



Welcome to issue no. 1 / 2009 of EWC News.

20th March 2009

### Der EBR-Fachinformationsdienst

The training and consultancy network "euro-worksouncil.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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You can find past issues in the [newsletter archives](#).



[Dieser Newsletter auf Deutsch](#)



[Cette newsletter en français](#)

#### Contents:

- [1. Works councils discuss a new legal position](#)
- [2. European works councils organize days of action](#)
- [3. EWC agreements are updated](#)
- [4. Judgements in EWC issues](#)
- [5. Foundation of European works councils](#)
- [6. Europe-wide EWC contract politics](#)
- [7. Worldwide framework agreements](#)
- [8. German companies mark the SE landscape](#)
- [9. Video conferences no substitute for meetings](#)
- [10. Interesting web pages](#)
- [11. New publications](#)
- [12. Training and consultancy network: Examples of our work](#)
- [13. Details of seminars planned](#)
- [14. Imprint](#)

## 1. Works councils discuss a new legal position

### Ministers of Agriculture shall put EWC Directive into effect



The EU Council of ministers agreed in Brussels on the new Directive to the European works council on December 17th, 2008. On the day before the European Parliament also had agreed in a plenary session with a large majority (see [report in EWC News 4/2008](#)). Since problems with the translation could no longer be processed on time the formal decision making is still due in the Council of ministers.

At present, the language jurists are checking all 22 language versions of the new Directive so that the content of the legal text is identical in all languages. This will most likely last until April 16th, 2009. The definite adoption is planned for April 23rd, 2009 by the EU Ministers of Agriculture and to be more precise as a so-called A point (i.e. the law is passed without discussion). After the signing by the European Parliament (probably on May 6th, 2009) the EWC Directive is published in

the Official Bulletin of the EU and becomes effective.

- [Summarizing assessment of the most important new regulations](#) (in German)
- [Questions and answers: what does the revised Directive bring about?](#) (in German)
- [Detailed documentation of the revision procedure since 1999](#)

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### Specialist conference in Hamburg blew up all expectations

The training and consultancy network "euro-workscouncil.net" carried out for the first time a specialist conference for European works councils on January 26th, 2009. Altogether 64 participants, among this EWC members from 33 companies, scientist from four universities, representatives from advice institutes and foundations, lawyers as well as trade union officers of DGB, ver.di, IG BCE and IG Metall, followed the invitation to inform themselves about the new EWC Directive in Hamburg.



Besides the description of the legislation process by the European MP Karin Jöns and the acting Secretary General of the European Trade Union Confederation Reiner Hoffmann the experience report of the EWC chairman of General Motors, Klaus Franz, received particularly big attention. Since a number of registrations could not be taken into account any more due to the immense interest, we offer further dates in the course of the year (see below).

- [Report of the EWC specialist conference in Hamburg](#) (in German)

### Media response to the specialist conference

**Hans Böckler  
Stiftung** 

Fakten für eine faire Arbeitswelt.

The trade union friendly Hans Böckler foundation used the opportunity to interview some participants of the specialist conference for the magazine "Mitbestimmung" and to light the backgrounds of the legislation procedure using contributions from the conference.

- [Contribution in the magazine " Mitbestimmung "](#) (in German)

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### Further specialist conferences and workshops on the new EWC Directive

The great response to this specialist conference has induced us to offer further dates. Two events will take place soon in cooperation with partners in Italy and Belgium. The programmes are available for download in German language.

**Rom, Villa Borghese**, May 7-8th, 2009 (simultaneous interpretation German -- Italian available, English on request) with an introduction to the Italian representation system



- [The programme of the specialist conference in Rome](#)
- [Registration form for the specialist conference in Rome](#)

**Liège**, June 22-23rd, 2009 (simultaneous interpretation German -- French available, English on request), specialist conference for European works councils and SE works councils

- [The programme of the specialist conference in Liège](#)
- [Registration form for the specialist conference in Liège](#)

**Paris**, September 30th -- October 2nd, 2009 (simultaneous interpretation German -- French available, English on request), specialist conference with the French consultancy firm Groupe Alpha

- The new EWC Directive -- inspired by the French representation system
- How can European works councils have early influence on restructurings?

