

Chapter 7

Does training make a difference?

The two preceding chapters have shown that neither measures to articulate EWCs with other institutions of labour representation nor trade union activities have overcome the shortcomings of the Directive and Recast. Those who saw potential in the EWC legislation viewed training as a further means by which the impact of legislative shortcomings could be mitigated (Gohde 1995). In addition, it was acknowledged that, as EWCs were innovative institutions, training would be required for representatives in order that they may undertake a new range of functions specific to EWCs (Miller et al. 2000). While it was recognised that negotiation and representation skills were, to a degree, transferable from national practice, initially language training, knowledge of different industrial relations systems, intercultural dialogue and training in the particulars of EWC legislation were all cited as specific to EWC participation and not generally available through national trade union training programmes (Stirling and Miller 1998; Miller 2002; Gilman and Marginson 2002). More recently, emphasis has been placed on training as a means of generating trust, creating transnational identity, promoting solidarity and establishing transnational communication systems among and between EWC representatives (Mählmeyer et al. 2017; Tully 2004; Föhrer and Erne 2017). This chapter examines the impact of training on the skills of EWC representatives and the performance of EWCs.

It was a source of considerable disappointment within trade union organisations that the Directive made no reference to training or the specific requirements of EWC representatives (Danis and Hoffmann 1995; Buschak 1999). Only Article 4 of the Dutch transposition of the Directive, *Wet op de Europese ondernemingsraden* (European Works Council Act, 1997), included an explicit training provision for EWC representatives.¹ In an apparently contradictory action, the Commission acknowledged the training requirements of EWC representatives in opening budget line B3 4004/B to provide financial support for the training of EWC representatives by trade union organisations. More than an estimated €100 million has been provided in support over 20 years through this and other budget lines.² While the extent of this support may

1. Article 4 of the Dutch transposition of the Directive states that '[i]n so far as is reasonably necessary for exercising their functions, they [EWC representatives] shall be afforded the possibility – during working hours and with their pay guaranteed – of taking part in reciprocal consultation and deliberations with other persons on matters concerning the performance of their duties and of undergoing education and training'.
2. During the 1990s, more than €10 million was spent annually on budget lines concerned with 'information, consultation and participation of representatives of undertakings'. After about 2000, the annual budget was of the order of €6 million to €8 million. These data are detailed in the various calls for proposals issued by the Commission. It should be noted, however, that all these sums were not spent exclusively on training, hence the estimate of €100 million. The establishment of networks, for example, was also funded through these budget lines.

have mitigated some of the disparities in resources between trade unions organisations, the opportunities for training among EWC representatives were initially uneven, as they were largely founded on national arrangements and were dependent upon the attitude of management towards training within each EWC. With EU enlargement, these disparities became more marked, as trade union training provisions in CEE were in the process of adaption to the market economy, were not yet embedded in industrial relations systems and were subject to marked limits in resources due to the relative lack of funds available to trade unions.

To address the absence of any reference to the right to training in the Directive, trade union organisations sought to include training provisions in EWC founding agreements. Initial research on these agreements indicated that between 23 per cent (Carley et al. 1996: 13) and 35 per cent (Marginson et al. 1998: 68) of Article 13 agreements included training provisions for EWC representatives. By 2005, the proportion of 703 'active' Article 13 and Article 6 agreements that made explicit provision for the training of EWC representatives had risen to 46 per cent (Cox 2005: 69), although only 28 per cent of 784 agreements extant in 2006 were reported as providing EWC representatives with access to training (Kerckhofs 2006: 61). Among the respondents to the 2007 survey, 56.3 per cent reported that the EWC agreement that formed their frame of reference included an entitlement to training,³ while 62.9 per cent of all respondents had attended at least one training event specific to their role as an EWC representative (Waddington 2011: 133). The most likely source of training in 2007 was from 'my union's education and training department', followed by training from 'a service organisation/consultancy associated with trade unions' and then 'a pan-European trade union organisation' (Waddington 2011: 134).⁴

