



**A Joint Framework of Actions of European Social Partners in the electricity sector on Competencies, qualifications and anticipation of change in the European electricity sector: First report**

**January 2015**

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# INTRODUCTION

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## Who are we?

### EURELECTRIC

EURELECTRIC is the voice of the electricity industry in Europe. We represent the power sector in over 30 European countries, speaking for more than 3,500 companies in power generation, distribution, and supply. We also have affiliates and associates on several other continents.

We stand for carbon-neutral electricity by 2050, competitive electricity for our customers, and continent-wide electricity through a coherent European approach. Our permanent secretariat is based in Brussels. We are representing the employers in the European Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee since 2000.

More information on our activities is available at [www.eurelectric.org](http://www.eurelectric.org).

### EPSU

EPSU is the European federation of Public Service Unions. It is the largest federation of the ETUC and comprises 8 million public service workers from 265 trade unions; EPSU organises workers in the energy, water and waste sectors, health and social services and local and national administration, in all European countries including in the EU's Eastern Neighbourhood. EPSU is the recognized regional organization of Public Services International (PSI).

We promote the interests of all public service workers in Europe. We are committed to achieve quality public services for all, to address unemployment and contribute to creating jobs to make sure that the European Union is positive for the people.

More information about EPSU is available at: [www.epsu.org](http://www.epsu.org).

### industriAll Europe

industriAll Europe is a European federation of independent and democratic trade unions representing manual and non-manual workers in the metal, chemical, energy, mining, textile, clothing and footwear sectors and related industries and activities.

We advocate thorough social reforms, the reinforcement of democracy and the promotion of economic and social progress in Europe. We support an integrated Europe without borders, with common social standards, a high level of social protection and the involvement of workers and trade union representatives.

More information about industriAll Europe is available at: [www.industrial-europe.eu](http://www.industrial-europe.eu).

## **A Joint Framework of Actions of European Social Partners in the electricity sector on Competencies, qualifications and anticipation of change in the European electricity sector (March 2013)**

The electricity sector is at unprecedented cross-roads facing a number of key challenges to meet Europe's energy and climate policy objectives. This transition towards a low-carbon economy implies a deep transformation of our sector on skills and jobs needs.

In this context and on the premise that social dialogue at company, national and European level has a key role to play to anticipate those changes and allow a smooth transition, we have jointly agreed on a joint framework of Actions on competencies, qualifications and anticipation of change in the electricity sector in March 2013. The framework of actions addresses a broad range of issues including anticipation of change, youth unemployment, climate change, new skills and age management. This framework also insists on the follow-up.

This framework of actions commits our members and affiliates to consider carefully the issues addressed, to engage discussions at national, sector or company level as most appropriate on anticipation of change, mainstreaming of equality policies and youth employment. These discussions and the potential concrete follow up actions implemented as a consequence of this joint framework will be reported to the European Electricity Social Dialogue Committee once/twice a year.

This first report constitutes the collection of the discussions and progresses made in several countries that gave feedback. We have received eight feedbacks so far from Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Norway, Spain and Sweden. The feedback for each country has been sent by EURELECTRIC Member. It has been completed by Trade union side when needed.

# FEEDBACK

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## Germany

First feedback received in November 2013. It has been completed in February 2014.

Member(s) of EURELECTRIC: Bundesverband der Energie- und Wasserwirtschaft e.v. (BDEW)

Member(s) of EPSU: Vereinte Dienstleistungsgewerkschaft (Ver.di)

Member(s) of industriAll: IG Metall, IG BCE

BDEW had contacted the social partner from the electricity industry on the German level, the VAEU (VEREINIGUNG DER ARBEITGEBERVERBÄNDE ENERGIE- UND VERSORUNGSWIRTSCHAFTLICHER UNTERNEHMUNGEN) and informed them about the Joint Framework and its main content. VAEU has since then had a first exchange with Ver.di, one of the three involved trade unions in Germany (the others being IG BCE and IG Metall). The main outcome, confirmed by IG BCE and IG Metall, was that a joint meeting between VAEU and all the mentioned trade unions on the issue is to be organised. Dates for the meetings have now been set for end of February/beginning of March but due to political differences between the trade unions not in a joint format.

## Hungary

Feedback received in May 2014.

Member(s) of EURELECTRIC: EURELECTRIC Magyarországi Tagozat

Member(s) of EPSU: EVDSZ

Member(s) of industriAll: LIGA EVDSZ, MSZSZ BDSZ, MSZSZ VDSZ; MSZSZ MOL Bányász

This follow-up report has been made together with the Trade Unions.

