

European waste workers agree to fight cut-throat competition

The single most important issue facing European waste workers is unfair competition with employers seeking to reduce wages and other benefits. The waste sector is confronted with “cowboy” companies that damage pay and conditions, health and safety, quality and environmental regulations, and are dragging everyone down to unacceptable levels. But also major companies engage in wage competition. The existence of different collective agreements in some countries allows companies to choose the lowest level dragging down standards for public and private service workers alike. Trade unions and works council representatives agreed to fight this tendency during the EPSU Waste seminar, 20 June 2005, Brussels. And organising workers into trade unions is the challenge for both unions in the old and new member states to develop the power to stand up for workers' interests

To this end proposals were made to increase work on:

- Cordination of collective bargaining.
- Establish European works councils in eligible companies.
- Opose unfettered liberalisation of the waste sector such as proposed by the Services of Bolkestein directive or in GATS.
- The social clause and quality standards in public contracts. A quality label is established in some European countries and this can possibly be extended to other countries.
- Attracting workers into the trade unions (organising) and for EPSU to extend its membership.

Unions will be asked to make our joint work visible to workers and members. Our

campaign will require common and public actions.

Participants at the EPSU seminar considered a report by Dave Hall, PSIRU on recent company and policy developments and the role of European Works Councils in restructuring and examples of this. The EPSU waste management policy and the Nordic Action Plan for the waste sector were considered by the participants. The points raised in the seminar will be brought forward to the Standing Committee Utilities, 7 October 2005, Luxembourg. The standing committee agreed to establish a work group. It will have to reflect further on the action plan.

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Работники очистных компаний решили бороться против ожесточенной конкуренции

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