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Improving quality of life at work

GDF SUEZ European agreement

INTRODUCTION

The company's performance and ability to adapt relies on both collective workplace relations and the recognition of each employee's individual place in the company.

Since men and women constitute the principal strategic resource of the company, it must look after the "*physical, mental and social well-being*"[1] of all its employees. Work, carried out under suitable conditions, is important for socialisation, recognition and personal fulfilment, Quality of life at work affects all GDF SUEZ employees whatever their entity or role within the organisation. Each person is responsible for their own and others' well-being at work. Quality of life at work therefore contributes directly to the social and economic performance of GDF SUEZ and, as a result, its longevity.

Quality of life at work, both from collective and individual viewpoints, encompasses multiple factors relating to the organisation of work, the atmosphere and culture within the company, work satisfaction, working conditions, the level of autonomy and empowerment, equality, the margin for error, recognition and the value placed on each person's work.

Well-being at work involves paying attention to each employee as an individual. In concrete terms, each employee must be given the opportunity to freely express themselves about their life at work and their expectations.
These generally, but not exclusively, relate to:

- the content of their work and the conditions in which they work,
- the opportunities for professional development,
- their understanding of organisational changes and changes to working methods,
- their work-life balance.

This Europe-wide agreement, defines a reference framework enabling the continuous improvement of quality of life in at work in every country and entity, through social dialogue and the enfranchisement of all stakeholders.

This agreement extends and supplements the commitments already made by GDF SUEZ in action plans relating to the Group's agreements on Health & Safety and gender equality in the workplace.

[1] Definition of health specified in the Introduction to the Constitution of the World Health Organisation

ARTICLE 1: SCOPE OF THE AGREEMENT

This agreement applies to all fully consolidated subsidiaries of GDF SUEZ and those which are more than 50% owned, subject to compliance with the criterion of dominant influence in the EU and EFTA (European Free Trade Association).

It will also be distributed to subsidiaries within European Union candidate countries which will have to comply with its clauses once they join the European Union. However, if prior to that time it is requested by a company's trade union organisation, a meeting will be organised with that company's Management in order to discuss the possibility of a voluntary application of this agreement.

ARTICLE 2: PURPOSE OF THE AGREEMENT

The purpose of this agreement is to encourage initiatives for improving quality of life at work, this includes:

- encouraging employees to express expectations and views of their quality of life at work,
- increasing every employee's awareness and understanding of issues relating to quality of life at work for themselves and others,
- ensuring that all managers, from directors to local managerial staff, are actively involved in the managerial issues relating to quality of life at work,
- placing quality of life at work at the centre of organised and defining social dialogue,
- providing a common framework enabling the identification of priority actions to be implemented.

ARTICLE 3: KEY ISSUES LINKED TO STRATEGIES FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF QUALITY OF LIFE AT WORK

In order to encourage initiatives to improve the quality of life at work, it is important to identify, through a systematic examination of several issues, the most significant employee expectations.

These expectations can relate to objective aspects determining the organisation of the company (1 & 2), to interpersonal relations (3 & 4) and to individual views and expectations (5 & 6).

The key issues are:

1. **The overall organisation of the company**: the existence and/or availability of organisational charts, various departments' missions and activities, rules of governance, operating procedures, the identification of risks linked to the nature of the company's activities, serious event management procedures etc.

2. **Working conditions and the content of work:** definition of roles and responsibilities, the scope and amount of activity, the degree of autonomy in the organisation of work, the variety of assignments and their suitability in terms of each person's skills, the physical work environment etc.

3. **Internal and external human relations at work**: social dialogue, awareness and sharing of the culture and values of the company, respect, being heard, recognition of work, participation in discussions and decisions, the psychological work environment (the detection of potential or actual situations where an employee may be isolated or harassed etc.). This attention to the quality of external human relations equally extends to subcontractors.

4. **Restructuring and change management** during organisational changes and/or the development of new methods and interconnections at work (the impact of information technology, remote work, work in "project mode" etc.), the reasons for and objectives of changes, the method of implementation, discussion at all levels of the organisation in accordance with the rights of employee representation bodies, feedback etc.