According to the commitment made by European Social Partners in the Electricity industry in the Joint Framework of Actions of European Social Partners in the Electricity Sector, adopted in Brussels on March 15 2013, the Hungarian National Association of EURELECTRIC reports the following progress made so far:

1. Anticipation of climate change (trainings at company and national level)

The planned AGENDA for 2014 of the VÁPB (Social Negotiations Committee in the Electricity Industry in Hungary - SNCEIH) includes the topics of education and implementation of the relevant EU Directives. A Joint Statement of the Hungarian Social Partners in the Electricity industry is under negotiation and signature, and it has two main focuses:

- The topic of special education with regard to the national competency and skills needs in the Electricity industry.
- Trainings focusing on health and safety in the Electricity industry.

An industry wide standardized job grading system is implemented that includes the degree of education among the job evaluation aspects.

2. Mainstreaming of equality

This commitment is in the focus of the SNCEIH but real actions are maintained at company level. National Association Member Companies manage their training system according to economical, business operation related and HR guidelines (e.g. the training is necessary for increased effectivity, it is required by law, it is the output of the performance evaluation system, etc.) Large emphasis is put on avoiding any form of discrimination. Member companies guarantee equal opportunity to trainings for their employees. It is emphasised in their own Ethical Standards and this statement regarding to the Equal Opportunity is in line with Hungarian legislation and requirements.

### 3. Ensuring young workers entering the Electricity Industry

Member companies develop and maintain strong relations with middle- and higher educational institutions that offer industry specific curriculum or focus on currently important competencies.

There are also trainee programs and scholarships available for students and young professionals. These programs are provided by companies operating in the Electricity industry. Member companies are active participants of job fairs.

Due to these actions visibility and reputation of the Electricity industry on the job market increased in the last years.

## Italy

Feedback received in February 2014.

Member(s) of EURELECTRIC: Assoelettrica

Member(s) of EPSU: Filctem-CGIL, FLAEI-CISL, UILTEC

Member(s) of industriAll: FILCTEM-CGIL, CISL FEMCA, UILTEC

A meeting has been organised in Assoelettrica with our most important associated companies, regarding the document "Joint Framework of Actions on Competencies, Qualifications and anticipation of change". In particular it has been discussed the ENEL's experience, identified as example of best practice, to present eventually to EURELECTRIC. During the meeting, the companies shared their experiences on this issue. Their experiences are very similar to the "route" taken by ENEL, but with different impacts and dimensions. In general, the innovative aspect of the Italian Industrial Relations' model is based on the development of trade unions' participatory role, through the creation of a "bilateralism" network. This is the best place where general themes of common interest are examined and discussed. In particular this occurs through Organisms structured and functioning on the basis of shared rules. Some issues: targeted training and employability, equal opportunities, health and safety, economic and energy market scenarios.

## Latvia

Feedback received in February 2014.

Member(s) of EURELECTRIC: Latvian Association of Power Engineers and Energy Constructors (LEEA)

Member(s) of EPSU: Latvian Trade Union 'Energija'

Member(s) of industriAll: ---

Latvenergo group companies (the largest company in Latvia in electricity sector) have a collective agreement signed with the largest trade union in Latvia in electricity sector „Energija”. One of the points in the agreement refers to employees qualification – employees training and qualification raise, payment of university fees for those employees studying electricity, paid study vacations (20 working days per year). This year Latvenergo is in the process of reviewing the agreement.

Therefore there have been four meetings with the trade union. Nevertheless the point about the qualification will stay the same. Latvenergo's daughter company Sadales tīkls (distribution system operator) owns a Training Centre. The Centre is an accredited educational institution and its aim is to raise employees' qualification in electricity sector including new technologies. Currently regarding new technologies we are dealing with live line works, and anticipate smart metering in the near future. Latvenergo group companies are active also in working with high schools and universities that provide education in the field of electricity to attract young people to the sector. Latvenergo has signed agreements with two largest universities in Latvia to make an input in students' qualification, as well as provides scholarships to best students, organises contests for students' works on important business topics. Our Training Centre provides the opportunity for students to learn things in practice. Latvenergo is open for students to offer practice and jobs to the best. Latvenergo is also thinking the best way of retaining older people and their know-how at company level. Up to now we offer them to be trainers in the Training Centre, to stay as experts dealing with standards and/or documents or to be coaches for students. Latvenergo actively informs the trade union on the activities regarding qualification, work with youth and retaining older employees at company level.

## Norway

Feedback received in February 2014.

Member(s) of EURELECTRIC: Energi Norge

Member(s) of EPSU: EL & IT Forbundet,

Member(s) of industriAll: NITO – The Norwegian Society of Engineers and Technologists, TEKNA – The Norwegian Society of Graduate Technical and Scientific Professionals

Together with the trade unions, Energy Norway have a going on discussion within several of the issues on Training and competencies, Youth employment and demographic change, Climate change and just transition and Equality. This small report has been discussed with their counterpart EL & IT Forbundet.

