

European Works Councils needed in social services multinationals

(5 January 2011) EPSU commissioned research to assess the state of affairs regarding social (care) services multinationals and their eligibility for an EWC in august 2010.

The report by Jane Lethbridge (PSIRU) shows that there are 10 MNC's that provide social services in various countries in Europe at the moment. Only two of them have an EWC established, which is mainly because they have been global services providers in catering and cleaning services since a long time. They have recently entered the 'European market' for social services.

The remaining eight companies have social services as their core business. This covers a wide range from elder care to child care and community services. There is an increasing focus on policy towards these services at EU level although attempts to maintain quality standards are only being promoted with a voluntary quality framework. With a growing, ageing population, the issues about how to maintain high quality care for older people will remain a key political issue for the future. This is an issue workers should play their role in as professionals in social services provision.

Multinational companies involved in the provision of different care services are showing signs of consolidation since 2007. Companies operating in the Nordic region are developing a range of services which deliver care to local settings, whether care centres or residential homes.

As the recast EWC directive gives clear(er) rights to information and consultation of workers, it's even more desirable that in all MNC's an EWC is set up.

Workers have the right to training and facilities provided to the Special Negotiating Body (SNB), such as pre- and post-meetings and the presence of experts - including trade union officers- in the negotiation meetings.

EPSU assists different EWCs in this regard

- Care services, multinational companies and expanding European markets - Report by Jane Lethbridge (PSIRU)

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