5. **Opportunities for fulfilment and professional development**: recognition and development of skills through training, practical exercises, participation in cross-cutting projects and communities of practice, career support and bolstering, knowledge and experience transmission (mentoring, tutoring and more), promotion opportunities etc.

6. **Work life balance**: the pace of work, working hours, respect for home life, access to local services (shops, transport, recreation etc.)

ARTICLE 4: METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL ACTION PLANS

Within each entity management will put together a multidisciplinary team in order to carry out their "quality of life at work" initiatives.

This multi-disciplinary team will be made up of:

- Management on one hand,
- and employee representatives on the other: trade union representatives and/or the Works Council and/or health and safety monitoring bodies, as per the rules and procedures which apply to their entity and country,
- It will be supported by qualified persons such as: health and safety and human resources experts, occupational doctors, social workers, psychologists, occupational therapists etc.).

The whole strategy is undertaken by the multidisciplinary team in accordance with the three stages described below:

1. **Share ideas on each of the 6 areas listed in article 3 of this agreement in order that:**
   - each member of the multidisciplinary team have a good **understanding and internalisation** of individual expectations of quality of life at work,
   - **and that a diagnostic** of their entity's situation **be developed**.

   The conditions in which employees carry out their work, their ability to express themselves and have an impact on the content of their work are determining factors in

the perception of quality of life at work. The diagnostic will therefore systematically include an analysis of the policies, practices, procedures and tools which currently allow employees to express their views and expectations regarding their life at work (examples to help develop the diagnostic are provided in appendix 1).

This diagnostic is comprised of all relevant and existing social indicators within the entity (cf. appendix 2 for examples of these indicators).

Particular attention must be paid to psychosocial risk factors.

2. **Identify steps to be taken:** each entity defines its action plan in line with the diagnostic which has been drawn-up and circulated. This action plan includes monitoring indicators and an implementation schedule.

   In particular, it must contain specific steps with the aim of reinforcing or establishing mechanisms via which employees can express their views and expectations regarding their quality of life at work. Examples are the labour relations barometer, the commitment survey, internal or external employee feedback systems, regular team meetings etc.

   Each Group entity will define the most appropriate scope and procedures for the implementation of these steps, which necessarily take place over the long term, that is, over several years.

   Each entity must have carried out the first two stages (diagnostic, collection of expectations and action plans) of the initiative over the course of 2015. This initiative will be repeated according to a regular cycle defined in each entity.

   Entities will ensure they construct an ambitious action plan that is consistent with the diagnostic.

   Those that have already instituted actions contributing to quality of life at work will verify over the course of 2015 whether or not these actions need to be developed with regard to the 6 key issues listed in article 3. This stage (verification and any additional work) is undertaken by the multidisciplinary team in a quest for continuous improvement.

3. **Ensure the monitoring and feedback of the action plan** in order to measure effectiveness and carry out any corrections that may be necessary. This monitoring takes place once a year.

ARTICLE 5: COMMITMENT FROM THE GROUP'S MANAGEMENT IN TERMS OF COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

The GDF SUEZ Management ensures that this agreement be communicated to the Group's stakeholders:

- its managers and managers so that they are actively involved in the managerial aspects of improving quality of life at work,
- all of its employees, each of whom is responsible for their own and others' quality of life at work. Communication will be provided in all the necessary languages,
- the human resources and health and safety divisions, as advisors and support for managers overseeing and improving their teams' working conditions,

- staff representatives and trade union organisations, as key participants in social dialogue,
- suppliers and sub-contractors, encouraging them to apply the principles of this agreement with their own employees and informing them that any conditions observed which are not in line with this ethos, could endanger their commercial relationship with the Group.

The Management of Business Line undertakes to ensure that this agreement is rolled out within its Business Units and entities belonging to the scope defined in article 1, in a form that is adapted to the context and can be subject to negotiation.

In addition, in order to encourage the implementation of the agreement, it will be launched at a European seminar that will be organised within 6 months of the signing of this agreement in cooperation with European trade union federations. This seminar will bring together the social partners, management and representatives from the Human Resources and Health and Safety divisions.

ARTICLE 6: NON-REGRESSION CLAUSE

The clauses in this agreement cannot under any circumstances constitute a reason for reducing the obligations relating to quality of life at work already provided for by national, European legislation and/or local collective agreements.

