)
- [Legal position statement from the FO trade union](#)
- [Full text of the verdict](#)

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## Protection against dismissal for Belgian EWC members

In its court ruling of 28th September 2009, the industrial tribunal of Antwerp decided on the protection rights of Belgian members of European Works Councils. They are to be treated in the same manner as Belgian works council members. If the employer wishes to dismiss a Belgian EWC member, he must follow a special procedure. If not, the dismissed employee may claim special financial compensation. This also applies if the employee belongs only to the EWC and not to a Belgian works council.

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## Appointment of European Works Council delegates

On 4th November 2009, the highest French appeal court ruled on which authority is competent for disputes concerning the appointment of French EWC delegates. The case was initiated by the CGT union who was unable to send its EWC candidate to the EWC of the U.S. aeroplane supplier, Hamilton Sundstrand. As in a similar case in Germany (see [report in EWC News 1/2008](#)) the judges in Paris decided in favour of the national courts.



- [Further information on legal position](#) (in French)
- [Summary for the appointment of delegates within all EU countries](#)

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## Employee ranking quotas illegal

On 27th November 2009, the district court in Nanterre near Paris ruled on a complaint filed by the

Hewlett-Packard works council. The judges prohibited their French management from dictating to its executives a quota of 5% of bad ranking to be given to their subordinates. Moreover, the works council had not been consulted prior to this measure. The concerned employees may now claim compensation.

- [Report on the verdict](#)
- [Comment on the verdict](#) (in French)
- [Report from the last EWC meeting](#)

### 3. Demands for correct consultation procedures

#### U.S. automobile supplier refuses social dialogue



The European forum of the automobile supplier Federal Mogul met in Turin from 29th September to 1st October 2009. After a number of plant closures and staff cuts across Europe the closure of the Italian site in Desenzano on Lake Garda is now on the agenda. In a statement, the 18 employee representatives from eight countries criticised the reluctance of central management to enter into real social dialogue. Whilst working on an improved EWC agreement with the EWC, it has declined at the same time negotiations with local employee representatives in Italy. The European forum of Federal Mogul was founded in 1996 under British legislation.

- [Full text of the EWC statement](#)

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#### Europe-wide day of action at Alcatel-Lucent

On 10th November 2009, the European Works Council of the Telecom and Network outfitter Alcatel-Lucent staged a day of action in six European countries. Some support was also given from US employees. Since the merger of the two former companies in December 2006, four restructuring programmes have been carried out up to now and thousands of jobs dismantled. The EWC already won a court case for insufficient information in April 2007 (see [report in EWC News 2/2007](#)).



- [Action day reports in the European countries](#)
- [USA flyer](#)
- [Report on the EWC meeting of 14th December 2009](#)



#### PPR reorganisation without consultation

In an interview with the Wall Street Journal on 24th November 2009, the president of the French luxury goods group, Pinault-Printemps-Redoute (PPR), announced the sale of both the FNAC (electronics and books) and Conforama (furniture) retail chains. PPR wants to concentrate on its luxury brands such as Gucci and Yves Saint Laurent. A press statement from the CGT trade union criticizes the fact that although the PPR European Works Council was convened in a meeting on the day of the interview, it was not informed by central management about its plans to sell. PPR signed two agreements with the EWC in October 2008 on its social responsibility (see [report in EWC News 4/2008](#)).

- [The press release from the CGT](#) (in French)

### 4. Influencing control on restructuring

## Steel group strengthens social dialogue during crisis

On 2nd November 2009, the central management of ArcelorMittal signed a framework agreement with the European Metalworkers Federation (EMF) covering the 115,000 European employees of the Luxembourg based steel group which has been hit hard by the financial crisis (see [report in EWC News 1/2009](#)). Its aim is to promote long term job security, the development of employee competency and to improve social dialogue.



## Second pillar to support EWC

In parallel to the European Works Council established in 2007 (see [report in EWC News 2/2007](#)), a high-profile group for monitoring social dialogue has now been set up. It is made up of twelve trade union and twelve employer representatives and meets quarterly. One of its tasks is to monitor the profitability of all sites and the supervision of the framework agreement. It will be supported by national parity based control committees established in each country. An arbitration board is planned for any disputes which arise.