**Castle hotel Montabaur**, October 12-14th, 2009, workshop with the following topics:

- The new EWC Directive -- where have EWC agreements to be adapted now?
- Exchange of experience about EWC activities in other companies and sectors
- Project work in the EWC on the example of health mapping

Non-committal appointments to the October workshops are possible over the [contact form](#). We then inform about the programme and the details of the participation on time.

## 2. European works councils organize action days



### " Frozen day " at EDS

The downsizing planned by the merged IT service provider Electronic Data Systems (EDS) and Hewlett-Packard evokes growing protest among the staff. The second Europe-wide action day took place on January 29th and 30th, 2009 and had been described as " Frozen day " with reference to freezing the salaries. Particularly affected from the cutback are at the moment the EDS activities in Hungary, which are to be shifted to India. The Hungarian works council was only inadequately and the European works council not at all informed about this. About the consequences of the merger executed in August 2008 the employees are more or less left in the unclear (see [report in EWC News 4/2008](#)).

- [Country reports of the action day](#)
- [Report about the dismissals in Hungary](#)
- [Information of the German trade unions about EDS](#) (in German)

### Steelworkers demand assurance

An action day took place at ArcelorMittal on February 10th, 2009. The steel group wants to cut 6,000 jobs in Europe. Although central management had promised the steering committee of the EWC at a meeting in London on December 15th, 2008, to execute without dismissals, the conditions of the voluntary retirement should be negotiated in each country separately. While there are already collective agreements reached in France, Belgium and Luxembourg, negotiations have not even started yet in Poland, Czechia and Romania. The EWC agreement of ArcelorMittal had been signed after the merger in July 2007 (see [report in EWC News 2/2007](#)).



- [Press release after the EWC meeting in London](#)
- [Trade union demands to the management](#)
- [Report of the action day](#)



### Action day against restructurings at Bosch

The motorcar supplier Bosch experienced a Europe-wide action day in the production centres for brakes in Germany, France, Spain, Italy and Portugal on February 16th, 2009. Workers' representatives of this division had decided in Brussels on January 27th, 2009 on the construction of an own communication structure to exchange information between the locations fast. A list of requirements, which is aimed at a Europe-wide framework agreement was also approved.

There is an European works council at Bosch since 1998 but the different divisions are not represented adequately in it. The European Metalworkers' Federation (EMF) tries therefore to build up an independent representation structure with a coordination group in the division for brakes.

- [The platform of demands from January 27th, 2009 in the wording](#)
- [Reports and photos of the action day](#)

### 3. EWC agreements are updated

#### EADS anticipates a new EWC Directive

Workers' representatives and central management of the aircraft and space group EADS agreed on a new EWC agreement according to Dutch law on October 30th, 2008. It replaces the regulation from the year 2000. The EWC consists of 17 members, six each from Germany and France, three from the UK and two from Spain. As a permanent guest an observer from the European Metalworkers' Federation (EMF) is invited. Differently than in France the EWC consists only of workers' representatives.



The EWC elects a steering committee and a finance committee consisting of six members each. Plenary sessions take place four times a year. The definition of information and consultation was already taken from the wording of the new EWC Directive. The agreement fixes a procedure for the conclusion of transnational collective agreements. Below this holding EWC there are 4 independent European division works councils in the EADS group, which already exists since some years now, among this one for Airbus.