ARTICLE 7: EFFECTIVENESS AND DURATION OF THE AGREEMENT

This Agreement shall enter into force on the date of its signature.

The agreement is entered into for an unlimited period.

ARTICLE 8: MONITORING OF THE AGREEMENT

This agreement is monitored by a commission made up of 15 members who meet once a year. As far as possible, the commission will be made up of an equal number of men and women.

In the case of a grievance (non-compliance with the agreement and its application) if local discussion processes have not resulted in a solution, the case can be presented to the European Federations with all the relevant documents. A meeting will then be organised between a delegation from the European Federations and Management, in order to examine the case and decide the appropriate measures to be taken in order to resolve the grievance.

The members are appointed by the European trade union federations that have signed this agreement, upon the proposal by the trade union organisations in the different countries.

ARTICLE 9: INTERPRETATION AND REVISION OF THE AGREEMENT

This agreement will be translated into the languages within the scope of the application of the agreement.

It is agreed that only the version written in French (signed version) is valid for the parties.

Questions of interpretation relating to this agreement fall under the remit of the monitoring commission mentioned in article 8.

The signing parties may revise this agreement in accordance with a period of notice of 3 months and by inviting a special negotiation group appointed by the signatory European trade union federations.

ARTICLE 10: FILING OF THE AGREEMENT

This agreement will be filed with the DIRECCTE (Regional Work, Employment and Vocational Training Department) in Paris, under whose jurisdiction the head office of GDF SUEZ is located.
A copy will also be filed with the labour tribunal, whose jurisdiction the GDF SUEZ head offices fall within.

27 / 11 / 2014

In order for GDF SUEZ SA and its subsidiaries to meet the conditions defined in Article 1 of the Agreement:

The Chairman:

Gérard Mestrallet

And the two European trade union federations, duly authorised by their members:

EPSU	**IndustriAll Europe**
Jan Willem GOUDRIAAN	**Sylvain LEFEBVRE**

Were appointed to the Special Negotiation Body and participated in the negotiation meetings:

Germany: Herbert Frischmann
Belgium: Wilfried Gemels, Marc Roedolf, Peter Vanautrijve
Spain: José Luis Arrufat
France: Nelly Charriat, Isabelle Herchen, Yves Ledoux, Didier Michel, Marie-Hélène Notis, Arnauld Prigent, Jacky Rouchouse, Thomas Clain
Hungary: Sandor Daru
Italy: Antonino Mezzapelle
Norway: Gunn Heidi Jentoft
Poland: Leszek Kasinski
Romania: Daniel Glevan

APPENDIX 1: DIAGNOSTIC SUPPORT

Consideration of the methodology

This document is a diagnostic aid that the multidisciplinary team (as defined in article 4) can choose whether or not to draw on.

The multidisciplinary team must first take ownership of the agreement and share the objectives of the strategy. It is desirable to share out the organisational arrangements for discussion among the multidisciplinary team (contribution, planning, decision-making methods, information provided etc.).

In terms of methodology, the entity chooses the diagnostic development method that seems the most relevant to its context and any existing elements. It ensures the best use of existing information and studies to carry out the diagnostic, including those expressing the direct expectations of employees.

Finally, the multidisciplinary team analyses the various data and determines different strengths and areas for improvement for each of the six themes identified by the agreement. The action plan is then put together by highlighting one or more priority actions per theme.

To help the multidisciplinary team to prioritise the actions, the latter can use an analytical framework to position them according to the following two dimensions: ease of implementation and impact. So the ideas that are easy to implement and produce the greatest impact will be more readily apparent from this analysis grid.

Details about the content

The diagnostic should review each of the 6 themes.

1. The general organisation of the company

This theme is designed to open up the possibility for an employee to access information about the strategy, issues, organisations, regulatory methods and processes of the Group, Branch, BU or entity.

So this might be, for example, asking if there are flow charts or documents presenting the tasks of services/departments within the entity. It is also important to check if there are procedures and work processes. This information may take the form of articles in a journal or a newsletter distributed to employees of the entity.

Examples:
Have you made charts and information about the general operation of the business available to employees?

