

# The role of the EWC and trade unions in change

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## EWC Deutsche Telekom – state of play of the Agreement

## Topics for information & consultation (1)

§ 10 (4) EWC Agreement Deutsche Telekom Group

- *Structure of the Group*
- *Economic and financial situation*
- *Anticipated development of business, production and sales situation*
- *Workforce situation and its anticipated development*
- *Investments (investment programs)*
- *Fundamental changes in the organization*

## Topics for information & consultation (2)

- *Introduction of new work and manufacturing processes*
- *Relocation of undertakings, establishments or significant parts thereof and transfers of production*
- *Merging or splitting of undertakings or establishments*
- *Cutting back or closure of undertakings, establishments or important parts thereof*
- *Mass redundancies*
- *Other matters can be added to the agenda if agreed by central management and the EWC board*

## Transnational matters

§ 1 (3)f EWC Agreement Deutsche Telekom Group

- *Transnational matters are matters that affect the Community-scale undertaking or Community-scale Deutsche Telekom Group as a whole or at least two establishments or two companies in different member states.*
- *Matters which affect the employees and companies in only one country remain within the exclusive responsibility of the social partners in this country according to the common rules of the country. The rights of the employee representatives at national level shall not be affected hereby.*

## Challenging starting point

- EWC involvement in innovation not a given
- Especially definition of transnational matters a problem (as a whole or at least 2 different countries involved)
- E.g. agile working often bound to one site/country – no transnationality
- Only „*investments (investment programs)*“ and „*introduction of new work and manufacturing processes*“ provide basis for arguments

## Reccomendation for Action (1)

- Reframe and redefine „transnational matters“
  - *„matters shall be considered to be transnational where they concern the company as a whole, or at least two undertakings in two different member states. Such matters include also decisions which, regardless of the number of member states involved, are of importance for the European workforce in terms of the scope of their potential effects. Consequently any matter concerning one member state may affect the whole company, in Europe, through its related core-business.“*

## Recommendation for Action (2)

- Agree with management – based on provision in § 10 (4) – to include innovation and digitalisation in the list of topics

# EWC Deutsche Telekom – fit for involvement?

## EWC: functions in innovation processes

- Co-ordinating employees' responses to the issue
- Creating a genuinely European strategy or action
- Obtaining more information
- buying some time
- Bringing in experts to assist in evaluating the plans
- Suggesting alternatives
- Supporting local strategies

## Internal and external factors of influence

- External:
  - Understanding corporate culture and management strategy
  - Management and employees' rights
  - Transnational decision-making process
- Internal:
  - EWC's capacity to influence decisions
  - EWC and local workforce
  - Multi-level co-ordination and articulation

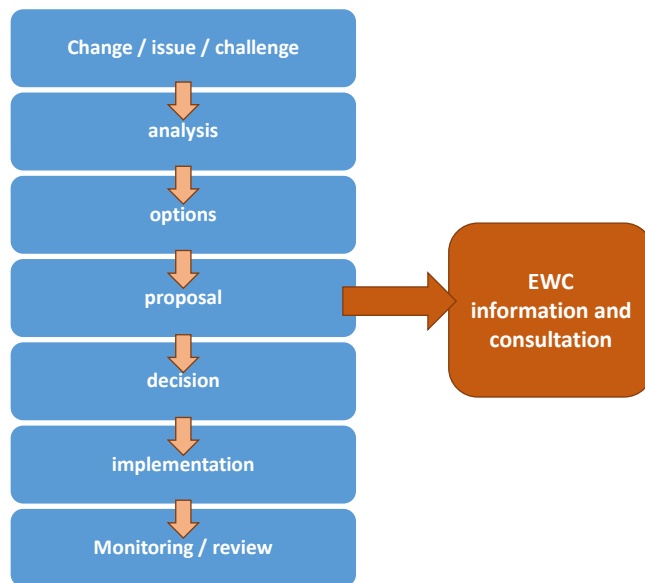
## EWC prepared to play an active role?

<p><b>Symbolic EWC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ No common understanding of the ways of working in the EWC</li> <li>➤ Only one meeting with central management per year</li> <li>➤ Receives information but conducts no discussions with management</li> <li>➤ Hardly any communication between EWC members during the year</li> </ul>	<p><b>Service-orientated EWC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Information provided by central management is forwarded to national EWC members without any follow-up</li> <li>➤ EWC informs central management about developments and problems in countries without making demands</li> <li>➤ Rare communication within EWC between annual meetings</li> </ul>
<p><b>Project-orientated EWC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Selected problems and issues are taken up proactively by the EWC</li> <li>➤ Issues are dealt with in working groups and consolidated decisions are taken</li> <li>➤ Results are discussed with management with a view to finding solutions</li> <li>➤ Frequent communication throughout the year</li> <li>➤ Good coherence within the EWC</li> </ul>	<p><b>Participation-orientated EWC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Constant dialogue with management regarding a level playing field</li> <li>➤ EWC receives detailed information about all developments within the company</li> <li>➤ EWC delivers joint opinions on all planned projects and changes within the company</li> <li>➤ EWC discusses strategic decisions with management</li> <li>➤ Alternatives to management plans are developed</li> </ul>

## Reccomendation for Action (3)

- Get a common definition what kind of role the EWC should play
  - What kind of EWC would you like to be?
  - What kind of EWC are you right now?
  - What needs to change?
  - Do you have the capacity to do this?
  - Are you all on the same page?

Strategies to be involved



## Reccomendation for Action (4)

- Get involved in a project as soon as possible
  - By setting the agenda; and/or
  - By training management to provide you with proper information at proper time; and/or
  - By anticipating change/innovation projects as an EWC (on the basis of information provided – economic & financial data ...); and/or
  - By anticipating change/innovation projects on local level



## EWC process during an innovation process

- Steps to be taken ...
  - Anticipating change (early warning signals)
  - Receiving relevant and sufficient information
  - Meaningful and successful consultation
  - Assessing an innovation plan
  - Shaping and influencing decisions
  - Negotiations
  - Evaluation and reflection on lessons learned

## Reccomendation for Action (5)

- Every consultation needs to be taken seriously and must be managed like a project
  - goal(s),
  - timeline,
  - strategies,
  - roles,
  - escalation levels,
  - Evaluation of the consultation process,
  - Lessons learned
  - ...

## You are not alone ...

- Other EWCs (in ICTS or other sectors) have similar issues
- [UNI Europa](#) (European Federation of services unions) works on how to shape digitalisation, e.g. [digital footprint](#), [shaping industrial relations in a digitalising services industry](#)
- National trade unions
  - Especially regarding worker participation, national Labour Law, involvement on local level
- Other actors
  - Experts, media, political parties, governments, EU, ...