



Welcome to issue no. 4 / 2011 of EWC News.

27<sup>th</sup> December 2011

**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. European Commission sends out reminders

### Italy, Greece and Luxembourg have not yet transposed the EWC Directive

The 27 EU countries as well as Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein had until 5th June 2011 to transpose the new Directive on European works councils into their national legislations. Of these 30 countries only eleven have respected the timing (see [report in EWC News 2/2011](#)). In July 2011 the European Commission consequently sent formal reminders to 17 countries and on 24th November 2011 initiated official infringement procedures against four countries.



- [European Commission press release](#)

One of these procedures (against the **Netherlands**) was superfluous, since the legislative procedure had already been concluded and the new EWC legislation came into force on 15th

November 2011. Following texts are available only in Dutch:

- [Report on the legislative procedure](#)
- [Full text of new EWC legislation](#)

In **Luxembourg** the government adopted the draft bill on 11th November 2011, which was submitted to parliament on 29th November 2011. The legislation has not yet been passed. Following texts are available only in French:

- [Report on new EWC legislation in Luxembourg](#)
- [Full text of draft bill](#)

Transposition is also underway in **Greece**. On the other hand the situation looks totally different in **Italy** where there were already problems after the adoption of the old EWC Directive (from the year 1994). The Italian legislator only took action after being summoned by the European Commission and passed the EWC legislation in 2002.



The reason for this is that Italians are accustomed to negotiating agreements between the union confederations CGIL, CISL, UIL and the employers as part of collective bargaining. On 12th April 2011 they consequently concluded a common position on the new EWC Directive, which, unlike for example Belgium, is not universally applicable. Now how do companies without union representation stand? Since an EU-Directive applies however to all Italian employees

without exception, the legislator has been invited to fill in this legal loophole.

- [Full text of the common position](#) (in Italian)

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### Legal case against "participation-free sanctuaries"

On 24th November 2011 the European Commission in Brussels decided to bring the Netherlands before the European Court of Justice. The litigation is for incorrect transposition of European Union regulations for participation rights on supervisory boards following transnational mergers.



The complaint arises from a legal claim made by a Dutch trade union dating from the year 2008. The Netherlands is a preferred location for foreign holding companies. Apart from fiscal considerations, the ability to avoid participation rights by these means also plays a role. An employee representation on the supervisory board can be elegantly avoided with just a small office or a "letter box" at Amsterdam airport, providing there are only a few employees within the Netherlands. For example EADS, the parent company of Airbus, or Ikea, the Swedish furniture group have hereby officially declared their company headquarters in the Netherlands.

- [European Commission press release](#)

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### New EWC statistics from Brussels

On 25th November 2011 the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) in Brussels published new charts with statistical data. According to this, there are currently 995 European works councils in 932 cross-border enterprises (some companies have established more than one EWC).

- [The graphs for download](#)

### New release of German EWC legislation

On 15th December 2011 the revised version of the German EWC act was published in the Federal Law Gazette. This is the first time that the complete legal text, in force since 18th June 2011, is available in one document. Earlier releases mentioned only the modified paragraphs.

- [Full text of Federal Law Gazette publication](#) (in German)

## 2. Practical tips: Provisions for changes in structure

### Caution with adaptation clauses according to article 13



One of the most important improvements of the new EWC Directive is the legal right to a renegotiation of the agreement after "changes in structure" of the company (mergers, spin-offs, closures, delocalization of company headquarters). With a view to removing this legal right many companies - above all British and American – are currently trying to persuade their European works councils to sign an adaptation clause to their EWC agreement. What legal rights do employee representatives lose if they thoughtlessly sign such clauses?

#### The provisions set down by law for changes in structure

Article 13 of the new EWC Directive states the following:

*Where the structure of the Community-scale undertaking ... changes significantly, and either in the absence of provisions established by the agreements in force or in the event of conflicts between the relevant provisions of two or more applicable agreements, the central management shall initiate the negotiations referred to in Article 5 on its own initiative or at the written request of at least 100 employees or their representatives in at least two undertakings or establishments in at least two different Member States.*

#### Composition of the Special Negotiating Body (SNB)

Article 5 of the new EWC Directive regulates the creation of the SNB for the first establishment of a European works council. When there is however a change in company structure, further members are added to the elected SNB members from each country: hereby each existing European works council sends at least three of its members into the SNB. So where there are changes in company structure there is an opportunity to put the whole EWC agreement to the test, to renegotiate and to substantially improve its' quality. Even though the process may take up to three years, during this time the existing European works councils remain in office.