- [The EMF press release](#)
- [Full text of the framework agreement](#)

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## Mahle EWC secures social plan in Italy



On 23rd September, 2009 the central management of Mahle, a German automobile supplier announced the closure of its valve manufacturing plant in Volvera near Turin. Despite protests, local management was not willing to start negotiations for a severance plan. Things got moving only after the involvement of the European Works Council and following the visit of a delegation from Volvera to the company headquarters in Stuttgart on 7th December 2009, where they protested together with German works council members. A social plan which avoids redundancies despite the plant closure was signed on 14th December 2009. According to an additional agreement the EWC is to take on a controlling function in any further procedures.

- [EWC press release](#) (in German)
- [Video of the protests in Italy](#) (in Italian)
- [Radio report on the negotiations](#) (in German)

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## EWC intervention enables negotiated solution

On 4th December 2009, the Dutch-British Corus group announced its intention to mothball its steelworks Redcar in the northeast of England. As a consequence 1,700 of the 2,600 jobs in the Teesside region would be lost. The subject was up for discussion in a meeting of the EWC held on 9th December 2009 in IJmuiden (Netherlands). It criticized in a press release that no alternative plans had been discussed and a certain number of their questions remained unanswered. Management held discussions on the future of the plant with British trade unions on 17th December 2009. It was agreed to put in place a common taskforce to examine alternative solutions. The official consultations will start in January 2010. The EWC was established under British law in the year 2000 following the merger of British Steel and Koninklijke Hoogovens to form Corus. There had already existed similar bodies in both of the former companies since 1996.



- [Trade Union press release](#)
- [Report on the EWC meeting](#)
- [Press release on the creation of the taskforce](#)

## 5. New European Works Councils

### Delay at German Locomotive Manufacturer



Negotiations for the EWC agreement of the railway equipment manufacturer, Vossloh, were carried out between May and September 2009 although the request from two countries for its establishment had been made back in February 2006. This German company is therefore one of the few cases where the legally specified negotiation deadline of three years was not respected (see [report in EWC News 2/2008](#)). In such cases the legislator provides for the establishment of a default EWC.

The creation of the EWC was of particular importance to the Spanish unions since Vossloh runs a large locomotive manufacturing plant in Valencia. Twelve delegates from ten countries participated in the constitutional meeting at Möhneseesee (Westphalia) on 9th December 2009 and elected a steering committee of three members (from Germany, Spain and Poland). It will meet several times per year.

- [Report on the EWC constitutional meeting](#) (in German)

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### U.S. security company without EWC agreement

On 5th October 2009, the central management of Brinks Security International in Paris and the secretary of the newly created EWC signed a set of internal standing rules which largely resemble a normal EWC agreement. Since negotiations could not be concluded within the legal deadline of three years, the EWC is created on the basis of the subsidiary regulations of the French EWC legislation.



It is composed of nine countries: France, Benelux, Germany, Hungary, Greece, Ireland and Poland. The EWC is chaired by the employer who has full voting rights and may consult another two managers with consultative voice. The EWC is explicitly recognised as a legal entity, facilitating any legal action. The employees' side elects a speaker ("secretary"), a treasurer and another four members to form a steering committee. The employer bears all regular costs and the EWC receives in addition an annual budget of € 15,000 which is at its disposal to pay for trainings and IT material. On top of their participation to regular meetings, members of the steering committee can have up to 120 hours per year time-off.

- [Presentation on European Works Councils in private security services](#)



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### French insurance company creates EWC under old Directive

An EWC agreement was signed under French law at the headquarters of the insurance broker, Gras Savoye, in the Parisian suburb Neuilly, on 6th November 2009. A total of 16 EWC members, nine from France and one from each of 7 further countries, meet once a year under the chairmanship of the employer. A four-headed steering committee made up of the CEO and three employee representatives is responsible for day-to-day operations. The representatives have ten hours per annum time-off over and above their participation to meetings. The company bears all regular costs. The steering committee disposes of its own annual budget of € 2,000 which is very little by French standards. Information and consultation rights do not go beyond the standards of the old EWC Directive.

## Updated EWC statistics from Brussels

The European trade union institute (ETUI) published new figures on European Works Councils on 13th November 2009: altogether, there are now 938. The surge of creations has noticeably receded in 2009 in comparison with the previous years. This is possibly connected with the new EWC Directive since all EWC agreements signed in the transition period between June 2009 and June 2011 are subject to special rules.

european  
trade union institute

**etui.**

- [Statistics download](#)

## 6. Group reorganisations change EWC structure

### U.S. pharmaceutical companies merge



On 3rd November, 2009 the U.S. pharmaceutical company Merck finalized its take-over of Schering Plough. Merck has thereby become the world's second largest company in this sector. 16,000 of the 105,000 employees are now to lose their jobs. Prior to the merger the European Works Council of Schering Plough made a complaint on 22nd April, 2009 for insufficient information over the closure of the Irish plant in Bray south of Dublin, planned for 2011. The Schering Plough EWC set up in 1996 under Irish law is expected to be combined with the Merck European Forum founded in the same year under German law.