#### EWC before the splitting up

The European works council of the Mecom group constituted itself in an extended composition in Berlin on February 5th and 6th, 2009. Because of the buying up of activities in the Netherlands a renegotiation of the EWC agreement from the year 2006 became necessary. It builds on the EWC of the Norwegian media group of Orkla founded in 2001 and is marked Scandinavian. The German EWC members will however leave the council soon, because Mecom wants to sell its German subsidiary, the publishing house Berliner Verlag, to DuMont Schauberg. Till now, this Cologne media group does not have an EWC yet. The following texts are only available in German:

- [Report about the constituting EWC meeting](#)
- [Further information on the Mecom group](#)
- [Study of the Hans Böckler foundation of the Mecom group](#)
- [Press report about the sale of Berliner Verlag](#)

New agreement after a controversial merger once more adjourned



The merger of the two French energy groups Gaz de France and Suez in July 2008 was a politically controversial measure. In the run-up it came to one of the most important court decisions in the 15-year history of the EWC legislation. So the European works council of Gaz de France could in November 2006 stop the merger by means of an injunction, because its consultation rights had been disregarded by central management. This spectacular legal success made it possible for the workers' representatives of Gaz de France to succeed with a transnational compensation agreement in March 2008 (see [report in EWC News 1/2008](#)).

In the meeting of the special negotiation body (SNB) of March 3rd to 5th, 2009 in Paris a new EWC agreement should have been signed. But several separate meetings, in which compromises of the wording were sought, did not lead to a definite result. The negotiations are therefore continued in April 2009.

- [Thesis paper to the EWC structure after the merger](#)
- [The EWC agreement of Gaz de France in the wording](#)
- [The EWC agreement of Suez in the wording](#)

#### 4. Judgements in EWC issues

##### A Swedish court strengthens European works councils



On October 8th, 2008 a court in Stockholm judged in favour of the obligation to information prior to the foundation of an EWC. It is the first judgement in an EWC matter which was ever passed in Sweden. The judges oblige the branch office of Kühne + Nagel in Stockholm to pass on all data which are required in connection with the formation of a European works council to the German national headquarter in Hamburg.

Since 1996 the forwarding company is blocking the EWC foundation with legal obstructions, what after long discussions in 2004 led to a judgement of the European court of justice in Luxembourg. Since after that the employer is insistently delaying the EWC foundation, further legal proceedings followed. In January 2007 the supreme court of justice of Austria judged in favour of the obligation to information (see [report in EWC News 3/2007](#)). A similar judgement is still due in Slovakia now. According to Michael Kalis, chairman of the German group works council, the employer will start the EWC foundation if the decision in Slovakia is also clear (see [report in EWC News 1/2008](#)).

Meanwhile the family run company is criticized intensely in employer circles, because the numerous verdicts are in the end strengthening the employees' side – and not only in this company. The case has made the European Commission to take precautions against such a behaviour in the new EWC Directive ("lex Kühne + Nagel").

- [Background to the current procedure](#) (in German)
- [The verdict of the European court of justice in the wording](#)

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##### U.S. computer manufacturer loses lawsuit in France

The highest French court of appeal in Paris ("Cour de Cassation") judged in favour of the trade union CGT and against the U.S. computer company Dell on January 21st, 2009. The direct shipment manufacturer has an EWC by virtue of law according to French legislation, since negotiations with the employees' side did not lead to any conclusion. According to the minimum regulations of the EWC legislation only one single seat is allotted to France in the Dell EWC, which caused a quarrel to break out.



The Dell management did not want to accept the CGT representative from the factory in Montpellier and had in the factory Rueil-Malmaison near Paris at first a works council elected and later another EWC delegate. The company has failed in last judicial authority now with that. The court assumes a legislative period of four years, independent of interim changes at local works councils. The CGT representative therefore keeps his seat in the European works council.

- [The verdict in the wording](#) (in French)

In April 2007 the Federal Labour Court in Germany also had to decide on a delegate choice to the European works council (see [report in EWC News 1/2008](#)). Unlike at Dell the quarrel was not with the employer, but about an appeal against the election by works council members not voted for.

- [Further judgements in EWC matters](#) (in German)



### European court of justice decides on consultation rights

At present, two cases which concern information and consultation duties of the employer in relation to mass redundancies are heard at the European court of justice in Luxembourg. The first case is based on a trial at the industrial tribunal Liège and concerns the motorcar supplier Mono Car Styling, which is in liquidation. The second case was heard at the highest court of justice in Finland and concerns Fujitsu Siemens Computers. In both cases the court has to decide when an information of the employer in case of restructuring measures can be regarded as being “in time”.

