

Joint Meeting of the AXA EWC on 17 October in Cologne

The following articulation meeting was held in Cologne on October 17 at AXA's offices. Andrea Wolf was in charge of the organization on site.



The topics on the agenda (see the minutes of the previous articulation meetings) are presented by Hedi Ben Sedrine and commented on by the employees representatives of the German delegation. The latter took note of the candidatures of Francesco Rotiroti and Angela Doyle for the vacant posts in the Secretariat.

German News :

Concerning XL CS SE Germany: No reps on site and employees are represented by Andrea Wolf at the Cologne headoffices. For employees whose positions are deleted in the new organization, they can express wishes on vacant positions and their application is studied by a Commission. All employees in this case have found a job, but many positions remain vacant because many departures took place even before the implementation of the voluntary departure plan.



For AXA Konzern, the priority issue remains the increase in workload in many departments and consequently a deteriorating quality of life at work.

Many investments have been made for AXA GROUP Solutions, but the results are not visible to employees and customers. This generates a lot of concern for employees who suffer decisions that are centralized in Paris without any information coming down. The same subject applies to the reps who are not consulted on local issues.

This meeting ended with the traditional Group photo with in addition Bettina Cramm, who came to greet the CGE after the meeting.



Joint Meeting of the AXA EWC on 22 October in Prague

As the last stop on the European tour, outside France, for articulation meetings, the EWC is hosted in AXA's new offices in Prague. Pavel Gottwald, EWC reps for the Czech Republic, was in charge of organizing a meeting for the Czech Republic, Poland and Greece



Anna Podgornaia (Director of Human Resources) presented some figures for AXA in the Czech Republic and Slovakia and the transformation of the working environment for employees. The 570 employees are spread over 3 sites (Brno, Prague and Bratislava) which have been redesigned according to a new organization, respecting the principles of autonomy and responsibility associated with teleworking 2 days a week adopted today by 12% of employees. The employees representatives confirmed the very good level of social dialogue in the Czech Republic.



A project will be developed to align resources and skills with the achievement of the local roadmap, on the other hand an effort on training will be made to improve the employability of employees.

CEEC News :

Concerning the sales rumours about the CEEC's activities, the Secretary of the EWC said that the local vision of this issue must be brought up to the level of the overall project of the Group's strategy. Profitability in these countries is not in question, but the Group has decided to refocus on a number of countries to develop its business. The main concern must remain to focus on the guarantees that will be given to AXA employees whose business is sold outside the Group.



Polish reps remain concerned because in the past many redundancies had occurred when Generali bought insurance companies, and today rumours in the media, which are highly specialized in the insurance sector, talk about Generali as a potential buyer. Pavel Zicky confirmed that reps had requested information from the local management, which refuses to comment. Trade unions do not exist in Poland and in the event of a transfer, employees representatives would have no mandate or prerogatives to negotiate with management. The members of the Polish delegation would like to find help in the Group's bodies such as the EWC.

The EWC Secretariat will play its role as a facilitator in bringing information down to local entities and in social dialogue, which must remain at a good level even in more difficult times. The absence of a trade union amplifies the concern of Polish local employees who are considering the option of joining a trade union in order to have greater credibility in the negotiations.

The AXA EWC Secretary will work with reps to find the best solutions if the rumours come true.

In addition, Polish reps point out that the sale of MBank, Poland's fourth-largest bank, could pose a problem because it is a distribution partner for AXA Poland.

Pavel Gottwald regrets the recent emergence of these rumours, knowing that in the Czech Republic, AXA is the best employer in terms of social benefits. A sale in the Czech Republic does not surprise employees who have already experienced several for the oldest among them. On the other hand, employee motivation can be strongly affected and there is a risk of a slowdown in operational activity. AXA Czech Republic is a small entity for the Group but relatively important in the country. The local management tried to explain the situation but was unable to provide precise information. Elected officials are worried about the future and if the sale is not completed, AXA will have to clarify its strategy in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.



The Slovak elected representative would like to know quickly who the potential buyer would be in the event of a sale in order to be able to assess the social impacts for employees.



For Hedi Ben Sedrine, the subject is very complex to measure the possible impacts because everything depends on the level of the buyer and the reasons why he wants to buy what could be sold by AXA.

A new Director of Group Labour Relations has just arrived at the head of the EWC and he will have to act on all possible levers to find the best solutions to deal with this transnational issue and mitigate its negative social consequences.

Finally, the question that could be put to Thomas Buberl at the next plenary session in November in Paris: What is the Group's strategy behind the possible sale of AXA's activities in Eastern Europe?