BusinessEurope expressed no initial comment on the absence of training provisions from the Directive. At the EU-level conference held during April 1999, BusinessEurope spokespersons and managers with responsibility for EWCs within MNCs expressed doubts about the skills and capabilities of EWC representatives regarding strategic corporate decision-making (Kerckhofs 1999b), a view confirmed elsewhere by managerial sources (Lamers 1998; ORC 2007). The argument advanced was that the absence of appropriate skills slowed corporate decision-making. This argument constitutes a case for extended training provisions. As noted above, managers with responsibility for EWCs were prepared to sign EWC founding agreements that included training provisions as a means of addressing the perceived skills and capacity shortfall. Reflecting the congruence between the preference of trade union organisations for legislative underpinning to training provisions and the agreement by many managers within MNCs that training provisions be included in EWC founding agreements, a joint statement by the social partners entitled 'Lessons learned on European Works Councils' stated that 'investing in language as well as technical/content training helps to

3. A further 23.4 per cent of all respondents indicated that their agreement provided no entitlement to training and 20.3 per cent did not know if such an entitlement existed.

4. Among all EWC representatives, 44.7 per cent had attended training provided by their national union's education and training department, 18.7 per cent training provided by a service organisation or consultancy associated with trade unions, and 13.5 per cent training provided by pan-European trade union organisations.

optimise the functioning of the EWC and to reduce overall functioning costs. Ensuring the efficiency of such training actions is essential' (ETUC et al. 2005). At this juncture, however, BusinessEurope opposed any revision of the Directive, implying that any solution to the absence of training provisions should be sought on a company-by-company basis through EWC founding agreements, in practice ensuring that managers exercise control over the training provision.

When the revision of the Directive became more likely during 2007-2008 (see Chapter 2), two further developments affected the views of policy-makers on training. First, the preparatory study for an impact assessment of the Directive requested and endorsed by the Commission reported that managers thought that legal and financial training increased clarity among representatives regarding their role and responsibilities within EWCs (EPEC 2008). Second, a further joint statement by the social partners promoted training as a means of improving the effectiveness of EWCs (ETUC et al. 2008), although a letter from the Secretary General of BusinessEurope to the EU Commissioners' Heads of Cabinet reiterated that, while training should properly 'reinforce the means available to members of EWCs', their 'power should be confined within the company' (de Buck 2006). In short, training was identified by the social partners as an issue that was central to the development of EWCs, but there was no consensus on how the issue should be addressed in policy terms.

In light of the evidence favouring a training provision and encouraged by some alignment among the social partners, European policy-makers introduced a 'right to training' in Article 10(4) of the Recast, which states:

Insofar as this is necessary for the exercise of their representative duties in an international environment, the members of the special negotiating body and of the European Works Council shall be provided with training without loss of wages.

This right was elaborated by recital 33, which states that:

[...] employees' representatives must report to the employees whom they represent and must be able to receive the training they require.

European policy-makers thus remedied their error in excluding a training provision from the Directive. Indeed, by 2010, the Report of the Group of Experts conducted at the behest of the Commission claimed that the issue of training was 'not controversial' (European Commission 2010b: 43). In the light of the history of training provisions within EWCs, this claim was bold in the extreme. As this chapter demonstrates, this claim is also optimistic with regard to developments subsequent to the Recast.

The inclusion of a right to training in the Recast did not appear to have a direct effect on EWC founding agreements. In particular, the inclusion of Article 10(4) on training in the Recast failed to accelerate the rate of inclusion of training provisions in EWC founding agreements (De Spiegelaere and Waddington 2017). By 2015, however, 74 per cent of Article 6 agreements and 55 per cent of Article 13 agreements included provisions for EWC representatives to attend training (De Spiegelaere and Jagodziński

