



Professional and managerial staff want a voice...

Why not yours?

Social elections • 9 > 22 May 2016





Sociale verkiezingen

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A job that suits you perfectly

Do you have a job with a significant degree of autonomy, variation and interesting contacts? Do you like to take the initiative and steer projects in the right direction? That's a good thing. Enthusiastic employees often have a clear view on how to improve the working environment, both for the employees and for the company.

Professional and managerial staff are employees as well, with their specific wishes and concerns: a fair and transparent salary, a harmonious balance between professional and personal life, a qualitative, ethical and sustainable working environment, etc.

Approximately 20% of the employees' group are 'professional and managerial staff'. However, terminology differs: middle management, higher management, professional, ... Sometimes this vagueness is used to exclude a significant group of employees from agreements resulting from the social dialogue. Undeservedly. After all, professional and managerial staff deserve respect and appreciation as well. Involvement and social dialogue are part of that.

Even before I became an employee representative, I had respect for the trade unions, even if I was fully committed to the company and the results. Throughout the years, I became increasingly convinced that good social conditions are an essential part of this. I felt the need to throw my weight behind it. Moreover, there was nobody at central services with Carrefour who represented LBC-NVK. My candidature was received enthusiastically .

Professional and managerial staff, who are very much involved in the company, are just as socially aware as other employees. But they tend to conceal it, because they are afraid that they will miss out on promotion opportunities or suffer a loss of their variable remuneration. **Fortunately there are many managers who realise that a good relationship between the staff and the social partners is beneficial to the entire company. And that professional and managerial staff has a role to play in this respect.**



Michel DEKENS (Carrefour)

The power of people

The power of people can be found in teambuilding and synergy. Those who are able to convey enthusiasm, inspire their teammates and create commitment and success. A good atmosphere at work is based on teamwork and mutual respect.

There is no such thing as “a bit of confidence”. It’s all or nothing. Proper social dialogue that includes professional and managerial staff and their concerns is an essential building block. That is why an increasing number of managers feel that good company results go hand in hand with good social dialogue. Socially aware professional and managerial staff becoming actively involved in a trade union are a vital link to success.



My trade union career started when I noticed that white-collar workers and professional and managerial staff were treated differently in our company. Although at times these differences were very subtle, they often had far-reaching consequences.

Thanks to our joint efforts with the trade unions, these differences have been partly eliminated. Nowadays, professional and managerial staff can also work part-time if they want to. In the past, that was considered “not done” for professional and managerial staff. It was regarded as a lack of motivation.

But there is still a long way to go. Nowadays, I am committed to breaking the taboo of stress and burnout. **Many professional and managerial staff have to cope with the effects of too much workload and I think this issue should be permanently on the agenda.** This way, the management will actually tackle these problems instead of merely complying with the formal legal obligations. Hence, a trade union delegation of professional and managerial staff is no luxury.



Christine VAN DE VELDE
(Arcelor Mittal)

When I was a junior professional, I considered the trade union a burden.

However, the more experience I gained in management positions and in consultation with the trade unions, the more I began to see the added value of a well-functioning trade union. The trade union helps to ensure that employees feel at ease in the company and touches on difficulties that can be solved in an early stage because of this. In many companies it may be normal for professional and managerial staff to be members of a trade union, but in the energy industry, this was not the case until a few years ago. The professional and managerial staff themselves did not think it was necessary, either, because they earned an attractive salary, the workload was bearable, and they had job security. But all of this has changed considerably. That is why I decided to participate in the previous social elections. **In my capacity as trade union representative I now assist my fellow professional and managerial staff by providing correct information and I raise their problems and questions with the management.**

Karel DE LAET (Elia)

A changing working environment

The growing world-wide competition and fast technological progress have considerably increased the workload. Jobs and working conditions are almost permanently changing. Professional and managerial staff, both supervisors and highly qualified professionals, have an important role to play in these changes. Their specific position causes them to be closer to the management and at the same time well-informed about what is happening within the company.

Their position in between the management and the operational staff offers opportunities to achieve well-balanced progress, both for the company and for the employees. Professional and managerial staff can make a difference.

As a liaison between the hospital and schools, I am committed to the organisation and planning of internships by students from various disciplines: nurses, caretakers, childcare, teachers and logistics assistants. **I love the contact with the students, the schools and the representatives of the different entities.** My job is more varied now than it was when I was a senior nurse.

When the hospitals of Dinant and Mont-Godinne merged, I became a trade union activist. The works council is an essential platform to exchange information and to gain insight into the way the hospital operates.