This is particularly important in old "voluntary" agreements, which were concluded for the first time before September 1996, or which were modified between June 2009 and June 2011. In these cases the request for renegotiation according to article 13 leads automatically to an improvement in the legal status, even if the actual contents of the EWC agreement remain unchanged (this does not apply however to EWC agreements under British law). The signing therefore, of an adaptation clause, which invalidates article 13, can only be strongly discouraged.

#### Adaptation clauses undermine employee negotiating power

Even if central management frequently argues that these clauses are merely a way of avoiding a long and bureaucratic procedure, the suggestions however are targeted at the quality of the EWC agreement. When a EWC signs such a clause it is giving up any "means of bargaining" without any compensation in return. N.B.: Often in the text proposed by management **no express mention of Article 13** is made, even though it is to be invalidated!

### Workshop on renegotiation of EWC agreements

A workshop is being organized from 8th to 10th October 2012 on Rheinfels Castle for European works councils wishing to renegotiate their EWC agreement. There will be a special emphasis put on the legal situation after "changes in structure".

**TIPP !**

- [EWC workshop program](#) (in German)

## 3. Focus on the United Kingdom

**First German-British EWC conference in London**



Around 40 participants predominantly from Germany, the UK, but also from four other countries, came together on 27th and 28th October 2011 in London, for an exchange on working experience within their European works councils and on the rules of the game for employee representation. The conference was organized in co-operation with the London branch of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. Every fifth EWC is subject to British legislation and nearly all German transnational companies have a location in the UK. This direct exchange will therefore be continued in future. The next German-British EWC conference in London is planned for 25th and 26th October 2012.

- [Documentation on London EWC conference](#)
- [Intercultural problems in the German-British context](#) (in German)
- [Presentation of the British system of employee representation](#) (in German)

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### Recent news from British companies

Since there is no legal basis for works councils or participation in the United Kingdom, the collective regulation of working conditions is only possible through trade union committees and on the basis of in-house collective agreements. Trade unions must first fight to be recognized as a party to collective bargaining in each individual company. Even though there has been legislation on the matter since the year 2000, the actual situation varies greatly from company to company. Some recent examples:

- Trade unions were recognized in October 2011 at Kammac. This company in the Midlands is specialized in logistics and storage for the brewery industry. The workforce voted in a secret ballot and without any opposition for the recognition of the trade union, Unite, who, in the future, will negotiate working conditions through in-house collective agreements. Next step is the negotiation of a "recognition agreement" with management, which will cover the basic rules for the establishment of an employee representation body ([see report](#)).
- LSG Sky Chefs, the catering company at Manchester airport, is one step further. A "recognition agreement" was signed there in November 2011, which regulates the details of employee representation ([see report](#)).
- An opposite example is to be observed at Honda in the South West of England. In their Swindon plant the employer is using legal means to try to derecognize the Unite union. In July 2011, the convenor – which is similar to a German works council chairman – was suspended from his job ([see report](#)).




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### Largest labour dispute since the general strike in 1926



Between two and three million people took part in a nation-wide general strike on 30th November 2011 in the United Kingdom to secure their pension rights. The government wants to use the pension funds to consolidate the national budget. Unlike in Continental Europe, British pensioners are dependent, to a substantial extent, on payments from their employer's pension funds. The national pension covers only minimum benefits.

Whereas such nation-wide general strikes are quite frequent in Mediterranean countries due to the very extensive strike rights there, a British general strike comes as a real sensation. The many obstacles from the Thatcher legislation do not make it easy for British trade unions to fulfill the formal conditions. There had therefore to be held a strike ballot covering all potential strikers throughout the whole country.



- [Report on strike ballot](#)
- [Report on general strike](#) (in the German trade union press)

Although the general strike on 30th November 2011 was dominated to a large extent by the public services, there are also problems with pension funds in the private sector. The British Ford subsidiary is now threatened with its first strike ballot since the 70's. Unilever, the world-wide consumer group is one step further, with strikes in several plants throughout England on 9th December 2011 in defense of pension rights. Support came also from their European works council.