- [Position statement of Schering Plough EWC](#)

### Delayed EWC meetings in brewery group

Following the announcement of the decision of the Belgian brewery group Anheuser-Bush InBev to sell its entire East-European business to a financial investor (see [report in EWC News 3/2009](#)) and under pressure from the trade unions, two extraordinary sessions of the European Works Council have taken place. Up to now central management has however refused to give access to the sales contract.



The trade unions are at present trying to make initial contact with the new owner. Since the East-European delegates will soon no longer belong to the EWC of Anheuser-Bush InBev, the job of creating the European Works Council for the new company under Czech law has to be dealt with immediately. There are already problems with local management in Romania and Hungary.

- [Report on the current situation](#)

### Announced Merger of transport groups



The financial terms behind the planned merger of Transdev with the transport division of Veolia Environnement were announced on 21st December 2009. The two French companies want to establish themselves as the world market leader in passenger transport. The state company Transdev operates bus lines with 46,000 employees in nine countries; the privatized enterprise Veolia Transport has a worldwide presence in 28 countries with 84,000 employees. Information and consultations are due to start shortly in both companies. There has been an EWC in place at Veolia Environnement since 2005 and since 2006 in Transdev. The Veolia EWC sits under the wing of its holding and is not particularly specialised with the transport division, making a new EWC structure necessary after the merger.

- [The financial background to planned merger](#)
- [Spanish trade union CC.OO position statement](#) (in Spanish)

### Alcan Packaging changes hands

More than two years after the merger of the raw material groups Rio Tinto and Alcan (see [report in EWC News 2/2007](#)), the sale of the Alcan Packaging division, with 14,000 employees in 28 countries, was finally concluded on 23rd December 2009. Central management pointed out to the press that the European Works Council had also been consulted. The latter had repeatedly demanded this through several protests (see [report in EWC News 1/2008](#)).



As the new owner, the Australian packing group Amcor, has already started to adapt the organizational structure for its 75 plants in Europe. The German production plant in Singen (photo) will be split into three independent companies. The European Commission had given the go-ahead for the transaction on 15th December 2009 under the condition that Amcor sell two very profitable plants in Spain which produce packaging for the pharmaceutical industry.

Rio Tinto has only had a European Works Council under French legislation since June 2008, and which replaced the former council of Alcan in place since 1996 (see [report in EWC News 3/2008](#)). Amcor has had an EWC under German legislation since 1998. Due to the size of the transaction both councils are now faced with structural trimming. If the new Directive were already transposed, they would have a legal right to renegotiate the EWC agreement.

- [Report on the sale](#)
- [Full text of Rio Tinto press release](#)
- [Press reports on the Singen plant](#) (in German)

## 7. The European Company (SE)

### Lenze freezes co-determination



Once again a family business uses the SE legal entity to freeze employee participation in the supervisory board to one third. An SE agreement was concluded on 31st July 2009 in Aerzen (Lower Saxony) for the machine manufacturer Lenze. The company has about 1,900 employees in Germany and without its SE transformation could potentially have exceeded the threshold for a parity supervisory board. Lenze employs over 3,000 people worldwide. The SE participation agreement can be cancelled at the earliest in 2021, which is a lifespan which even surpasses, the highly controversial, in those days, Porsche agreement (see [report in EWC News 3/2007](#)).

The new SE works council is made up of 17 delegates from eleven countries and meets twice a year. They elect a five-member steering committee with a right to meet three times per year and to access all European sites. There was previously no European Works Council at Lenze.

- [Company press release](#)

**Hans Böckler  
Stiftung**

Fakten für eine faire Arbeitswelt.