2015: 58). Of these agreements, 53 per cent included a general clause on training and 50 per cent of these specified the availability of language training (De Spiegelaere and Jagodziński 2015: 58). In other words, the increased inclusion of training provisions in EWC founding agreements appears to result from a learning curve among the signatories to agreements rather than a direct effect of the Recast. This is confirmed by managers responsible for EWCs, only 8 per cent of whom indicated that new training arrangements had been introduced as a direct result of the Recast (Waddington et al. 2016: 58). The higher proportion of EWC agreements containing training provisions has not reduced managers' criticisms of EWC representatives. In their view, EWC representatives' inadequate training in languages, skills and understanding business slows down corporate decision-making (Waddington et al. 2016: 36–38) and as an obstacle to effective transnational dialogue (Pulignano and Turk 2016). In practice, managers responsible for EWCs within MNCs want more training for EWC representatives. The inclusion of a right to training has also not resolved the issue of the quantity of training required for EWC representatives (CAC 2018a).⁵

This chapter addresses these issues by reference to the survey results in four sections. The first section examines the extent of training available to EWC representatives, while the second assesses the selection of the training provision, the composition of the training cohort and the content of training received by EWC representatives. The third section discusses whether training is effective in improving the performance of EWC. The fourth section identifies the demand for further training from EWC representatives. The central argument of the chapter is that a wide-ranging training provision is available to EWC representatives that enhances skills and imparts knowledge relevant to EWC performance. This training, however, does not markedly improve the performance of EWCs on the core activities of information exchange and consultation, suggesting that training is insufficient in overcoming the shortcomings of the legislation in these areas.

Extent of the training provision

An initial central question regarding training provision is: do EWC representatives receive training; if so, how much; and, if not, why not? The survey asked respondents to state the number of days of training they had received for their work as EWC representatives during the three years prior to the survey. Table 7.1 presents the results.

Table 7.1 shows that 39.1 per cent of all respondents reported that they did not attend any training events specific to their EWC duties in the three years prior to the distribution of the survey. This proportion is higher than the 23.0 per cent of EWC representatives who had received no training reported by the evaluation study of the Recast endorsed by the Commission (European Commission 2016b).⁶ The survey responses from 2018,

5. For example, a case brought before the Central Arbitration Committee (CAC) in the UK more than 10 years after the adoption of the Recast centered upon the quantity of training required. The President of the SNB of Hewlett Packard argued that more training was required in order to complete the negotiations to set up an EWC. This view was supported by UNITE, the trade union involved. In contrast, the company argued that some training had already been made available to members of the SNB and thus more training was not required.

6. This study should be treated with great caution, as it comprised only 26 respondents to the question on training.

Table 7.1 Training received during the past three years

	No training %	Up to 1 day of training %	2 to 3 training days %	4 to 5 training days %	More than 5 training days %	Don't know %	N
All	39.1	12.8	24.5	9.1	12.3	2.3	1,419
Office holders	26.2	11.6	29.2	10.3	21.0	1.6	488
EWC members	44.4	15.0	22.6	8.2	7.7	2.2	775
Trade unionists	37.9	12.6	23.8	10.2	13.2	2.3	1,213
Non-members	45.4	13.9	28.4	3.0	6.9	2.4	203
EWC coordinator present	32.5	14.0	25.5	10.1	16.3	1.6	844
No coordinator	37.6	12.5	27.5	10.9	9.3	2.2	292
Article 13	42.2	14.0	20.7	9.3	11.9	2.0	446
Article 6	37.8	12.2	26.2	8.8	12.4	2.5	966
EWC representatives from:							
Nordics	36.6	17.8	18.7	10.0	14.1	2.9	196
CMEs	36.1	9.4	25.7	11.2	16.0	1.5	519
MMEs	41.8	11.9	26.8	8.0	8.3	3.3	320
LMEs	40.7	17.3	21.5	7.1	12.6	0.8	125
EMEs	41.4	12.7	24.8	7.5	10.2	3.3	104

however, are consistent with those from 2007, when 36.1 per cent of all representatives had not attended a training course for EWC activities (Waddington 2011: 133). It would thus appear that the Recast has had no significant impact on the extent of training among EWC representatives, a result that is consistent with the finding that the Recast did not accelerate the rate at which training provisions were included in EWC founding agreements (De Spiegelaere and Waddington 2017).