- [Report on pension negotiations at Ford](#)
- [Report on the strikes at Unilever](#)
- [Report on the visit of the EWC delegation](#)
- [Full text of EWC solidarity declaration](#)

#### 4. Further country reports

##### Disintegration of the Dutch trade union confederation FNV

In spring 2011 an agreement was concluded between trade unions, employers and the government on the gradual increase in the pensionable age from 65 to 67 years. The subject is however highly controversial, both within the community as well as in the trade union confederation, FNV. There was a clash on 3rd December 2011, since from a total of 19 individual trade union federations, two of the federations with most members considered themselves to be insufficiently represented on the FNV governing board. The FNV will therefore undergo voluntary dissolution and put in place a completely new trade union organization before summer 2012, which will follow other rules than those currently in practice. With its 1.4 million members the social-democratic oriented FNV is the largest trade union confederation in the Netherlands; the Christian CNV has about 350,000 members.



- [Press report on the dissolution of the FNV](#)
- [Presentation of the Dutch trade union system](#) (in German)

##### Romanian social partners set on self-organization



An exceptional agreement was signed on 25th October 2011 in Bucharest on the collective bargaining system. The contracting parties included the five large union confederations as well as the new employers' association Patrorom, which was created only in September 2011 following the merger of the previous four employer confederations. A dispute had broken out with the social partners after the most extensive reform of the collective bargaining system in 20 years was implemented unilaterally by the government in May 2011.

In September 2011 the largest part of the employers' associations left the national Economic and Social Council. With the new agreement social parties recognize each other mutually. In the future they would like to organize their co-operation autonomously and independent of state institutions.

- [Press statement on the signing of the agreement](#)
- [Report on resignation from the Economic and Social Council](#)
- [Report on the reform of the collective bargaining system](#)

##### Portugal increases working time by 30 minutes

On 7th December 2011, the Council of Ministers in Lisbon adopted new working time regulations as part of anti-crisis measures for rescuing the banks and the euro. Employers in the private sector can



hereby now extend the daily working time by 30 minutes, without having to pay overtime. Employees in Portugal work therefore 3.5 hours longer per week than employees in Germany. Even in countries such as Latvia, Slovenia and Romania the actual working time is now lower than in Portugal.

- [Report on the increase in working time](#) (in German)
- [Portuguese government announcement](#) (in Portuguese)

## 5. Examples of EWC activities

### Chinese financial participation rejected on ethical grounds



In a meeting in London on 12th October 2011, the European works council of GdFSuez, the French energy group, adopted a negative opinion as part of a consultation procedure on the financial participation of a Chinese sovereign wealth fund. According to the EWC the investor does not adhere to principles of corporate social responsibility and fundamental human and labour rights are not guaranteed. GdFSuez had concluded an international framework agreement with the trade unions in November 2010 on these matters (see [report in EWC News](#)

[4/2010](#)).

There has been as yet, no known comparable case, where a European works council has rejected a minority investor on ethical grounds. The Chinese government would like to gain access to raw materials and an international reputation through capital investments. Since there are 1,500 European employees affected by the investment in the GdFSuez subsidiary in question, central management carried out an information and consultation procedure with the EWC. The opinion statement was prepared during two EWC meetings with the help of a consultancy company.

- [Report on the consultation procedure](#)
- [EWC Press statement](#) (in French)

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### European works councils in commerce

Wholesale and retail trade employee representatives from Germany, Austria and Switzerland met with colleagues from Eastern Europe from 17th to 19th October 2011 in the “Vienna Dialogue”. This platform with annual meetings has already been in place since 2002. Apart from an exchange on European works councils’ activities in commerce it also covers topics such as employment situation, minimum wages, store opening times as well as the observance of minimum social standards.



- [Report on the “Vienna Dialogue” 2011](#) (in German)

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### French EWC wants to stop restructuring using legal means



It was reported in Paris on 13th December 2011 that the European works council of Areva, the nuclear group, is preparing legal proceedings, in order to enforce its’ participation rights. As a consequence of the Japanese nuclear disaster, the French national company plans to slash investments and cut-back the workforce. However these plans were not discussed with the EWC, and no information and consultation has taken place. The EWC therefore, wants to stop the austerity plans through a provisional injunction order and refers to a similar case in the year 2006 at Gaz de France (see [report in EWC News 1/2008](#)).

