

## **EWC GdfSuez expresses support for French industrial action**

(22 October 2010, Brussels) The EWC agreed a declaration of support for the industrial actions in France. The unions organized a series of actions against the government proposals to increase the pension age to 62 years. The actions also effect GdfSuez especially in gas transport and electricity production.

One of the main items concerned the merger of the *Trading activities* of France, Belgium, Netherlands and Germany. The unions raised a number of issues and demanded more guarantees for the workers involved regarding the impact on workers, pay and conditions. Not all processes are finished and not all information is available regarding future structure of the new company. The file also became linked with ongoing industrial action over the dismissal of a worker in Electrabel maintenance as negotiations over the merger related dossiers were halted. The worker was dismissed following an internal audit that possibly violated the privacy of the worker concerned and the ethical code of GdfSuez. The EWC requested clarity and GdfSuez will be investigating this. The CEO Mestrallet made a clear distinction between the private sphere of a worker and the professional career. The EWC agreed to organize a special EWC to consider the trading merger to be able to provide an opinion. It will also discuss the ethical charter further.

The EWC also considered the GdfSuez policy on *Mobility* of workers in the company. The policy relates to workers wishing to work elsewhere in the company. The [EWC intervened earlier](#) as the company did not consult over the policy despite this being part of the EWC agreement. Further discussion and consultation took place. The EWC raised a number of additional issues. The responses of management were noted and no opinion was given.

The CEO presented the financial results and how GdFSuez is doing to weather the financial and economic crisis. Other issues concerned the activities of the group and the progress with merger with GdfSuez as well as the possibility to ensure workers can obtain a discount on their electricity.

The EWC met for the Steering committee, pre-meeting, plenary with management

and debriefing 18-21 October 2010, It brought together over 60 representatives from 15 countries with 13 languages being translated in Berlin. EPSU's Deputy General Secretary participated in the meeting.

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