Formally these legal cases do not have any reference to the EWC, the decisions can nevertheless be expected with tension; as they are of prejudging effect for a more exact definition of the employers' responsibilities for the information of the workforce, and thus will also influence indirectly the consultation rights of European works councils.

- [Further information about the lawsuit in Belgium](#)
- [Further information about the lawsuit in Finland](#)

## 5. Foundation of European works councils

### Media company refuses EWC negotiations

The central management of the Finnish media group Sanoma (on the picture headquarters in Helsinki) would like to avoid the foundation of an European works council. The group has 21,000 employees, branch offices in 20 countries and belongs to the five largest magazine publishing houses in Europe. The Finnish trade unions have rendered a campaign since autumn 2008 to force the entry into EWC negotiations.



- [Report about the events](#)



### An Italian Romanian EWC founded

An EWC agreement was signed for the tube manufacturer Tenaris at the corporate headquarter in Dalmine (Lombardy) according to Italian law on December 18th, 2008. Eight representatives from Italy and three from Romania belong to the new EWC. It meets once a year, is escorted by a two-headed steering committee and advised by the European Metalworkers' Federation (EMF).

### U.S. heating system manufacturer founds EWC

An EWC agreement was concluded for about 2,000 European employees of Lennox, a manufacturer of heating and cooling systems, according to French law on January 20th, 2009. The EWC comes together at the seat of the company in Mions, a suburb of Lyon, under the chairmanship of the employer once a year. The 15 workers' representatives, amongst them four from France, two from Spain and one more member each from 9 other EU countries, elect a



secretary, his deputy and another two members to the steering committee. These get 120 hours time-off in addition to the meetings every year. Special sessions of the whole EWC take place on application of two thirds of its members. The information and consultation rights in the EWC agreement are already strongly inspired by the new EWC Directive.

The texts of numerous EWC agreements are available on a [download page](#).

## 6. Europe-wide EWC contract politics

### Principles on training and further education agreed

The European works council of UniCredit signed a joint declaration on training and further education with the central management in Milan on December 16th, 2008. The principles shall apply in all European branch offices of the Italian bank and be supervised by the EWC, which gets the required means to work. In April 2008 two working groups had been formed from twelve representatives each from the human resources management and the EWC to work out appropriate documents.



- [Report of the signing of the declaration](#)
- [The declaration on training and further education in the wording](#)

Further information about European works council activities can be found on the internet page of the bank; amongst this, documents on a recently completed EU financed project for the promotion of transnational cooperation. The EWC founded in 2007 after purchase of the German HypoVereinsbank has one of the best EWC agreements in Italy (see [report in EWC News 1/2007](#)).

- [Presentation of the EWC on the web page of the company](#)
- [Presentation of the workshops of the EU project](#)
- [The EWC agreement in the wording](#)



### Evaluation of the agreement on anti-discrimination

On January 15th, 2009 the French nuclear group Areva presented the final report of ODEO ("Open Dialogue through Equal Opportunities"), a project which had been sponsored by the EU. In the previous months the human resources policy had been examined in all 51 European locations. Central management of Areva had entered into an agreement with the European Metalworkers' Federation (EMF) and the European works council on the equal treatment of men and women and for the integration of handicapped people in November 2006. The ODEO project was carried out jointly between EMF and Areva and contained ten workshops with altogether 140 participants to guarantee the local implementation of the European framework agreement.

- [Press release at the completion of the ODEO project](#)
- [The ODEO final report in the wording](#)

### General agreement on capacity adjustment did not bring about a solution

The EWC of General Motors agreed with central management on a Europe-wide framework agreement on January 12th, 2009. The most important component was the promise of the employer to abstain from shutdowns and redundancy despite the sales crisis. In the framework agreement minimum standards for production cuts were fixed and flexible customizations of the working time were made possible. The European works council thus proofed once more that it can operate like a " full-functional group works council ", said



its chairman Klaus Franz (photo) on the EWC specialist conference of the training and consultancy network " euro-workscouncil.net " on January 26th, 2009 in Hamburg. So far a transnational agreement of this kind had never been signed before in a single company.

