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Report : 2 cases of multi-national companies,
with and without union network

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Electrolux





Electrolux

- One of the world's largest white goods manufacturer (washing machines, dishwashers, dryers, etc.)
 - Brands / companies such as AEG, Zanussi, Simpson, Volta, Westing House, Wascator, Refripar and soon GE white goods part in the US with approximately 12000 employees
 - Production in 25 countries
 - 65000 employees
 - Many factory closure / relocation of production during the 2000s
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Union work at Electrolux

- Well-functioning trade union network in Europe
 - European Work Council (EWC) based on legislation, collective agreements and generally good cooperation with unions
 - Many factory managers who have experience and knowledge of the union and collective agreements / negotiations (in many European countries)
 - Global Framework Agreement (GFA), unfortunately not union council
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Disadvantages of not having a global trade union network, one example :

- **2012-13 major dispute at Electrolux plant in Thailand**
- About 100 workers sacked after strike and local union leaders suspended from work
- Local union not affiliated to TEAM
- Local union have no experience and seek support from a regional network that do not belong to any trade union organization, NGOS;s supporting with advice.....
- IF Metall, TEAM and IndustriAll give full support
- After pressure from IF Metall and IndustriAll the dismissed workers offered to regain their jobs

IF Metall Electrolux union repr. meeting with the local union



Difficulties in the Electrolux case

- Local factory manager who behave badly
 - Local union not affiliated national trade union (TEAM)
 - No global network within the company
 - NGO;s provide advice and support to local union
 - No possibility of direct communication with the local union (language difficulties)
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For the future

- Continue to try to create a global union network inside the company
 - Start negotiations again to introduce a global union council
 - Evaluate / learn the lessons of the conflict in Thailand
 - Support TEAM to organize a new local union in Electrolux plant in Thailand, is already in progress
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SKF

- Multinational company with a GFA ,Union council and a global network



SKF

- SKF was founded in 1907
 - Manufacturer of bearings, seals and various lubricating systems
 - Manufacturing in about 100 factories in 32 countries
 - About 48 000 employees in 130 countries
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Global union work inside SKF

- Global agreement (GFA) with union council since many year
- Global Agreement (GFA) is well established inside the company
- Factory managers and other managers receive training about GFA
- Global Union Council meets every year
- A well-functioning global union networks
- Company management encourages praesidium of the union world council to be active to solve possible conflicts

SKF Global union council meeting in Brazil



SKF global union meeting Brazil 2011



For the future

- More union training for union rep. in the Council
 - Create trade union network at subcontractors
 - Regional union networks meetings
 - SKF in China...union training at factory level... ?
 - Continue to defend the Global Union Council
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