An explanation of why EWC representatives had not attended training events, however, is not straightforward. The above-mentioned evaluation study of the Recast stated three reasons that may contribute to the absence of training: the EWC had been recently formed or the EWC representative had recently taken up the post, and training programmes had yet to be implemented; EWC representatives did not request training; and difficulties were encountered in securing access to training due to the reluctance of managers to grant permission (European Commission 2016a). The first of these reasons can be examined by reference to the length of tenure of the EWC representatives.⁷ Among the EWC representatives who had not attended a training event, 28.1 per cent had been in post for two years or less, compared to 29.0 per cent who had been in post for between two and five years, 29.4 per cent in post for between five and 10 years, and 13.5 per cent in post for more than 10 years. The impact of the length of tenure, at best,

7. This approach allows investigation of the impact of turnover among EWC representatives, which may also contribute to the low take-up of training opportunities.

thus explains why about a quarter of EWC representatives have not attended a training event, although it is clear from the length of service of EWC representatives who had not attended training that factors additional to the length of service are integral to any explanation of the absence of training.

The second reason advanced to explain the absence of training was that there was no demand from EWC representatives. This reason was assessed by reference to the training needs reported by EWC representatives.⁸ The responses here were clear-cut. Representatives who had received no training for their EWC duties were much more likely to report that they required training on all topics (34.8 per cent) than those who had already received training in the three years prior to the distribution of the survey (8.3 per cent). The argument that there is no demand for training among EWC representatives can thus be dismissed.

Similarly, the impact of management on training provision is also limited. Among the EWC representatives who had not attended a training event, only 6.1 per cent reported that central management and 3.7 per cent reported that local management opposed the EWC. Furthermore, these managerial proportions were lower than those reported by EWC representatives who had attended training events.⁹ Management opposition to training cannot thus explain why a large proportion of EWC representatives received no training in the three years prior to the distribution of the survey. In short, the reasons for the absence of training of EWC representatives advanced in the evaluation report explain, at best, a minority of the cases.

Among those in receipt of training, there is considerable variation regarding the quantity of training. No fewer than 12.8 per cent of EWC representatives had received no more than one day's training, whereas 24.5 per cent had received between two and three days. More positively, 21.4 per cent of respondents had attended four or more days of training in the three years prior to the distribution of the survey.¹⁰

Consistent with the findings of the 2007 survey is the greater extent of training utilised by office holders compared to EWC members. In particular, in 2018, 72.2 per cent of office holders reported that they had attended a training event compared to 53.4 per cent of EWC members. Furthermore, office holders were likely to attend more training events than EWC members. The concentration of the training provision on office holders is anticipated, as it is the office holders who are vital to the functioning of the EWC.

Trade union organisations provide much of the training that is available to EWC representatives. It was thus expected that trade unionists would be more likely to receive training than their non-unionised counterparts. The survey supports this expectation,

8. The survey asked EWC representatives to indicate their training needs from the list of 13 topics. Details of these topics are provided in the section below on training needs. The key point for the analysis here is that there were 13 topics and that the respondents could select as many of the options as were appropriate.

9. Among the EWC representatives who had received training, 2.4 per cent reported opposition from central management and 1.6 per cent from local management.

10. Among all respondents to the survey, 2.3 per cent gave an answer of 'don't know' in response to whether they had attended a training event in the three years prior to the survey.

although the difference is not marked, suggesting that many non-unionists can secure places on training courses. In this context, the provision of training courses to entire EWCs may contribute to the training provision of non-unionists. The presence of an EWC coordinator is more influential on attendance at training events than unionisation. Among EWC representatives with a coordinator present, 65.9 per cent have received training, whereas 60.2 per cent of those without a coordinator are in the same position. Furthermore, the presence of a coordinator is also associated with a higher number of training days. An explanation of the absence of training among EWC representatives additional to those provided in the evaluation report may thus be the absence of a coordinator at the EWC.