In view of the events within the days after that the promise of the employer is, however, no longer up-to-date. The Swedish subsidiary Saab registered insolvency on February 20th, 2009. At present, the separation of Opel and Vauxhall from the U.S. mother group into the legal form of an European Company (SE) is being discussed. The European headquarter of General Motors and the European works council reached an agreement during a meeting in Rüsselsheim to start negotiations about the future company structure and the consequences for the employees on March 12th, 2009.

- [Report on the agreement on employment conditions of January 12th, 2009](#) (in German)
- [Press release after the EWC meeting in March 12th, 2009](#) (in German)
- [Further information about current events at General Motors](#)
- [Report about the EWC specialist conference in Hamburg](#) (in German)

## 7. Worldwide framework agreements

### Revised agreement for Faber-Castell



Since January 16th, 2009 an updated version of worldwide social standards applies to the Bavarian writing materials manufacturer Faber-Castell. The international framework agreement from the year 2000 had proved itself worth and was now completed in some points. It is regarded as exemplary in trade union circles.

- [Report about the new version of the agreement](#)
- [The new agreement in the wording](#)

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### A Swedish printing group marks signs

On January 27th, 2009 UNI, the international confederation of service sector trade unions, signed a framework agreement with the central management of the Swedish printing group and publishing house Elanders in Gothenburg to secure international labour standards. It is the first agreement of this kind for a Swedish company of the printing industry. The agreement is valid for branch offices in eleven countries on four continents, it also promotes the recognition of employee representations in the USA. In the same meeting an **agreement on the foundation of a European works council** for Elanders was signed.



- [UNI report of the signing of the agreement](#)
- [Report of the company of the signing](#)
- [Video with interviews of participants from the meeting](#)
- [The framework agreement in the wording](#)



### Office furniture manufacturer confesses social standards

On February 13th, 2009 the Building and Woodworker International and the office furniture manufacturer Wilkhahn signed an international framework agreement in Frankfurt, which contains not only the production centres in Germany but also in Spain and Australia. An exemplary monitoring procedure was agreed on. The company from Bad Münden employs altogether 600 workers and is till now not covered by the EWC Directive.

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

## 8. German companies mark the SE landscape



## The first German bank is operating in the legal form of SE



The DVB Bank changed to a European Company (SE) on October 1st, 2008. The supervisory board still consists of nine members, thereof three employee representatives. The 13 members of the SE works council come from Germany, the UK, the Netherlands, Norway and Greece. The DVB Bank with seat in Frankfurt is specialized in transport financing.

- [Press release of the company](#)



## SE with parity representation on the supervisory board

SGL Carbon from Wiesbaden has the legal status of SE since January 23th, 2009. An agreement with representatives of the workforce had been completed at the end of November 2008. The manufacturer of carbon products will have a supervisory board from twelve members on a 50/50 basis also in future. Four from the six workers' directors come from Germany and one each from Poland

and the UK. A SE works council with 13 members from seven countries will replace the European works council founded in 1996.

- [Press release for the SE conversion](#)

## Outstanding SE agreement for GfK



Since February 3rd, 2009 Gesellschaft für Konsumforschung (GfK group) in Nuremberg has been a SE. Three workers' representatives belong to the nine-headed supervisory board of the worlds fourth largest market research firm: from Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Every country has at least one seat in the SE works council which meets once per year. A steering committee carries out regular business, its seven members come from different countries and meets 3 times per annum.

The GfK agreement is similarly policymaking as the SE agreement completed in December 2008 at the adhesive producer tesa (see [report in EWC News 4/2008](#)): central management and SE works council can take joint initiatives on cross border topics, the SE works council can set up temporary committees to certain topics or projects, the SE works council can become active on request in countries without local works council and in case of disputes arising from the SE agreement a three headed arbitration body is foreseen.