The hospital professional and managerial staff, in particular the senior nurses and heads of department, have to cope with stress and many other problems: i.e. the harmonisation of salary and employment conditions of professional and managerial staff after the merger. **As their representative, I raise the issues the professional and managerial staff are dealing with in the workplace with the management.**



Sophie COUVREUR (CHU Dinant Godinne)



I have worked in the R&D department of a pharmaceutical company for 13 years. We develop new medicines that will be launched on the market. I love my job because it is varied: I establish contacts with many people in different departments and for different projects. I learn something new every day. Recently we developed a mathematical model that explains how a medicine is absorbed into the body.

In 2012 I participated in the social elections because I was shocked by the impact of the 2009 and 2010

reorganisations. I was elected as a member of the Works Council and the Committee for Prevention and Protection in the Workplace (CPBW) and I am very glad to be able to defend our collective interests against the management. This is necessary, as there was another reorganisation in 2014 and we had to work for better severance pay and internal relocation of as many colleagues as possible.

Nathalie TOUBLANC (UCB)

About 8 years ago, a colleague asked me to participate in the social elections. "You know a lot of people and you have a high level of social awareness". I thought this was a nice compliment, so I went to the meeting of the trade union activists. Nice people and all equally committed.

These past 8 years have not always been easy. Negotiating and consulting with your employer is not always an obvious thing to do, and sometimes you must dare to go against them. But with the support of the LBC-NVK officers we always got through it. We are not always successful, but still, we frequently make things happen. **I enjoy informing my fellow professional and managerial staff about things I have been able to achieve for them.**



Furthermore, I have helped a lot of colleagues on an individual level with questions concerning remuneration, rights and obligations in case of dismissal, etc.

Monique VANWALLEGHEM
(Colruyt Group Services)

A strong trade union - with professional and managerial staff.

Every 4 years social elections are held, in which employees elect their representatives for the social dialogue. Social elections are key in the social dialogue between employers and employees. In May 2016, employees will again elect their representatives for the Works Council, for the CPBW and in some cases for the trade union delegation as well. Through these consultative bodies, employees are given a voice in the company – ranging from agreements on working hours, workload or holidays to consultations on financial and economic policy choices.

Integrated approach

The wishes and concerns of professional and managerial staff are mostly connected to other things. Very often they are part of a set of demands relating to remuneration and employment conditions. That is why the interests of professional and managerial staff are promoted together with those of other employees, wherever possible.

An extensive network of trade union officers and service providers aspires to quality, expertise and support. But in addition to this support framework, the professional and managerial staff themselves make a lot of efforts. By creating networks, they establish new contacts and exchange knowledge and experience that are useful for the social dialogue and the provision of services.

This networking trade union action makes everybody stronger.

A specific structure

The National Union for Professional and managerial staff (NVK) is the network promoting the specific interests of professional and managerial staff and is a major additional asset in trade union work and social dialogue. Through the NVK, ACV-CSC brings together the representatives of professional and managerial staff in order to discuss specific issues. Together with representatives of other employee groups, ACV-CSC creates solidarity between all employees without losing sight of the specific interests of the professional and managerial staff.

More information about the NVK network can be found on www.nvk.be

Choose a representative trade union: ACV-CSC

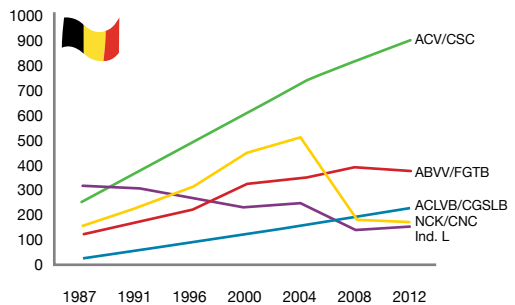
In companies with at least 15 professional and managerial staff, a separate electoral college elects professional and managerial representatives for the Works Council. Only professional and managerial staff can submit their candidature and cast their vote. This ensures their presence in the Works Council. In addition to the three main trade unions, the National Confederation of Professional and managerial staff (NCK) can also nominate candidates for the electoral lists of professional and managerial staff, and independent company lists are allowed as well. Being a 'representative trade union', ACV-CSC offers an important added value. As ACV-CSC represents all groups of workers, close collaboration within the company is possible. This is in everyone's interest, because it strengthens the employees' position. Furthermore, ACV-CSC is represented in the National Labour Council and in the sectoral joint committees, where important collective agreements on remuneration and employment conditions are made.

And there is more: ACV-CSC offers support through a wide range of training, services and experts. They help you understand and evaluate the figures and proposals from the employer's side.