Is line management based in the same location as you? If not, how many times a year do you meet?

Do you stay regularly informed about the life of your entity through meetings or communication tools? Projects, challenges?

Are there procedures for risk management and more specifically in the case of management of serious events: fatal accidents, suicides, harassment, assault, burn-out, etc.?
…

2. The content of work and working conditions

This theme seeks to gain an insight into the understanding and expectations of employees regarding their assignments and activities and the conditions under which they carry these out: physical or psychological conditions.

Examples:
Does each employee have an annual appraisal (setting missions, goals and resources)?

Do some employees have to carry out their work under conditions involving the presence of factors that may be hazardous to health (chemicals, dust, noise, etc.)?

Does the activity of certain employees lead to difficult or awkward postures? Have improvements been put in place or considered?

Can employees express opinions about the organisation of their activity?

Are those employees who have frequent customer relationships trained to receive requests?

Do employees have the means to enable them to carry out their work (balanced workload /resources)?
…

3. Internal and external human and working relations

This theme focuses on the existence of social dialogue within the entity. The aim is to measure the ability of employees to express their views and be recognised.

Examples:
Are regular meetings between employees and managers/ supervisors (team meetings, appraisals) planned in order to set goals, check progress and identify the resources required (training, work placement...), in particular when the workplace of the manager and team are different?

Is there an integration process for new employees to make it easier for them to take up their new post?

Are you mindful of the well-being of your colleagues/employees/contractors?

Should the selection of subcontractors be subject to an examination of the behaviour of businesses towards their own personnel?

Are training/tasks for raising awareness with management offered?

Are cooperation and discussions between teams encouraged within your organisation?
Within your entity, is there an ethos of kindness, and in particular, acceptance of errors?
Does your entity encourage a good atmosphere?
…

4. Transformation and change management

In this chapter, things like the mechanisms for information, communication or training during organisational changes or development of new ways of working (development of tools, etc.) are identified.

Examples:
If your entity has experienced or is experiencing organisational changes / developments in working methods, how are employees made aware of these plans and their steps? How are they able to discuss the project?

In a context of change, is there a process for listening to and supporting staff (training, regular information, monitoring etc.)?

Are you able to express yourself on the organisation or reorganisation of work?
…

5. Opportunities for achievement and professional development

This area identifies existing approaches or those that need consolidating for supporting the recognition and development of employees' skills.

Examples:
Does a system for the publication of the jobs available in your entity/business unit exist?

Are there regularly scheduled appraisals between employees and managers to discuss requirements for support, desires/needs for change and remuneration?

Are employees valued for a job well done?

6. Creating a work/life balance

In this section the things considered include work schedules and meeting times. Access to local services (nurseries etc.) may be also identified.

Examples:
Does your entity allow access to local services (nursery, transportation, sports, local shops, etc.)?

Is there a charter for meetings and the proper use of I.T. tools, particularly email?

Are employees regularly asked to work overtime?
Are working hours flexible?

Is there any consideration for family commitments and personal aspirations in the work organisation?

To what extent does your company take into account of travel difficulties (e.g. travel time, work trips)?

APPENDIX 2: EXAMPLES OF DIAGNOSTIC INDICATORS

To carry out the diagnostic phase, the multidisciplinary team identifies relevant indicators:

- those existing already and appearing in social reporting (non-financial), including the health and safety field,

- those to be initiated during the diagnostic process provided they are easy to put together.

Examples of indicators that can be used during the diagnostic phase:

The general organisation of the company
Existence of communication tools across the entity: number of meetings, number of publications of communication resources
…
The content of work and working conditions
Rate of extra paid hours/hours worked
Absenteeism
Rate of accidents at work
Number of people usually or regularly exposed to noise (> 80 dB)
…
Internal and external human and working relations
Number of meetings with employee representatives
Existence of an annual appraisal
…
Transformation and change management
Existence of communication to employees (document or meeting) if organisational changes are planned
Number of briefings about development projects
…
Opportunities for achievement and professional development
Number of employees promoted in a year
Rate of trained employees
Existence of a publication place for internal vacancies available
…

Creating a work/life balance
Existence of a charter on working hours
Availability of services nearby
Possibility of flexible hours
…