

MEPs: Give workers a real voice in multinationals

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The employment committee of the European Parliament today voted in favour of upholding workers' rights and social dialogue in multinational companies.

The report by MEP Dennis Radtke (EPP) on amendments to the European Works Council (EWC) Directive was adopted by an overwhelming majority (28 in favour/ 7 against/ 8 abstentions).

This is good news, as the EWC Directive needs to be reviewed to ensure the effective exercise of workers' rights of information and consultation on company decisions.

Currently, there is no legal certainty nor legal predictability: too many loopholes and a clear lack of enforcement lead to only one in five EWCs is meaningfully consulted on the most important transnational decisions.

Among the measures designed to strengthen EWCs included in the report:

- A clear definition of the transitional issues on which EWCs must be consulted;
- The introduction of a deterrent and proportionate sanctions for companies who flout their obligations;
- The ability of EWCs to request an injunction to suspend company decisions not having respected information and consultation.

ETUC Deputy Secretary General Isabelle Schömann said:

"In the majority of multinational companies, workers face a David against Goliath battle on a daily basis to uphold these most basic information and consultation rights. The message of the European Parliament is now clear: the effective exercise of democracy at work matters.

“Today MEPs have clearly recognised the need for these rights to be properly enforced by closing loopholes and requesting deterrent and proportionate sanctions for those companies who do not comply.

“Company management should be prevented from randomly classifying information as confidential.

“Financial sanctions in the current directive are clearly insufficient for multinational companies and, ultimately, EWCs must be able to request injunctions to suspend companies decisions made in violation of their rights.”

Notes

Background information on European Works Council: Background information on European Works Council: <https://www.etuc.org/en/democracy-thematic/european-works-councils>

ETUC response to the second-phase consultation of Social Partners under Article 154 TFEU on a possible revision of the European Works Council Directive (2009/38/EC)

ETUC position on the current revision can be found in the ETUC position [Democracy at Work matters. For a European Works Council Directive that delivers for workers!](#)