### New figures on SE ...

According to estimates from the Hans Böckler Foundation there were altogether 431 European companies in Europe at the end of August 2009. However, only 99 of them are operating normally. Noticeable is the high number for Germany where no fewer than 64 of the 99 "normal" companies have their headquarters. The reason: many employers use the SE transformation to

either completely avoid or freeze to one third, the participation rights in their supervisory boards. This is specifically referred to in the business press (see [report in EWC News 2/2008](#)). Moreover, companies already operating under parity co-determination frequently reduce the size of their supervisory board in the course of SE transformation. The following documents are available in German only:

- [Chart with current figures](#)
- [Summary of current situation](#)
- [Report from the Newsbulletin - Böcklerimpuls](#)

### ... this is just the tip of the iceberg

Initiatives for the transition to SE originate exclusively from the employers' side. In many cases works councils are informed of the events with very short notice. At present, of all the German companies with parity based co-determination, hardly more than 1% have undertaken an SE transition. Nevertheless, and if only for the reasons mentioned above, a considerable increase can be expected in the coming years. The legal entity SE could therefore develop into one of the greatest challenges for the German co-determination system since the Second World War. The following two examples show clearly the challenges for German employee representatives:

- [Report on tesa SE transition](#) (in German)
- [Interview with tesa SNB chairman](#)
- [Report on Warema SE transition](#)
- [Background: Co-determination in the SE](#) (in German)

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### Employee representatives contribute to fund

A "European Worker Participation Competence Centre" (EWPC) has recently been set up by the European Trade Union Institute in Brussels and will provide employee representatives support for their work in supervisory boards of European Companies (SE). It is financed from a fund which is fed by the royalties of these employee representatives. The EWPC works therefore similarly to the Hans Böckler foundation in Germany whose budget is supplied from the royalties of employee representatives on German supervisory boards. There are at present around 75 employee representatives sitting on 23 European-wide SE supervisory boards, with a rising trend.



While the transfer of remunerations triggers a positive acceptance in continental European countries, it meets with a mixed opinion in the Anglo-Saxon cultural area. The London Financial Times described the model as a "gold mine" for the trade unions. The funds would finance campaigns which could work directly against the shareholder's interests. Employers would therefore ultimately finance their arch-enemies (see [report in the Financial Times](#)).

- [Further information about the EWPC](#)
- [Transfer rules for the remunerations](#)
- [Report on an EWPC meeting](#) (in German)

## 8. Activities beyond Europe



### Worldwide presence at Danone EWC meeting

For the first time in the French food group Danone, 60 employee representatives from twenty countries around the world met in Geneva from 12th to 14th October 2009 together with the central management. The non-European representatives were able to assist as guests in a plenary session of the Danone Information

and Consultation Committee (CIC) -- the name given to the European Works Council founded in 1988. The CIC may hereby ultimately grow into the role of a World Works Council. A world-wide antidiscrimination agreement has already existed since June 2007 at Danone (see [report in EWC News 4/2007](#)).

- [Report on the Danone conference](#)

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### Volkswagen worldwide charter for Labour Relations

On 29th October 2009 a charter for industrial relations was signed by central management of Volkswagen at the meeting of their group's World Works Council in Zwickau, Germany (photo). It sets down minimum standards for local employee representation bodies in more than 60 plants of the automobile group within 15 countries. The worldwide charter is to be transposed everywhere into concrete terms through a local plant specific participation agreement.



Employee representatives in all Volkswagen sites therefore now have the right to hold up to four general assemblies per year and local management informs the entire workforce once a year. A supervisory group at the Volkswagen's headquarters monitors compliance with the charter. Under the initiative of the European Works Council an agreement was reached for the establishment of a works council in the newly opened plant in Kaluga (Russia) on 25th September 2009.

- [World Works Council Press release](#)
- [Full text of the charter](#)
- [Report on the agreement for Russia](#) (in German)



### Tenaris World Works Council demands recognition

The World works council of Tenaris met in Bergamo from 28th to 30th October, 2009. Although the central management of the Italian tube manufacturer recognises the new EWC composed of delegates from Italy and Romania (see [report in EWC News 1/2009](#)), it refuses, however, to discuss with employee representatives from the other four countries outside Europe. The World works council staged a demonstration against this, with large media coverage, in front of the headquarters of the company in Dalmine (photo).

- [Report on the meeting](#)

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### Worldwide Siemens meeting

Employee representatives from Siemens Europe, India, Brazil, China and the USA met in Munich for an international workshop from 24th to 25th November 2009. While the previous three world meetings were all funded by trade unions, central management bore for the first time all costs and was open to discussion. The establishment of a World works council and an international framework agreement for minimum social standards are currently under debate. A few days later from 5th to 7th December 2009, Indian and European employee representatives from Siemens discussed improvements to networking at a seminar in Mumbai.