- [Press release for the SE transformation](#)

## Building machine manufacturer avoids an equal supervisory board



Since February 18th, 2009 the building machine manufacturer Wacker Neuson from Munich has signed as an European Company (SE). Before a SE agreement which covers 17 EU countries had been signed on January 14th, 2009. The 14 members of the SE works council, among seven from Germany, come together twice every year and choose a select committee of seven members. This can carry out at least another annual meeting. Countries with small workforce are combined to regions and send regional representatives. Wacker

Neuson resulted from the merger of two building machine manufacturers in 2007. Shareholders wanted to avoid a supervisory board on a 50/50 basis, which is only possible through transformation into a SE. Thus even with growing staff numbers it remains for the employees' side

at two of six seats.

- [Press release for the SE transformation](#)

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### Largest equal SE supervisory board in Europe

On February 19th, 2009 a SE agreement for the automotive and engineering group MAN was signed at the seat in Munich which provides a 16-headed supervisory board on a 50/50 basis. A supervisory board of this size had never before been formed by SE agreement. Even groups like BASF, Allianz or Fresenius did not want to accept more than twelve mandates (thereof six workers' directors). At MAN there are two trade union officers from IG Metall among the eight workers' directors, four works council members from Germany and two workplace representatives from other countries.



The European works council founded in 1996 will soon be replaced by a SE works council to which 26 members belong to. The select committee composed of nine members meets regularly with the central management. The SE agreement of MAN goes in many points beyond the legal minimum standards and can be seen as a milestone with regards to the participation of employees in the SE. Already in April 2006 a SE agreement was signed for the daughter company MAN Diesel, the first ever in Germany. The transformation of MAN AG into MAN SE is to take place in April 2009.

- [Report about the conclusion of the SE agreement](#) (in German)

### 9. Video conferences no substitute for meetings

#### Study warns managers of virtual communication



The activities of an European works council takes time and money. A recent study of the British consultancy firm GHK Consulting estimated the costs of an EWC meeting at € 101,000 and in individual case it can be up to € 370,000. The select committee costs on an average – with three annual meetings -- € 25,700 (see [report in EWC News 3/2008](#)). Why should travel and meeting costs not be lowered by an intensified use of video and telephone conferences?

Scientists in the USA have recently come to the conclusion that it is advisable to be cautious with video conferences. In the study " Videoconferencing in the Field: A Heuristic Processing Mode " from the Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences is shown that it is more exhausting for participants of video conferences to process and to integrate information than during a personal conversation. It is particularly problematically if in video conferences decisions are taken. At the tests it turned out that participants of a video conference are more strongly influenced by the appearance of a speaker, while probands face-to-face were paying stronger attention to arguments.

- [Report about the findings](#)

For members of European works councils it can be particularly problematic if they are informed by central management in the context of a transnational restructuring plan only by video conference. The missing possibility for the personal interaction impedes the discussion and the use of all action possibilities, which the consultation procedure offers. Suggestions may not reach at all the level of decision; at the end the unilateral decision-making by the employer is cemented more easily through this.

Such technical possibilities should only serve as support of direct contacts and not as a substitute for EWC meetings. A negative example is the EWC agreement of the call centre operator Transcom WorldWide from Luxembourg, which does not grant the steering committee any other form of communication (see [report in EWC News 2/2008](#)).

### 10. Interesting web pages

## Rotogravure information in six languages

Since February 2009 the internet page of the trade union ver.di offers a multilingual information platform for the rotogravure industry. Besides EWC topics there are also many workplace and trade union information in six languages available..



- [The web page of the rotogravure section](#)

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## Trade union research institutes jointly present themselves



The TURI network founded in February 2008 has created its own internet platform. Trade union friendly research institutes from 17 countries present themselves with their projects, deliver current reports and provide documents for the download.

- [The TURI web page](#)

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## Petition against social dumping

The British trade union Unite describes the consequences of several judgements of the European court of justice for the employee rights in the European single market on an internet page. Four cases, including Viking Line and Vaxholm (see [report in EWC News 4/2007](#)), judge the freedom to strike and social achievements lower than the freedom of establishment and economic freedom. With a petition Unite wants to support the demands for a social Europe.



