



elections for
employee representatives

a complete A to Z

SOCIAL
ELECTIONS
2012

I participate!

In any company, there are things you would want to see change, things you could improve and others that, quite frankly, do not work at all. There are also things that go well, which are necessary for the well-being of the workers and which must be preserved at any price.



Employees

There are many issues concerning your place of work that gnaw at you and you feel the need to act. You are concerned by what is happening within your company. You would like to improve your colleagues' quality of work. So becoming a staff representative is a challenge for you.



Managerial people

As a member of the managerial staff, you sometimes have small benefits, which some of your other colleagues do not enjoy. However ... this title of executive is sometimes a heavy one to bear because they are always asking more of you and you may not necessarily benefit from the advances that employees have managed to obtain.



Young people

You are still on the threshold of your working life and you still have many years of work ahead of you. You are therefore directly affected by what is happening at work ... (and for quite a while!)

Elections for employee representatives are an opportunity for you to be heard where you work. Here you will find an outline of what you need to know about elections for employee representatives. Having your voice and that of your colleagues heard: a tempting challenge for you? Then what follows will certainly be of interest to you...



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What exactly are elections for employee representative?

Elections for employee representatives are an opportunity for you to choose the people who will represent you with the employer. It is the time when those who will be your representatives on the collective bargaining committees and who will conduct the dialogue between management and labour within the company will be elected. In Belgium, elections for employee representatives are organised every four years in every company that has 50 or more workers.

A WELL-REHEARSED PROCEDURE

Elections for employee representatives are a well-rehearsed decision-making process comprising different rules that must be respected. Elections for employee representatives are held in several stages. From the outset, you will be protected as a potential candidate against redundancy. If you would like to put yourself forward as a candidate, you need to contact SETCa/BBTK (Belgian trade union for employees, technicians and managers). Your application will be attached to a specific list corresponding to your staff grade. Voting day is a decisive moment. Voting in elections for employee representatives is an important right and a defining act within the company. Don't let your voice go unheard and use it advisedly! Let your colleagues know...

Am I protected against redundancy?

Yes! As a candidate, you are protected against redundancy, even if you are not elected at the elections for employee representatives. Protection of representatives is guaranteed, which means that staff representatives are able to fulfil their duties entirely independently. This protection prevents the employer from making any candidate or anyone elected to the Works Council or CPPT/CPBW redundant. This protection will take effect on 8 January 2012.

I have never been active in a trade union and I know nothing about employment legislation. How would I be able to defend my colleagues?

As a representative, you are not alone! You are surrounded by an entire team: colleagues who are already highly experienced representatives, trade union officials, etc. Being a representative is something you learn. SETCa/BBTK is there to support and assist you. Furthermore, we organise regular training courses to provide you with the fundamentals so that you can start immediately. You will gradually acquire the legal knowledge and expertise, through experience ...

Are there conditions?

To become a staff representative on a Works Council or on a committee for prevention and protection at the workplace (CPPT/CPBW), you need to put yourself forward for election as an employee representative. In order to be a candidate, you need to comply with certain conditions:

- ▶ Have an employment contract with the company or be assimilated to a worker of equivalent grade;
- ▶ Be over 18 and under 65 years old;
- ▶ Not be part of the managerial staff;
- ▶ Not be a prevention advisor;
- ▶ Have worked in the company for at least 6 months.

If you match these criteria and you would like to submit your application to be a candidate, you should follow the procedure that applies here.

Why choose SETCa/BBTK?

EMPLOYEES

The elections for employee representatives are an opportunity for you to be heard where you work. To become a staff representative on the Works Council and the committee for prevention and protection at the workplace is to have a real right of scrutiny of what is happening.

MANAGERIAL PEOPLES

Many executives do (too) many hours, are not rewarded accordingly and, moreover, are seldom represented by a trade union. Employers cleverly use current legislation to exclude them from certain laws and collective bargaining agreements that apply to other employees. SETCa/BBTK can help you make your voice heard and that of your fellow managers.

YOUNG PEOPLE

As a young employee, your motivation, your focus of interest, your expectations as well as your fears about work are different to those of an older worker. And that's completely normal: almost all your working life is ahead of you! SETCa/BBTK can help you improve the quality of work and the rights of young people within your company.

SETCa/BBTK is an organisation that is concerned about building a fairer, more united society. Our priorities are to guarantee the young and the not so young a calm and happy future, to hold on to jobs, to maintain social benefits and to provide good pay and working conditions. SETCa/BBTK is also a dynamic team, willing to listen, and will help you through the good times as well as at times of crisis.

How do you manage your time if you're a representative?

When you're a representative, the employer must give you the wherewithal to be able to discharge your duties attaching to the post and to fulfil your brief. These provisions are often laid down in the standing orders or in a collective bargaining agreement. The periods of time spent on union business are regarded as working time and paid at normal work rates.

Works Council or Committee for Prevention and Protection at the Workplace: how do they differ?

The Works Council and the Committee for Prevention and Protection at the Workplace are both consultation bodies between employers and workers. They each have very distinct terms of reference.

THE WORKS COUNCIL

A Works Council must be set up in any company employing 100 workers or more. It consists of employee and employer representatives. The Works Council:

- ▶ Receives all information and is consulted about the company's economic and financial situation as well as about jobs;
- ▶ Draws up and modifies employment regulations;
- ▶ Manages the company's charitable works;
- ▶ Discusses anything that concerns the life of the company, working conditions, holiday dates, the introduction of new technologies, severance criteria, ...
- ▶ Ensures laws and agreements, etc. are applied

THE COMMITTEE FOR PREVENTION AND PROTECTION AT THE WORKPLACE (CPPT/CPBW)

A Committee for Prevention and Protection at the Workplace must be set up in any company that has 50 employees or more.

The Committee for Prevention and Protection at the Workplace :

- ▶ Ensures that health and safety conditions are improved;
- ▶ Is involved in the prevention of accidents at the workplace;
- ▶ Ensures that occupational health services are implemented, etc.
- ▶ The Committee for Prevention and Protection at the Workplace is also involved in monitoring the working atmosphere. It ensure that there is sufficient quality and protective equipment (clothing, safety goggles, etc.) and investigates individual complaints concerning safety and welfare.



9/12/2011

→ 22/12/2011

procedure
starts

8/01/2012

→ 21/01/2012

protection
starts

7/02/2012

→ 20/02/2012

preliminary
posting

13/03/2012

→ 26/03/2012

lists of candidates
submitted

7/05/2012

→ 20/05/2012

elections

When the dates of electoral proceedings coincide with a Sunday or a normal non-working day in the company, the operation must be carried out the day before this Sunday or normal non-working day at the latest.

with SETCa/BBTK,

I want to have my voice heard!

yes,

I want to have my voice heard at the next elections for employee representatives as a SETCa/BBTK candidate! I would like SETCa/BBTK to contact me to make my application to stand official.

Firstname & lastname

Adress

Phone number

E-mail

My SETCa/BBTK office

My Company

I want to receive SETCa/BBTK's newsletter

You're thinking about applying, but you don't know whom to contact? Do you have questions about this? Please don't hesitate to contact your SETCa/BBTK regional section. They will be able to offer you guidance and advice.



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SETCa/BBTK has
21 regional sections,
all across Belgium.

You can find the addresses
of our other offices on
www.setca.org or
www.bbtk.org

www.socver2012.be

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