It was mentioned above that, in 2015, Article 6 agreements were more likely to include a training provision (74 per cent) than Article 13 agreements (55 per cent) (De Spiegelaere and Jagodziński 2015: 58). This pattern of occurrence is replicated in the attendance of EWC representatives at training events, albeit with less marked differentiation, with representatives covered by an Article 6 agreement being more likely to have attended training (59.7 per cent) than their counterparts working within Article 13 (55.8 per cent) agreements. Furthermore, the ranking of the two variants of EWC is maintained regarding the total number of training days, with representatives covered by Article 6 agreements more likely to attend longer or more frequent training sessions. In this instance, it thus appears that the absence of a requirement to amend Article 13 agreements in order to comply with the right to training included in the Recast is associated with a more restricted training provision among EWC representatives working within the framework of Article 13.

The relative absence of resources available to trade unions from the new Member States does not appear to limit the access to training of EWC representatives from these countries, suggesting that EWC agreements on training are universally applied. In particular, 41.4 per cent of EWC representatives from emerging market economies had not attended a training event during the three years prior to the survey, a proportion that compares favourably with EWC representatives from mixed market economies and is comparable with representatives from liberal market economies. It is noteworthy, however, that EWC representatives from coordinated market economies and Nordic countries are the most likely to have attended training events totalling four or more days.

Selection, cohort composition and content of training

In addition to the extent of the training provision available to EWC representatives, there are three interrelated issues that may be contested with regard to the training provision. The first concerns the selection of the training provider: in practice, does the responsibility for selecting the training provider fall to management, EWC representatives, a combination of both, or another party? A second issue concerns the distinction drawn at the outset of this chapter between training for skills necessary to undertake EWC duties and training to promote transnational labour action. The former focuses on the legislative framework, rights and duties, whereas the latter is concerned

with the generation of trust, identity and solidarity among EWC representatives. Trade union organisations and many EWC representatives have interests in both of these aspects of training provision. Management, however, focus on training for skills to undertake EWC duties, as it is the absence of these skills among EWC representatives that managers think slow corporate decision-making.

A third issue concerning the training provision that may be contested is the composition of the training cohort. This issue is related to the provider and the content of the training. Language training, for example, is more likely to take place one-on-one between trainer and EWC representative than training intended to generate solidarity. Similarly, training provided by a trade union is likely to comprise EWC representatives in membership of that trade union, whereas training provided by training organisations may be conducted on a 'by EWC' basis: that is, for all members of a single EWC. The survey of 2007 showed that EWC representatives were three times as likely to have been trained on EWC matters by their trade union than by a training organisation, suggesting that the majority of training was available on a 'by union' rather than a 'by EWC' basis (Waddington 2011: 136). In turn, this suggests that the development of informal dialogue, an EWC identity and solidarity was limited by the composition of the training cohort, as training 'by union' does not bring together all the representatives from a single EWC. This section addresses these issues in three stages. The first stage identifies who selects the training provider, while the second determines the composition of the training cohort. The third stage assesses the content of the training provision.

Selection of the training provider

As a means of establishing how the selection of the training provision is controlled, the survey asked whether respondents attended training from a provider selected by management or from a provider selected by employees.¹¹ Responses to these questions allow the identification of the five variables utilised in Table 7.2: training provider selected only by EWC representatives (46.7 per cent), training provider selected only by management (8.9 per cent), training provider selected by both EWC representatives and management (9.3 per cent), training provider selected by neither management nor EWC representatives (31.5 per cent), and training for which the party responsible for selecting the training provider was not known (3.7 per cent). It should also be noted that 31.5 per cent of EWC representatives reported that neither EWC representatives nor management selected the training provider. It is possible that trade union organisations, or institutions known to members of the EWC selected the training provision in these circumstances. Whatever the case, the data indicate that management have some influence on the selection of training events for EWC representatives, but this influence is marginal compared to that of the EWC representatives. In the case of training providers selected by neither management nor EWC representatives, a higher proportion of training providers were selected by other parties than those selected only by management, revealing that these other parties were more influential than management in this regard.

11. Respondents could select one, both or neither of these options.

Table 7.2 Does the selection of the training provider make a difference?