- [Report on Areva’s plans](#)
- [Report on the repercussions in Germany](#) (in German)

- [Report on the situation at the Erlangen plant](#) (in German)

## 6. Newly established European works councils

### Austrian Rail creates EWC

On 20th June 2011 and only a few days after the new Austrian EWC legislation came into force, an EWC agreement for the ÖBB was signed in Vienna by employee representatives from Austria and Hungary. The company, whose most important foreign subsidiary is for the moment Rail Cargo Hungaria, intends to further expand internationally in the coming years.



- [Report of the signing of the agreement](#) (in German)

### First Belgian EWC establishment in new legal context



An EWC was established on 29th September 2011 for Ter Beke, a food processing company from East Flanders, on the basis of the new Belgian collective agreement (see [report in EWC News 3/2011](#)). The listed company has 1,850 employees in nine locations in Belgium, France and in the Netherlands.

### Italian cement manufacturer establishes EWC

The first Italian EWC under the new legal context was established on 26th October 2011 in Rome. Cementir Holding, a building materials group, has 3,200 employees world-wide in 15 countries. A reference could only be made to the new EU Directive since there is still no EWC legislation in Italy (see [report above](#)). It is noticeable that the EWC agreement does not contain a definition for information and consultation in accordance with the new Directive.



The EWC is made up of 14 members: six from Italy, five from Denmark, one each from Norway and Sweden as well as an observer from Turkey. There is only one plenary meeting per year, and an additional annual right to two days training. A four-member steering committee deals with the day-to-day business.

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



### German software company up-grades

After the establishment of a German works council SAP now also has a European works council. A EWC agreement was signed on 24th November 2011 at the company headquarters in Walldorf near Heidelberg. There will be employee representatives out of 27 countries in the EWC where Switzerland is not represented. It meets once per year.

- [Report on the establishment of SAP's EWC](#) (in German)

The establishment of SAP's EWC is remarkable for several reasons. Up to the year 2006, not even one local works council existed to cover the 14,000 employees at that time in Germany. The first election had to be legally enforced at that time. Members from the IG Metall union were responsible for taking this initiative. Following the establishment of the German works council, the ver.di trade union created a workplace union committee in competition with IG Metall, and which was, in turn, responsible for the establishment of the European works council. Both trade unions

are members of the same confederation, the DGB, but they are however in competition when it comes to works council elections or to recruiting new members. The following texts are available only in German:

- [Position statement of IG Metall workplace committee](#)
- [Ver.di union workplace committee's website](#)
- [Question: which trade union is responsible for SAP?](#)

### Union competition on the increase

The question of the delimitation of organizational areas between the different DGB member trade unions is becoming more and more problematic in Germany. While in some companies the different trade unions co-operate well together there is strong competition elsewhere. Apart from the IT industry other sectors are concerned such as e.g. mobile communications, the energy industry, transport and industrial services. It does not take competing political confederations such as those in France, to produce the same problems as in France.

## 7. Updated EWC agreements

### Airbus doubles number of meetings

On 27th June 2011, Airbus's EWC agreement was updated. The number of annual plenary meetings for the 18 EWC members was increased from two to four. One representative each from both suppliers, Aerolia and Premium Aerotec, participate as guests - these are subsidiaries, which were first spun-off but in the end not sold.



The new EWC agreement adopts the definition of information and consultation from the new EU Directive. The European works council of Airbus was created in 2001 under Dutch legislation. Strictly speaking it is only a Divisional European works council within the EADS group, which has itself a European works council of its own at the Holding level. Their EWC agreement was already adapted in October 2008 (see [report in EWC News 1/2009](#)).

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### Supermarket chain strengthens the steering committee



The old Carrefour EWC agreement dating from the year 1996 was updated on 20th October 2011. The EWC is made up of 29 members from eight countries; including eleven from France, seven from Spain, and three each from Belgium and Italy. The five members of the steering committee meet three times annually. Following the French model they are not elected, but appointed by the UNI union federation in Brussels. All EWC members have an annual right to two days training and right of access to all sites in Europe. The first correct information and consultation procedure since the establishment of the EWC in 1996, took place in March 2011 (see [report in EWC News 2/2011](#)).

- [Report on the signing of the agreement](#)

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### Financial group updates EWC rules

Groupama, the French insurance and banking group updated its EWC agreement on 2nd December 2011. The working means of the EWC have been improved. Language courses are now expressly provided. Although the company has its headquarters in France, the employee chairperson (= EWC secretary) is located in Italy.



