

Press Release – 9 June 2010

European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU)
Stichting Onderzoek Multinationale Ondernemingen (SOMO)

Europe's electricity companies and Corporate Social Responsibility
European Works Councils - poorly informed and consulted

This new report looks at the European electricity companies, CSR policies and involvement of the European Works Councils (EWCs).

- All major European energy companies included – e.g EDF, ENEL, EON, Fortum, GdFSuez, Iberdrola, RWE, Vattenfall, Veolia. Some operate across the world: US, Latin America and Australia
- The companies represent a **million workers** and generate **half a trillion euros** in revenues.
- Of the companies that do have CSR policies only a limited number endorse all international standards considered. Many do not report according to global standards.
- The results of a survey of European Works Council representatives are included. They are poorly informed and consulted. There is a gap between formal policies and proper implementation.
- The report ends with recommendations for EWC representatives and trade unions.

EPSU's Jan Willem Goudriaan: "Not all companies provide transparency. A more binding European framework or legislation on disclosure of information on environmental, social and governance issues is needed. The report shows that this is not a problem for most companies but a small minority does not play by the rules."

EPSU, Europe's umbrella union federation for energy urges the electricity industry to respect international standards.

SOMO's Joseph Wilde-Ramsing "While it is positive that many companies have a formal CSR policy, the research shows that workers as a key stakeholder are not involved. Without a key role and resources for the workers, CSR policies risk being empty of content."

Richard Howitt MEP, the European Parliament Rapporteur on Corporate Social Responsibility said: "Reporting clearly on the environmental social and governance standards of a company is not just about public relations or window dressing but must be part of an integrated process which keeps workers thoroughly involved through European Works Councils on the values, performance and ethical standards of the company. The message of this report for the energy sector is clear, you need to step up your game and fully recognise that CSR is not just done by management but is done by a coalition of management, worker and stakeholders in unison."

The report can be found at: EPSU: www.epsu.org/a/6581
 SOMO: <http://somo.nl/news-en/csr-and-european-works-councils/>
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