ACV-CSC ensures collaboration within the company between all employee representatives as well as democratically developed stands and opinions.

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As a contract design & management advisor at Sodexo, I meet colleagues employed both at headquarter and regional level every day. This way I keep myself informed about what is going on in the company. Furthermore, I have gained a lot of experience in various positions. First as a blue-collar worker, then as a white-collar worker and now as a professional. That's an asset as well. After all, it is not always easy to be a professional and a trade union representative at the same time. **You continuously have to compromise and try to find a good balance between the well-being of the employees and the regulations laid down by the company.** That is why I always listen to both parties.



In 2008 I participated in the social elections for the first time. **I have always thought it is important for employees to have a contact point within the company** where they can be informed about the company and where they can be helped with their questions about their employment relationship. As a trade union representative, I have many different responsibilities: welcoming new employees into the company, advising colleagues who wish to enter into the regime of unemployment with company allowance (SWT, replacing early retirement) and striving for better remuneration and employment conditions.

Specific issues concerning professional and managerial staff

Social dialogue is never over. The context in which professional and managerial staff work is continuously changing. Consequently, the issues we are working on change as well. After all, professional and managerial staff are the ones who actually perform the trade union activities, be it in thematic work groups or in officially recognised bodies. Some of the issues dealt with include...

● CORRECT REMUNERATION

Maybe your salary cannot be found in a clear and formal job classification system and pay scale. Your salary and possible bonuses are the result of your performance and assessments. The figures or targets you must reach are regularly revised. Through social dialogue you can help determine the rules for the entire group of professional and managerial staff and employees, instead of leaving that process entirely to the employer. By doing so, you avoid the risk of being on your own.

● FEASIBLE WORKING HOURS

You probably love your job and you insist on autonomy. But maybe you have very high job demands and because of time constraints you are flexible when it comes to the legal working hours. You know about colleagues and friends who have to cope with work-related stress, a difficult combination between professional and private life or even a burnout. Or maybe you were in one of those situations

yourself at some point in the past. Many professional and managerial staff suffer from work-related stress and want an arrangement to be made with respect to their working hours. Through social dialogue it is possible to discuss this and to come to an agreement to keep the workload acceptable.

● ETHICAL WORKING ENVIRONMENT

The world around us is changing fast and is becoming increasingly complex. As a professional or managerial staff you are the first to experience those fast social and economic changes. Managing the flow of information, working more efficiently and innovating faster are some of the leading concepts that will sound familiar to you. Companies respond to these changes and impose ever-higher demands. More than once you are wedged between loyalty to the company and a sense of justice telling you to perform your job in an ethical way. Compliance, integrity... these are issues that we, as a trade union, need to tackle.

Questions, doubts? We are here for you!

Taking on a trade union commitment is not something you do on an impulse. You probably have a number of questions. Can I combine a mandate as a representative with my job? Will I still have enough time to do my job properly? Will I miss out on promotions? How will my employer react? What about my colleagues? What kind of support will ACV-CSC give me?

It is normal, and even important, to ask these questions. **But also ask yourself where you get your social conscience from.** What do you consider unfair? What do you want to achieve for your colleagues, together with other representatives? How do you want to do this?

Many professional and managerial staff have already taken up the gauntlet, without regret. Through the activities for professional and managerial staff within ACV-CSC, you can build a network with other representatives who can support and assist you based on their own experience. Moreover, we provide the necessary training to strengthen your expertise in different fields.

Do you have any questions? Would you like to talk to someone? Do not hesitate to contact us via socialevekiezingen@acv-csc.be or kader@acv-csc.be. Or get in touch with Sandra Vercammen and Jan De Paepe at +32 3 220 87 37

Professional and managerial staff, an added value in the social dialogue!

- Do you recognise the passion as well as the individual fight of each professional and managerial staff and the associated risks?
- Do you also wonder whether things could be done differently?
- Do you also think that the interests of the professional and managerial staff members could be served better by joining forces?
- Do you wish to be at the helm of social change?

ACV-CSC gives you the opportunity, through the social elections, to take on an important role : cooperate, consult, negotiate, take action.

After all, having a say in the company makes it possible to do things that benefit everyone: professional and managerial staff, employees and the entire society.

What does ACV-CSC have to offer?