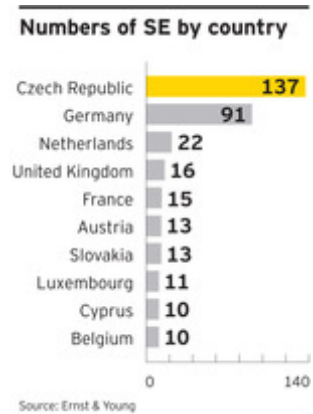
- [Report on the signing of the agreement](#)

## 8. News on SE legal form



## Social partners evaluate need for revision differently

On 4th July 2011, the European Commission in Brussels started the first phase of consultations on the planned revision of the SE Directive (see [report in EWC News 2/2010](#)). Employers' associations and trade unions were requested to give their position on selected questions. According to analysis from Ernst & Young, most SE companies are at present located in Czechia and in Germany (see chart). Whereas in Prague, specialized law firms offer empty SE shells for sale, in Germany the freezing of employee participation in supervisory boards is the main driving force (see [report in EWC News 4/2010](#)). This is covered in a new expert report from the union friendly SE-Europe Network in Brussels.



- [New statistics from the European Trade Union Institute](#)

BusinessEurope, the umbrella organization of European employers' associations, submitted its opinion on 6th October 2011 and spoke out **against a revision** of the current Directive. The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) replied on 28th October 2011 with a detailed position paper and identified the shortcomings of the current legal situation. These position statements will be now fed into the ongoing legislative process.

- [The European commission's consultation document](#)
- [Expert report from the SE Europe Network](#)
- [ETUC position statement](#)
- [BusinessEurope position statement](#)

## The SE revision scenario reminds us of the EWC revision

The present situation after the first phase of consultations shows parallels with the revision of the EWC Directive (see [report in EWC News 3/2007](#)). At that time it was precisely the employers' associations who completely refused any change in the legal basis for the European works council, until April 2008 when finally the European Commission itself took the initiative. In summer 2008 then a politically controversial agreement was reached between the social partners behind the scenes through an accelerated procedure (see [report in EWC News 3/2008](#)).



## German insurance company freezes one-third participation

The legal insurance division of ARAG was converted into a European company (SE) on 1st December 2011 just in time before the company reached the threshold of 2,000 employees for the formation of a parity-based supervisory board. As is the case for many SE transformations the one-third participation in the supervisory board is thereby frozen. The Holding of the family business remains even completely free of participation. An appropriate agreement was signed on 7th October 2011 at the company headquarters in Düsseldorf (photo). In the future two German and one Dutch employee representative will sit on the supervisory board of the legal insurance division.

The 3,400 European employees are represented by a SE works council, which meets twice annually. It is composed of representatives from Germany, Austria, Slovenia, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Belgium, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. They elect a steering committee of four members. One particularity of the agreement: all members of the SE works council have the same protection as a German works council.

- [Company press statement](#)
- [Report on restructuring plans of central management](#) (in German)

## Seminar on the organization of consultation procedures

A seminar is being organized from 10th to 13th April 2012, which is also intended for SE works councils. How does a SE works council concretely carry out the consultation procedure in the case of restructuring and prepare a legally binding opinion?

TIPP !

- [Program and registration form](#)

## 9. The view beyond Europe

### First world-wide pharmaceuticals meeting



For the first time a world-wide meeting for the pharmaceutical industry took place on 28th October 2011 under the initiative of the International Federation of Chemical Unions (ICEM). Around 50 representatives from 15 countries discussed current trends and restructuring in Geneva.

- [Report on world-wide pharmaceuticals meeting](#)

### World-wide network for Philips' employee representatives

Delegates from Europe, Brazil and Asian countries met together in Amsterdam on 23rd and 24th November 2011 to put in place a global network in the Dutch electronics group. Central management is under criticism for its lack of information on planned plant closures in the Lighting Division which were announced on 17th October 2011.



- [Report on the world-wide Philips's meeting](#)
- [Report on planned redundancies in the Lighting Division](#) (in German)
- [Analysis of social dialogue in the Lighting Division](#)

### First international framework agreement in the Catering industry



A framework agreement on fundamental social rights was concluded on 12th December 2011 between the French company, Sodexo and the IUF, the international federation of food workers' unions. The agreement which is applicable world-wide also regulates freedom of trade union activity. As recently as September 2010 a human rights organization had criticized Sodexo because of its violation of international labour standards in the USA (see [report in EWC News 3/2010](#)). In June 2011 the company had also concluded for the first time a very comprehensive recognition agreement in the United

Kingdom (see [report in EWC News 2/2011](#)).

