

Energy European Works Council representatives consider CSR, Corporate Policies, EWC Directive

(15 December 2009) Representatives of a large number of European Works Councils in the energy sector discussed the role of the EWC in corporate policies, corporate social responsibility and transnational agreements. Steve Thomas (PSIRU) presented an overview of the challenges faced by the companies. These include:

- Dealing with reducing carbon-emissions. Many companies chose to invest in nuclear power;
- Reducing high levels of debt after spending sprees. This will cause further restructuring and cost-cutting with pressure on jobs and pay and conditions
- Future of the transmission and also distribution networks in the companies;
- Where will the companies expand, what expected mergers and acquisitions and how does this relate to concerns of the competition and merger control authorities

Joseph Wilde of Dutch research group SOMO presented the first overview of Corporate Social Responsibilities in Europe's energy companies. The findings include:

- CSR is relatively new in most companies
- Most energy companies have written up to internationally agreed standards.

These are also defined in the [joint statement](#) of the trade unions with Eurelectric

- A survey of EWC representative demonstrated that not all companies discuss CSR with the EWC, that there is a lack of resources to consider the policies serious, that monitoring remains an issue and that this leads several EWCs to see CSR as nothing more than window dressing.

Richard Pond of EPSU introduced the research findings of a survey into company profits, dividends and wage bills. He further explained the work that is being done in EPSU around collective bargaining and the possible wage indicator project. EPSU's Jan Willem Goudriaan went through the new EWC directive (2009/38) and underlined the importance of ensuring that the EWC agreements do reflect the contents of the new directive when re-negotiating and to make a link with the transposition laws which have to be in place before 2011 so that EWCs do not lose rights due.

- [Documents and Conclusions are available here](#)

Representatives of EWCs in companies such as EDF, CEZ, EON, RWE, EVN, GdfSuez took part. The meeting was part of an EPSU-SDA project and funded by the European Commission. It took place 14 December 2009, Brussels. Further meetings are foreseen for 24 March and 8 June 2010.

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Policies

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