	Training provider selected only by EWC representatives %	Training provider selected only by management %	Training provider selected by both EWC representatives and management %	Training provider selected by neither management nor EWC representatives %	Don't know %	N
All	46.7	8.9	9.3	31.5	3.7	890
Up to 1 day	32.2	9.0	3.1	51.6	4.1	184
2 to 3 days	50.5	10.2	11.2	25.8	2.3	327
4 to 5 days	51.0	6.6	9.2	30.2	3.1	139
More than 5 days	58.5	9.2	12.7	18.1	1.5	204
Trade unionists	46.6	8.9	9.7	31.6	3.2	777
Non-members	47.3	8.9	6.2	31.1	6.5	112
EWC coordinator present	46.7	8.9	12.0	29.7	2.6	590
No coordinator	52.8	10.1	5.5	27.5	4.0	178
Hostile relations*	41.4	15.7	16.3	18.1	8.6	58
Neutral	43.4	7.7	5.1	43.2	0.6	153
Non-hostile relations	48.8	8.4	9.9	29.8	3.0	639

Note: * The survey asked whether EWC representatives thought that 'the relationship between management and EWC representatives can best be described as hostile'. Responses to this question included 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neither agree nor disagree', 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree'. EWC representatives assigned to 'hostile relations' responded either 'strongly agree' and 'agree', to 'non-hostile relations' responded 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree', and to neutral responded 'neither agree nor disagree'.

Table 7.2 shows that, where EWC representatives select their own training provider, they are more likely to have received four or more days' training. Conversely, when management select the training providers, it is more likely that the EWC representative will have attended fewer training days, suggesting that, while management may cite an absence of training as slowing down corporate decision-making, they are reluctant to provide a remedy to this perceived problem through long-term or regular training. The majority of EWC representatives who attended no more than one training day, however, reported that their training provider was selected by neither EWC representatives nor management. Furthermore, if the EWC representatives choose the training provider, they are likely to opt for more training days.

Surprisingly, the unionisation of EWC representatives appears to have no marked influence on who selects the training event. Similarly, the presence of an EWC coordinator does not significantly alter the personnel involved in the selection of training events, although both EWC representatives and management are more likely to be involved in the selection when there is no EWC coordinator present. Where EWC representatives perceive hostile relations with management, management are more likely to be involved in the selection of the training events than when relations are not hostile, suggesting that managerial trust of EWC representatives impinges on the selection of training

opportunities or that management in such circumstances use access to training to exert authority over the EWC. Irrespective of any hostility between the parties, the principal method of selection is only by EWC representatives.

Composition of the training cohort

A second issue that influences the training provision concerns the composition of the training cohort. In this regard, the survey differentiated between individual training, inter-company training and single EWC training. Individual training was identified as one-on-one training between a trainer and an EWC representative. It is assumed that most individual training will cover specialist topics such as language training or issues specific to the role of the EWC representative.¹² Inter-company training involves a training cohort drawn from a number of companies. The advantage of such training is that it allows EWC representatives to compare practices between EWCs, may act to limit the development of ‘company egoism’ among EWC representatives and may create space for networking among EWC representatives (Miller 1999). Inter-company training is unlikely to promote solidarity, trust and a unified identity among representatives from the same EWC. Furthermore, inter-company training may promote national perspectives among representatives rather than transnational approaches (Tully 2004). A third form of training provision by reference to the composition of the training cohort is single EWC training, which involves all members of a single EWC. This form of training promotes informal dialogue between members of the EWC and may assist in the development of trust, identity and solidarity within the EWC (Steiert 2001; Mählmeyer et al. 2017). Furthermore, such training may result in a detailed action plan for the EWC to pursue (Miller 2002).

Table 7.3 presents the results on the composition of the training cohort. The results from all EWC representatives show that single EWC training was attended by 58.0 per cent of representatives compared to 39.5 per cent attending inter-company training and 21.0 per cent attending individual training. Emphasis within the overall training provision had thus changed since 2007 when inter-company training provided by trade unions was three times as likely as single EWC training (Waddington 2011: 136).