- [Report on the signing](#)
- [Full text of the agreement](#)

## 10. Interesting websites

### Transparency for EWC activities in Healthcare group



Capio, the Swedish hospital chain established the first European works council in the private healthcare system in June 2006. The company which has in the meantime been bought by financial investors operates around 100 clinics in eight European Union countries and wants to expand further by acquisitions. The EWC meetings which are held twice per year are regularly documented on the company's Internet site.

- [Articles on the EWC from the Capio website](#)

## Industrial relations in Scandinavia

### NORDIC LABOUR JOURNAL

The Nordic Labour Journal is an English-language on-line publication which provides up-to-date information on the working life in the Nordic countries (trade unions, labour legislation, collective bargaining, unemployment etc.). It is published by a research institute in Oslo on behalf of the Nordic Council of Ministers. A free newsletter is also available.

- [Nordic Labour Journal website](#)

## Global responsibility within the computer industry

Several websites of partners from the GoodElectronics network are dedicated to the improvement of living and working conditions of employees in the computer industry of developing countries. A goal is for example to ensure that social and ecological minimum requirements are applied when purchasing computers.



- [PC global's German website](#)
- [GoodElectronics' international website](#)

## Violation of human and trade union rights throughout the world



The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) publishes every year, in June, a report on the violations of trade union rights for the previous year in all parts of the world. Individual countries can be directly selected on an interactive map; a glossary explains important terms and a manual and charts provide further information.

- [Video clip on the topic](#)
- [Summary of the year 2010](#)
- [Regional reports from Europe](#)

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

## 11. New publications

### Social dialogue in South East Europe

A project on social dialogue within the transport industries of Romania, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Croatia and financially supported by the European Union was concluded in May 2011. UNITATEA, the transport workers' trade union in Bucharest, which had coordinated the project, submitted not only a comprehensive report on the workshops, but developed also a handbook on social dialogue in the four participating countries. These publications are available in five languages.

- [The final report on the project](#)
- [The handbook on social dialogue](#)
- [Download of other language versions](#)





## Beyond Information and Consultation

While the legislator limits European works councils to information and consultation, many are already a step further. To an increasing extent company agreements are concluded which regulate, on a European level, issues such as e.g. occupational safety, profit-sharing, forward-looking personnel planning or the framework conditions for restructuring (see recent [examples in EWC News 3/2011](#)). This study which was published in September 2011 examines the negotiation processes and the interaction between the EWC and trade unions for such agreements in a total of ten companies. The main emphasis is on the metal industry, but the chemical group, Bayer and the banking group, Unicredit are also presented. The book is only available in German language.

- [Further information on the book](#)
- [The table of contents of the book](#)
- [On-line browse of book](#)
- [Description of the research project](#)

## Collective bargaining unity and plurality in Europe

A collection was also released in September 2011 which analyzes the collective bargaining systems in seven countries of the European single market. The starting point of the publication was a ruling of the Federal Labour Court from June 2010 which terminated the unity of collective bargaining and thus paved the way for a further disintegration of the bargaining system in Germany (see [report in EWC News 2/2010](#)). The German-language book published by the Hans Böckler Foundation was edited by Dr. Reingard Zimmer. This labour lawyer has also been working for many years with the training and consultancy network "euro-workscouncil.net".



- [Further information on the book](#)



## Board-level representation: up-to-date country comparison

In November 2011, the European Trade Union Institute, (ETUI), presented this analysis of the legal situation of employee representatives in supervisory boards and/or board of directors. According to it there are regulations on such participation rights in 17 European Union countries as well as in Norway. The book also offers an overview of the different models of Corporate Governance and of current political discussions and trends for the extension or restriction of employee involvement. A separate chapter is dedicated to the new legal form of the European Company (SE) and lists all the relevant companies, which have so far concluded a SE participation agreement. The book is available in English and German.

- [Book download](#)
- [Further information on the book](#)

We have made a collection of further technical literature on a [literature website](#).