- [IG Metall report on the world-wide meeting](#) (in German)
- [International Metalworkers' Federation report](#)

- [Report on seminar in India](#)

## 9. Transposition of the new EWC Directive begins

### Portugal pushes ahead



New European Works Council legislation which transposes the revised EWC Directive into national law came into force in Portugal on 2nd November 2009. Although the deadline set by the EU expires only on 5th June 2011, the legislation was already passed by parliament on 23rd July 2009 and was published in the official journal on 3rd September 2009. Portugal is the first country which provides better operating conditions for European Works Councils. However this country, on the western outskirts of Europe, numerically does not play an important role. Only nine companies with their headquarters in Portugal come under the Directive, and the finance institute, Banco Espirito Santo from Lisbon, is the only one of them to have founded an EWC so far.

- [Full text of the new EWC legislation](#) (in Portuguese)
- [Background: The most important points in new EWC Directive](#)

### British draft bill published

The transposition in the United Kingdom is awaited with great interest since the British government was the only to abstain from the vote at the Council of Ministers in Brussels (see [report in EWC News 4/2008](#)). The Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) started a public consultation already on 19th November 2009, on the implementation of the EWC Directive and which will run until 12th February 2010. This document includes a draft bill (starting page 38):



- [The invitation to participate in the consultation](#)
- [Full text of consultation document with bill](#)

### Trade union recommendations for ongoing EWC negotiations

On 9th December, 2009, several European trade union federations have published a common recommendation for EWC agreements to be concluded before June 2011. The paper aims at ensuring that the new EWC Directive's regulations already come fully into effect during the transition period leading up to the transposition into national legislations.

- [Full text of the recommendation](#)

## 10. Interesting Web Pages

### Dutch groups monitored



A "Company monitor" published by the Dutch trade union confederation FNV examines the social policy of multinational companies in developing countries. Reports on Ahold, Akzo Nobel, Heineken, ING, Philips and Unilever, can be found on the web page. A special dossier is devoted to the situation in China.

- [FNV Company Monitor web page](#)

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## Updates on corporate social responsibility

Company reports on social responsibility and sustainable business are available for download on the British web page "ReportAlert". The publications are available immediately following their publication and ordered chronologically.



- ["ReportAlert" web page](#)

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## Trade union position statements on EU industrial policy



Position statements from four European-level trade union federations on industrial policy are available on a common web page. It contains details on individual industry sectors as well as reports on the climate conference in

Copenhagen.

- [Industrial policy web page](#)

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## Chemical group highlights its social partnership

The international cooperation between BASF central management and employee representation bodies is presented in detail on a company internet page. BASF was one of the first large companies to have made the transition to a European Company (SE) in January 2008 and to establish a European-wide SE Works Council (see [report in EWC News 4/2007](#)). There is also a program for global dialogue.



- [Company's policy on dialogue](#)
- [Information on transnational representative bodies](#)
- [Information on global working and social standards](#)
- [Documentation on SE transformation process](#)

We have arranged various further interesting web-pages into a [collection of links](#).

## 11. New Publications

### Project report on future of labour relations



In December 2008 a EU financed project, "ZAUBER " (The future of industrial relations and work in Europe) was finalized by the Osnabruck based training institute Arbeit und Leben and based on six international specialist workshops in four countries. The recently published project documentation (booklet with CD-ROM) summarizes all the topics that were covered. The main emphasis was on information and consultation of employees in multinational companies, European collective bargaining policy and the prospects for labour relations in Middle and Eastern Europe. The booklet is available in German and English.

- [Project web page](#)
- [Most important contents of the book](#) (in German)
- [Table of contents of the book](#) (in German)
- [Complete booklet download](#)

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## Labour relations in Eastern Europe

A new study from Heribert Kohl, an expert on Eastern Europe, was published in September 2009. It examines the development of works councils, the spread of trade union membership, social dialogue and collective bargaining policies in 16 countries from Middle and Eastern Europe as well as the western Balkans. Of particular importance is how the financial market crisis was overcome in these countries and what effects can be observed on labour relations. For European Works Council members the study offers a treasure-chest of information and statistics for a better understanding of the situation of representatives in these countries.



- [Study abstract download](#) (32 pages)
- [Long version download](#) (112 pages)
- [Report of the presentation of the study in Warsaw](#) (in German)



## Transnational trade-union confederation's handbook

This book which contains the results of a Hans Böckler Foundation research project was published in November 2009. Part 1 can be used as a reference book on branch federations at both European and worldwide levels. Apart from the presentation of the federations, the authors of the book of the "Research team on European and global labour relations" from the University of Fulda who have also been conducting EWC research for many years also examine specific aspects of their trade-union work. As an example Part 2 of the publication deals with international framework agreements and another chapter with European works councils. The book is available only in German.