- [The web page of Unite on the social Europe](#)



## Communication in the motorcar production

Verbal understanding in the European single market reaches fast the borders, primarily with regards to special vocabulary and technical concepts. With the financial help of the EU the project EUCAM (Multilingual Communication in the European Car Manufacturing) which presents its work on its own internet page was carried out. Project partners are besides IG Metall and the European Metalworkers' Federation (EMF) also the motorcar group Daimler and partners in the UK, Hungary and Lithuania.

- [The web page of EUCAM](#)

We have arranged numerous further interesting links in a [link collection](#).

## 11. New publications

### Trade unions and multinational companies

This English-speaking book which has been published in January 2009 analyses the role of the global trade union federations in international labour relations and presents their cooperation in multinational companies. One case study, for example, examines the relationship of the International federation of chemistry and mining trade unions



(ICEM) with the British South African raw material group Anglo American and how the national trade unions in South Africa, Ghana and Colombia cooperate with the company -- with positive results for the employees. It is an interesting book for everyone who has to deal with worldwide issues be it as elected workers' representatives in the EWC, in national trade unions or as a scientist.

- [Table of contents](#)
- [Online order](#)

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### Current review of industrial relations in Europe



In January 2009 the European Commission presented the new report for developments of industrial relations within the years 2006 to 2008. It contains a listing of legislation and documents of the social dialog, court decisions on labour law, a reflection on trends of collective bargaining policy and on the trade union membership figures. The report is published in English every two years, an abstract is available in German and French.

- [The report in the original version](#) (in English, 168 pages)
- [The abstract of the report](#) (in German, 22 pages)

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### Works council activities in Germany and the Netherlands

A focal topic brochure of WSI-Mitteilungen devoted itself in February 2009 to the comparison between the German and Dutch model of workers' representation. A special aspect is the internationalization, connected with action possibilities of works councils in multinational companies. One of the contributions examines the future of co-determination in the Netherlands. The brochure is only available in German.



- [Preface to the focal topic brochure](#)
- [Summary of the contributions of the focal topic brochure](#)
- [Order of WSI-Mitteilungen](#)



### Manual to the new EWC Directive

Only a few weeks ago the final version of the revised Directive on the European works council was published and the first manual which comprehensively takes into account the new legal position is already available. Wolfgang Greif, head of the European department of the private employees trade union (GPA) in Vienna, explains therein not only the political and legal bases of the EWC but also delivers check lists for EWC agreements and useful tips for the foundation and development of an Europe-wide employee representation. At present, there isn't any other German language publication yet, which represents the new legal position in a detailed way. This book having been published in March 2009 should therefore not be missed in any EWC office. The following information is only available in German:

- [Further information about the book](#)
- [Reading example: Corner points of the new EWC Directive](#)
- [Reading example: Questions and answers to the new EWC Directive](#)
- [Online order](#) (unfortunately possible only in a few days)

We have compiled additional technical literature on a [special page](#).

## 12. Training and consultancy network: Examples of our work

### EWC negotiations in a Japanese pharmaceutical company

The special negotiation body (SNB) of Takeda Pharma constituted itself in London on January 19th and 20th, 2009. Till now, the Japanese company does not have an European works council. Werner Altmeyer from the training and consultancy network "euro-works council.net" was appointed expert (see [report in EWC News 3/2008](#)).



### European political conference of IG BCE



On January 28th and 29th, 2009 the IG BCE (German mining, chemistry and energy industrial union) carried out an European political conference in the training centre Bad Münders. Prof. Dr. Ulrich Zachert of the training and consultancy network "euro-works council.net" lectured on verdicts of the European court of justice, among this the cases Viking Line from Finland and Vaxholm from Sweden (see [report in EWC News 4/2007](#)). In an interview with the IG BCE magazine "kompakt" he explained the backgrounds. The following documents are only available in German:

- [Report about the conference](#)
- [The interview with Prof. Zachert in the wording](#)
- [Background report on the verdicts of the European court of justice](#)

### Participation in ethic Directive in U.S. group

The German works councils of Parker-Hannifin want to use their right for codetermination at the ethic Directive of the U.S. engineering group and to complete an works agreement at national level. The advice was carried out by Dr. Reingard Zimmer of the training and consultancy network "euro-works council.net", who assisted for the first time the German central works council at a meeting on this topic in Würzburg on January 29th, 2009. The European works council formed according to British law in 2003 also wants to deal with this topic.