Representatives never stand alone. Trade union work implies joint efforts. You will have the help of other representatives in the company and other industries whenever possible. But you can expect a lot more:

- **Support by the trade union officer**
He/she is your coach and will support you in the performance of your trade union mandate. By being present at the representatives' meeting, mediating in internal conflicts, coaching, explaining and analysing company files.
- **Training will familiarise you with the trade union work**
We provide a comprehensive training about the activities of the Works Council, the CPBW and the trade union delegation. But also about broader social issues. In addition, trade unions also provide training for people who are not elected. The ACV-CSC training is mostly organised through a special leave granted to trade unionists. In this context, agreements with the employers are in place, so that participants do not suffer loss of earnings.
- **Information**
ACV-CSC provides all necessary information about the functioning of consultative bodies, social legislation, the headquarters, internal procedures (actions, strikes, etc.). You will receive the biweekly journal 'Vakbeweging' for free.
- **Services**
To support your trade union work, you can rely on ACV-CSC services (legal service, employment service, department for contributions, etc.).
- **Involvement**
You have a say in the preparation of demand packages, collective bargaining agreements (at company and industry level) and in all meetings. You will receive all necessary information.
- **Protection:**
It is highly exceptional that activists have difficulties with their employer because of their commitment or when taking industrial actions. If this was to be the case, you can count on ACV-CSC's unconditional support for trade union and legal assistance.
- **Expert assistance**
ACV-CSC has a regional network of safety experts to give CPBW members expert advice in case of technical problems relating to work safety. ACV-CSC can count on financial experts to familiarise Works Council members with the financial information relating to their company. They will help you interpret financial statements and balance sheets correctly and compare the situation in your company with that of competitors. Furthermore, they are authorised to attend Works Council meetings.

An ACV-CSC commitment is not free of obligations

- **I am prepared to listen to the questions of colleagues**

ACV-CSC representatives are open to complaints and concerns of colleagues. They deal with these questions and complaints in the best possible manner by offering services and information or by referring them to the most suitable person or body.

- **I translate the wishes and concerns of colleagues**

ACV-CSC representatives are the voice of employees and colleagues, not only with the employer but also with the ACV-CSC representatives and within the ACV-CSC bodies. This voice is of great importance in democratic trade union action.

- **ACV-CSC is an organisation with clear values**

- You can find more information about the fundamental values and the “mission” of ACV-CSC on our website, with the specific conclusions of ACV-CSC congresses and administrations. In a nutshell, we are a trade union that stands up for all employees – working and not working - and that is open to people of all philosophical and religious convictions. We are a free trade union, independent from employers and political policy. We want to offer a constructive countervailing power, fighting for solidarity and a democratic society. Based on mutual solidarity we work on the emancipation and development of all employees, a better and fair society and sustainable development.
- We attach great importance to the dignity of each individual and not to structures. We dedicate ourselves to the weakest individuals, to equal opportunities, to participation, tolerance, public healthcare, decent work, a

proper income, international solidarity, control over one’s own job, involvement in decisions at work, more training opportunities. We are opposed to a fragmented society, with on the one hand people who can keep up and on the other those who cannot. That is why we insist on a fair distribution of joys and burdens.

- We are an active and militant trade union and we operate always according to our own approach. The first step that leads to a wide support is information and raising awareness. We confer where possible and take action where necessary.
- For all those reasons, there is no room in ACV-CSC for people who cooperate with the extreme right movement or with groups that make racist or discriminating statements or discriminate other people. Neither does ACV-CSC welcome people who bully colleagues or make use of violence.
- **Actively cooperating with ACV-CSC**
- ACV-CSC representatives are active members of ACV-CSC who participate in the decision-making process within the trade union delegation of their company and beyond. They make their voices heard whenever something needs to be decided. And they implement the democratically defined actions and stands afterwards.
- Elected representatives of ACV-CSC actually take on their mandates and attend the meetings of the committee or the Works Council whenever possible. ACV-CSC helps them to perform this mandate with proper training.
- Active members and representatives of ACV-CSC remain members and regularly pay the membership fee.

Interested?

Visit www.wordacvkandidaat.be or send us the form below

- YES, I am interested in a candidature for**
- the Works Council
 - the Committee for Prevention and Protection in the Workplace
- Yes, I am interested, but I would first like to have**
- more information
 - a meeting with an ACV-CSC representative

Ms. Mr.

Name		First name:	
Address:		No:	Box:
Postal code:	City:		
Telephone:		Cell phone:	
E-mail:			

I am a blue-collar worker white-collar worker professional and managerial staff

My company/institution

Address:		No:	Box:
Postal code:	City:		

I return the completed form to the ACV-CSC representative in my company or send it to the ACV-CSC – Dienst Onderneming, Haachtsesteenweg 579, 1030 Brussel. I can also fax the form to 02/246.30.10 or mail it to socialeverkiezingen@acv-csc.be

We will contact you as soon as possible.

ACV-CSC respects the privacy law.