



I.T.E.M.

Fostering employee involvement at company level by training the main actors dealing with European multinationals

EWCs in practice: good experiences of networking and transnational coordination

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Coordination ...

- ... between different levels
- ... between different actors
- ... with regard to specific objectives



European strategies for common issues

- ... in order to overcome the limitations of national responses
- ... in order to develop common strategies and prevent workers from being played off against each other



Specific objectives

- I&C processes (in particular in the context of restructuring processes)
- Negotiation of TCAs and their implementation
- European-level action



Prerequisites: resources

- Translation and interpreting services
- Communication tools
- Training
- Experts



Prerequisites: rights

- Information and consultation
- Extraordinary meetings
- Access to production sites
- Coordination bodies at national level
- etc.



Prerequisites: intercultural learning

- ... in order to overcome obstacles linked to multilingualism and multiculturalism
- ... in order to recognise, respect and understand cultural differences



Prerequisites: communication network

- Employees
- EWC members
- Select committee
- ETUFs
- Board-level employee representatives
- National and local trade unions
- Central management



Coordination

- I. Company-level structures of interest representation (EWCs, works councils, national coordination bodies etc.)
- II. Trade union coordination (ETUFs, national and local TUs)



Information and consultation

- to verify the information provided by management (e.g. working time, labour costs, flexibility ...)
- to react to processes of harmonisation of work organisation, labour policies, etc. (Unilever: world class manufacturing – impact on working conditions; need for a common position)



I&C in the context of restructuring processes (I)

- Extensive use of extraordinary meetings in ongoing restructuring processes (Bosch Breaks Division)
- Access to production sites: EWC secretary and EWC coordinator carried out visits to all plants involved in the restructuring process in order to get a better overview (Alstom)
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I&C in the context of restructuring processes (II)

- Consultation: development of alternative proposals
- ... to gain time with regard to implementation of management decisions (Alstom)



I&C in the context of restructuring processes (III)

- External expertise: use in the context of national consultation processes to be extended to the European level (Europeanisation of a national right) (Bosch)



Trade union support

- EWC coordinator (ETUF)
- Trade Union Coordination Group
- Action days
- 10 principles (guidelines for restructuring processes)



Ten principles

- Early warning system
- Information and consultation rights
- European TU coordination group
- Transparency of information
- Platform of common demands
- Negotiation of an EFA
- Communication strategy
- Cross-border activities
- Legal possibilities
- Binding commitment



EWC coordinator

- point of reference for all TUs represented in an MNC
- link between EWC and TU
- to guarantee that all national TUs receive the relevant information
- multisectoral MNCs: need for coordination between ETUFs
- horizontal and vertical coordination



Trade union coordination group (I)

- TUCG: ad hoc structure to accompany restructuring processes (supporting function)
- TUCG has to guarantee a European approach (10 principles)
- European-level coordination between EWC and TUCG (Bosch and Alstom)
- Combination between internal information (EWC) and political decisions (TUCG)
- EWC and TUCG complementing one another (extraordinary meetings/TUCG meetings, action day)



Trade union coordination group (II)

- Division of labour: initiative may shift from one actor to the other
- Involvement of TUs of affected sites
- TUs not represented in EWC are also involved (Alstom)
- Resources: EU funding for TUCG meetings
- Integration between EWC and TU communication network does not always work
 - missing structures
 - other priorities (e.g. sites too small)
 - tensions between TUs



Outcomes at European level

- Letter of understanding between Bosch EWC , Bosch central management and the buying company (safeguarding employment)
- EWC of Bosch mandated the new SNB (negotiations for new EWC)
- The conditions for the bargaining processes at national level were improved (Alstom)



Negotiation of TCAs

- Internal EMF procedures for negotiations at multinational company level (2006)
- Mandate to negotiate and to sign TCAs



Application of TCAs

- Harmonisation of social model in order to avoid dumping practices (Volkswagen)
- Interest representation and negotiation processes along the value chain
- Audi: integration and coordination: creating a TU network at the level of supply park (TU officers, works councils, ...)
- EFAs signed by GME (sharing the pain)



Conclusion

- More effective use of existing rights
- Need for more training
- Dissemination of 10 principles
- Crucial role of reciprocal trust
- Awareness of the fact that European level is the most adequate level of response (overcoming nat. Solutions)
- Development of a shared European-level strategy, i.e. to carry out common activities to achieve jointly defined objectives