## 12. Training and Consultancy Network “euro-workscouncil.net”: further examples of our work



## Regional exchange of experience on EWC

On 3rd November 2011 around 25 employee representatives from Austria and north Italy met in the Neustift monastery in South Tyrol (photo), for an exchange of experience on their European works councils. There were also some metal industry companies participating from South Tyrol that have yet to establish their EWC. Wolfgang Greif from the GPA trade union in Vienna and Werner Altmeyer from "euro-workscouncil.net", the training and consultancy network in Hamburg, were available as experts.



## German Italian EWC Workshop in South Tyrol



In co-operation with partners from South Tyrol and Italy, "euro-workscouncil.net", the training and consultancy network is running a workshop on 27th and 28th September 2012 in Bolzano for members of European works councils.

## SE works council starts new term of office with EU-project



During a meeting in Hamburg on 5th December 2011 the SE works council of the Donata Holding SE planned its project activities. It will hold a constitutional meeting in January 2012 for its new term of office and will begin with a training and consultancy project financially sponsored by the EU. With the help of "euro-workscouncil.net", the training and consultancy network, the representatives are to be made ready and fit for their future jobs. A whole collection of perfume brands such as Calvin Klein, Davidoff, David Beckham, Jil Sander, Joop and Lancaster lie under the control of the Donata Holding SE and its US subsidiary Coty. Coty has branch offices in 16 European Union countries, Switzerland and Monaco.

## Academy for European works councils established

On 20th December 2011 **EWC Academy GmbH** (Ltd Company) was founded in Hamburg. During 2012 it will gradually take over responsibility for all conferences, training courses and consulting services of the "euro-workscouncil.net". The new academy has its headquarters in Stella-House (photo) between the River Alster and the inland port, in sight of the historical warehouse district and of the new Elbe Philharmonic Hall. In the Hanseatic city the edifice is considered to be the most beautiful and most elegant expressionist example of an office building.



## 13. Current seminar schedule



### Seminar schedule brochure 2012

The training and consultancy network "euro-workscouncil.net" has been organizing and delivering conferences and seminars for the members of European works councils, SE works councils and special negotiation bodies since January 2009. So far 347 employee representatives from 155 companies have taken part (representing 16% of all companies in Europe with an established EWC). For the year 2012 a training brochure is now available in German, giving an overview of the planned events:

- [2012 training program for download](#)
- [Further information on individual events](#)

## Hamburg Conference for European and SE works councils

As every year, a two-day conference is being organised in Hamburg covering following topics:

### Monday, 23rd January 2012:

New standards for information, consultation and participation

### Tuesday, 24th January 2012:

Employee representation in Central and Eastern Europe



Both dates may be booked separately or together. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in 3 languages (German, English and French).

- [Program and registration form](#)
- [Hamburg Conference report 2009](#) (in German)
- [Hamburg Conference report 2010](#) (in German)
- [Hamburg Conference report 2011](#)

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## EWC seminar on the implementation of consultation procedures



A seminar is being organized from 10th to 13th April 2012 on Montabaur Castle (photo) which highlights the new legal situation for information and consultation in the context of restructuring. How does a European works council concretely carry out the consultation procedure and prepare a legally binding opinion? This seminar is also appropriate for SE works councils.

- [Program and registration form](#) (in German)

## EWC Starter-day

A basic seminar will again be held in parallel. It is aimed at newly elected European works council members and at works council members seeking information on the establishment of a EWC.

- [Starter-day program and registration form](#) (in German)

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## Seminars of the Institute for Further Education of Works Councils (ifb)



Since 1998 the ifb has been offering EWC seminars which were developed in conjunction with the training and consultancy network "euro-works council.net". The seminars are held in German language only.

### Basic seminar: The European Works Council from A to Z

21. – 25.05.2012 in Hamburg  
26. – 30.11.2012 in Cologne

### Advanced seminar: In depth workshop and exchange of ideas

04. – 08.06.2012 in Hamburg  
03. – 07.12.2012 in Erfurt

- [Further information on the basic seminar](#)
  - [Further information on the advanced seminar](#)
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## Workshop for SE works council members

In 2011 the training and consultancy network "euro-workscouncil.net" will be organising another SE workshop. Since the number of SE works councils is still relatively small, the next date will be coordinated with any interested participants by telephone. Anybody interested should please fill in and return the following questionnaire.



- [SE works council questionnaire](#) (in German)

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### In-house events

Please find a summary of possible topics for in-house events here:

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

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