



*EURELECTRIC, Union of the Electricity Industry  
EPSU, European Federation of Public Service Unions  
EMCEF, European Mine, Chemical and Energy Workers' Federation*

*Press Release – 19 September 2003*

**“Visegrad Conference on the social implications of the internal market for electricity, 19-20 September 2003, Prague”**

The employer and trade union representatives of the energy sector of the Visegrad countries and Slovenia are meeting today and tomorrow in Prague. The unions and employers discuss the social implications of the internal market for electricity. The new EU Member States will implement the internal market and open their markets, first for large industrial electricity users and in a second stage for households,

"The internal market will have an effect on jobs, pay and working conditions. It is important that unions and employers discuss this", says Jiri Kubicek, President of the Czech energy workers union OSE. "Social dialogue between unions and employers and with the government is essential to address these consequences", he adds.

Lubos Pavlas, the President of the Czech electricity employers organization agrees: "Social dialogue will help us deal with the restructuring of markets. The exchange of views between representatives from different countries will teach us which solutions are pursued". He welcomes the fact that the employers and Trade Unions from the new EU Members States will join the European Electricity Social Dialogue Committee.

Jiri Mohelnik, a representative of the Ministry of Industry and Economic Affairs referred to the consultation with the employers and the trade unions in the Czech Republic. While there are no results yet, the government is committed to continue this process. It is planned to evaluate this effects of the internal market on employment and users.

For his part Jan Kasnar of the Ministry of Social Affairs welcomed the social dialogue. The Ministry will contribute and will also use European funding to address social the consequences of the internal market, especially in the regions most affected.

The conference is organised by the European trade union organisations EPSU and EMCEF and the European organisation for the employers in the electricity sector Eurelectric. The conference received financial support from the European Commission. Representatives of which will discuss European social and energy policy with the social partners.

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