### SE trainings in two companies



After Prof Dr Ulrich Zachert and Dr Werner Altmeyer of the training and consultancy network "euro-works council.net" had accompanied the SE transformation at the Hamburg adhesive producer tesa as experts in 2008 (see [report in EWC News 4/2008](#)), another two cases are standing in line. The Bavarian metal company Warema Renkhoff and the Hamburg based technology service provider Germanischer Lloyd consider the conversion into a European Company (SE). Both companies employ just under 2,000 people in Germany and want presumably "to freeze" the third participation of the employees in the supervisory board (see [report in EWC News 2/2008](#)).

On February 12th, 2009 a prelude event for the German works councils took place at the seat of Warema in Marktheidenfeld; the group works council of Germanischer Lloyd was trained in Hamburg by the training and consultancy network "euro-works council.net" on March 16th, 2009. The special negotiation bodies shall soon be called for the constituting meeting.

- [Background: The participation in the European Company \(SE\)](#) (in German)

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## A Swiss pharmaceutical company wants to adapt EWC agreement

Members of the European works council of Hoffmann-La Roche met for their annual meeting in Brussels from March 16th to 19th, 2009. They want to adapt their EWC agreement, which was last updated in the year 2000, immediately to the standards of the new Directive and nominated Werner Altmeyer of the training and consultancy network "euro-works council.net" as expert for the forthcoming negotiations. The new Directive was already topic in the EWC meeting in 2008 (see [report in EWC News 1/2008](#)).



- [The EWC agreement in the wording](#) (in German)

### 13. Details of seminars planned

Registrations are possible for the following seminars and workshops co-made by us (in German):

#### The new EWC Directive -- What comes towards us there?

Specialist conferences for European works councils

07. -- 8-5-2009 in Rome

22. -- 23-6-2009 in Liège

30-9 -- 02.10.2009 in Paris (main emphasis: Restructurings)

#### Customization of old EWC agreements

Workshop for European works councils

12. -- 14-10-2009 in Montabaur

#### Project work in the EWC on the example of health mapping

Workshop for European works councils

12. -- 14-10-2009 in Montabaur

- [Further information about these workshops and conferences](#)

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

Institutions, politics, European works councils

14. -- 16-10-2009 in Bad Orb

- [Further information about these workshops](#)



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#### Seminars of the institute for further education of works councils (ifb)

**ifb**

Institut zur  
Fortbildung von  
Betriebsräten KG

Since 1998 ifb offers seminars for European works councils whose contents were worked out by the training and consultancy network "euro-works council.net".

##### Basic seminar: The way to the European works council

20.10 -- 23-10-2009 in Würzburg

##### Advanced seminar: Practice knowledge, EWC special

02. -- 5-6-2009 in Cologne

17. -- 20-11-2009 in Nuremberg

- [Further information about the basic seminars](#)
- [Further information about the advanced seminars](#)

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Workshops of ver.di-federal office

In the year 2004 an cross-sectoral workshop of the ver.di federal office for European works councils took place for the first time. In view of the new EWC Directive there are two appointments in 2009:

**The revision of the EWC Directive**

17. -- 19-6-2009 in Berlin

**Basis knowledge and practice of the EWC work**

02. -- 4-9-2009 in Berlin



- [Further information about the basis seminar](#)
- [Download of the programme for the two seminars](#)



**Further education at Ruhr university**

As part of a further education series for trade union officers and works council members the academy of Ruhr university Bochum offers the following:

**Training for Europe, the European works council**

Concepts, distribution, practice experiences, development prospects  
30. -- 31-10-2009 in Bochum

- [Further information about this constituent](#)

**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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