- [Description of research project](#)

- [Table of contents of the book](#)
- [Browse the book online](#)
- [Online ordering of book](#)

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## Newsletter for sustainable development



At the end of November 2009, the European Trade Union Institute, (ETUI), started a new electronic publication on sustainable development. The monthly newsletter from Brussels will report on any trade union activities related to questions on climate policy, job security and social justice.

- [Summary of newsletter contents](#)

## 12. Training and Consultancy Network "euro-workscouncil.net": Examples of our work

### Interviews and publications

In December 2009 **der betriebsrat** magazine published an article under the title "Family Business Sets Standards" concerning the negotiation of a participation agreement for the Bavarian Metal Company Warema, which recently made the transition to a European Company (SE) (see [report in EWC News 3/2009](#)). **EIRO**, the online portal of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions in Dublin had already analysed in September 2009 which elements of the Warema agreement could be regarded as trend-setting for co-determination in the European Company (SE).

- [Article on SE negotiations at Warema](#) (in German)
- [Analysis of SE agreement in online portal EIRO](#)

The December 2009 edition of the AiBplus technical journal reported on the negotiations for the establishment of a European Works Council in the Japanese pharmaceutical company Takeda. The special negotiation body (SNB) is currently being assisted by Dr. Werner Altmeyer from the training and consultancy network "euro-workscouncil.net" (see [report in EWC News 1/2009](#)).

- [Full text of the AiBplus report](#) (in German)

### Training on new EWC Directive

In cooperation with partners from five other EU countries the training and consultancy network "euro-workscouncil.net" is holding a number of workshops in the course of 2010 on the new EWC Directive. They are initiated by UNI, the European federation of trade unions in the services sector. Venues are planned in Paris, London, Madrid, Berlin, Bucharest and Warsaw. The agenda will be fixed in the project team meeting in Paris on January 13th, 2009 and published in the next version of the EWC News.



**ADAPT International**  
Anticipating Change Through Dialogue

### New cooperation partner in London

The British consultancy firm ADAPT International, apart from its research activities, devotes itself primarily to train employee representative on their information and consultation rights at both national and European levels. The company founder, David Tarren, was already used to focusing his activities on socially responsible restructuring and on the promotion of social dialogue during his work as a full-time trade union officer for Unite (up to March 2008). ADAPT International and the training and consultancy network "euro-workscouncil.net" will combine their activities in the German-British context and on EU projects in the future.

- [ADAPT International web page](#)

## 13. Current Seminar Schedule

Registration is open for the following seminars and workshops (only in German):

**Hamburg Conference for European Work Councils**  
**Legal and practical issues in EWC work**  
25-01-2010 in Hamburg



### **Workers' participation à la française?**

26-01-2010 in Hamburg

(both dates can be booked separately)

- [Contents of the EWC conference](#)
- [EWC conference registration form](#)
- [Report on the last EWC conference in January 2009](#)

### **English language course for EWC members**

13 -- 19-06-2010 in Eastborne (England)

- [Further information on the language course](#)
- [Language course registration form](#)

### **French-German EWC conference**

05 -- 07-07-2010 in Paris

### **Workshop for European Work Councils**

October 2010 in Montabaur

- [Further information on these events](#)



### **Europe for IG Metall trade union officers**

Institutions, political background, European works councils

24 -- 26-03-2010 in Bad Orb

- [Further information about this workshop](#)

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### **European Labour Law and European Court of Justice**

Significance for the work of representatives in the workplace

12 -- 16-04-2010 in Trier

- [Further information about this seminar](#)



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### **Seminars from the Institute for further education of works councils (ifb)**



Institut zur  
Fortbildung von  
Betriebsräten KG

Since 1998 the ifb has been offering seminars for European works councils which were developed in conjunction with the training and consultancy network "euro-works council.net".

#### **Basic seminar: The path to the European Works Council**

07 -- 11-06-2010 in Fulda

08 -- 12-11-2010 in Hannover

#### **Advanced seminar: Practical knowledge, EWC special**

14 -- 18-06-2010 in Erfurt

15 -- 19-11-2010 in Hamburg

- [Further information about the basic seminar](#)
  - [Further information about the advanced seminar](#)
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## In-house events

Please find a survey of possible subjects of in-house events here:

- [Topics for in-house training](#)
- [Topics for in-house lectures](#)

## 14. Imprint

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