*On Training and competencies and Youth employment and demographic change:*

For about eight years ago we established a collaboration between Energy Norway and the trade union EL & IT Forbundet, which we called "Job with energy" to increase recruitment to our sector. Later cooperation also evolved to include quality of education and the need for continuing education in our sector. This collaboration was established because the interest from young people was decreasing together with the fact that a lot of workers will retire in a few years. The number of

apprentices in our companies has now increased, and now we cooperate about the need for continuing education for the mature workers. We have also discussed Youth employment according to young people who drop out from school and don't get a job. We will encourage our companies to look at opportunities to provide these youth a job.

*Climate change and just transition:*

Knowledge of corporate challenges has been an important topic last year. Trade union wants more knowledge about all the challenges that come in our sector. Employers are also interested in having competent representatives to discuss the changes with. This discussion is according to the Basic agreement. Based on this we have together conducted a survey about cooperation between the local companies and the trade union, which is coming soon with a report on the challenges.

*Equality:*

This topic is always on the agenda, but mostly according to the lack of woman in our sector. Among skilled workers, only 2 % are women. Totally in our sector we have about 20 percent woman.

## Spain

Feedback received in November 2013.

Member(s) of EURELECTRIC: Asociación Española de la Industria Eléctrica (UNESA)

Member(s) of EPSU: FSC-CC.OO, FSP-CC.OO, UGT-Fitag

Member(s) of industriAll: CC.OO Industria, FSC-CC.OO, UGT- FITAG, USO FI, ELA Hainbat (Basque Country)

The companies associated in UNESA do not have a sectorial collective agreement (each of them has its own collective agreement, at company level). This means that the role of the Association in the labour aspects is always subject to the company level decision and we have not received a reply in the specific matters of the "Joint Framework of Actions of European Social Partners in the electricity sector". However, the Spanish Government is preparing and implementing a reform of the Spanish Electricity Sector and for the last months we have shared some meetings and workshops with the main trade unions in our sector (UGT and CC.OO) concerning the new changes that will affect the sector in the next several years and the impact of this new measures on our companies and our workforce.

CC.OO Industria reported that no workshops or meetings have been held to date, and that they have insisted on the need to negotiate a sectoral agreement, but that the employers' side (UNESA) has not reacted positively to this.

## Sweden

Feedback received in June 2014.

Member(s) of EURELECTRIC: Svensk Energi AB

Member(s) of EPSU: SEKO, Kommunal, Vision

Member(s) of industriAll: SEF – Svenska Elektrikerförbundet, Sveriges Ingenjörer, UNIONEN

Remark: This feedback has been drafted by Energiföretagens Arbetsgivareförening, the association representing the Employers of the Energy Companies in Sweden.

Energiföretagens Arbetsgivareförening has started discussion with one of their main trade unions on the blue color side aiming at signing a vocational introduction agreement. The purpose of such an agreement should be to facilitate young people's transition from school to working life and to ensure a long-term skills supply for employers in the electricity sector. It will be based on the principle that people lacking relevant experience in the occupation receive mentoring and training for part of their working hours.

A vocational introduction agreement should stimulate the employers in the energy sector to offer special introductory employments to young people, as a suggestion people aged up to 25. A key role in our discussions in the vocational introduction agreement has been the existence of a structured mentoring and training in the workplace with the intent that employers will be better able to take on a young person. That means that along with an introductory employment there should be an individual plan for mentoring and training during a certain part of the working hours. The employment is assumed to be based on a fixed-term contract.

The meaning is that there will be no remuneration for the mentoring and training part of the working hours. The wage should be at least the minimum wage for the remaining time.

To encourage the hiring of young people via collective agreements on vocational introduction the Government gives employers a substantial financial subsidy. This subsidy is both a wage subsidy and a subsidy for mentoring.

The next meeting for negotiating between the social partners will take place after the summer.

## CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

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Nearly two years after having been signed, the Joint Framework of Actions on Competencies, qualifications and anticipation of change in the European electricity sector has already succeeded in supporting and encouraging dialogue on national/sectoral/company level on anticipation of change, mainstreaming of equality policies and young employment in the sector. This constitutes an encouraging first step in the process.

As demonstrated in the reports above the trade union representation differs in the various member states and companies, with several trade unions representing the workforce in the same sector or company. So does the quality of social dialogue in the several countries which results from multiple factors, e.g. historical evolution of trade union structures in Central Eastern Europe, but also developments induced by the economic crisis. At the same time not all the trade unions represented in the electricity sector are actively participating in the European Social Dialogue Committee. This impacts the promotion and implementation of the Framework where there is still much room for manoeuvre for European and national social partners. The European Social Partners are committed to increase efforts to promote the FOA and link it to social partner activities already in place.

That being said, our ultimate goal as European social partners is to get feedback from other member/affiliate countries in order to promote and encourage dialogue on these issues across Europe and even set up concrete actions.

A second report will be published in one year.