Office holders are more likely to receive training comprising the three types of cohort than EWC members. While this result is anticipated for individual training, given that such training allows office holders to develop specialist skills appropriate to their position on the EWC, it is unclear why this should be the case for single EWC training when the expectation is that all representatives who serve on the EWC attend. It is also noteworthy that more than 40.0 per cent of EWC members did not attend a single EWC training event during the three years prior to the distribution of the survey, indicating marked limits to the development of identity and solidarity within the EWC by means of training.

12. An indicator of the validity of this assumption is that EWC representatives who had attended individual training were more likely than the average (by 19.3 percentage points) to state that they had undergone language training.

Table 7.3 Training cohort

	Individual training			Inter-company training			Single EWC training			N
	Yes %	No %	Don't know %	Yes %	No %	Don't know %	Yes %	No %	Don't know %	
All	21.0	77.2	1.9	39.5	58.0	2.6	58.0	39.2	2.8	890
Up to 1 day	14.7	82.3	3.0	24.3	71.5	4.3	50.0	46.2	3.8	184
2 to 3 days	18.1	80.9	1.0	35.1	64.2	0.8	56.9	41.7	1.4	327
4 to 5 days	21.2	78.5	0.3	45.9	54.1	0.0	61.9	36.8	1.3	139
More than 5 days	33.2	66.4	0.4	64.3	34.2	1.5	71.1	28.2	0.7	204
Office holders	26.3	73.0	0.7	46.1	52.3	1.6	59.8	39.0	1.2	367
EWC members	17.3	81.0	1.7	34.9	62.9	2.2	56.4	40.5	3.1	441
Trade unionists	22.7	75.9	1.4	41.4	56.5	2.1	57.8	39.9	2.3	777
Non-members	10.2	85.0	4.8	26.7	67.9	5.4	59.7	34.8	5.5	112
EWC coordinator present	22.2	76.0	1.7	44.0	54.0	2.0	62.4	35.6	2.0	590
No coordinator	24.9	74.3	0.9	32.1	66.0	1.9	53.2	43.9	2.9	178
EWC representatives from:										
Nordics	15.0	83.2	1.8	47.9	49.9	2.2	54.9	43.3	1.8	128
CMEs	31.1	67.6	1.3	39.7	59.4	0.9	58.8	39.6	1.6	331
MMEs	21.4	76.8	1.8	28.3	68.7	3.0	64.4	32.4	3.3	204
LMEs	5.6	92.7	1.7	48.8	46.8	4.4	52.6	43.0	4.4	75
EMEs	15.0	79.5	5.5	53.4	41.9	4.7	43.1	52.8	4.1	152

As expected, trade unionists are more likely to attend inter-company training than non-members, as inter-company training is the predominant form of training offered by national trade unions for their members. More surprisingly, union members are also much more likely to have attended individual training events. This may reflect the predominance of trade unionists among office holders, individual sessions between trade unionists and full-time officers on EWC matters, or greater language training opportunities for trade unionists. Regarding single EWC training, there is no difference between unionists and non-members in the rate of attendance. The presence of a coordinator influences the composition of the training cohort. Specifically, EWC representatives are more likely to have attended events based on inter-company and single EWC training when a coordinator is present, suggesting that coordinators channel and promote information about such training to EWC representatives.

An analysis of EWC representatives' countries of origin reveals much variation in the composition of the training cohort. With regard to individual training, for example, EWC representatives from liberal market economies are the least likely to have participated in such training. This may reflect the number of native English speakers among the liberal market economy respondents, and the fact that English is used as the working language of many EWCs. Similarly, EWC representatives from mixed market economies are the least likely to have attended inter-company training; however, they are the most likely to have attended single EWC training. It is not apparent why representatives from emerging market economies are the least likely to participate in single EWC training, as invitations to such events would be distributed to the entire EWC.¹³

Content of training

The content is a third issue central to the training provision examined here. For the purposes of this analysis, distinctions are drawn between training for the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes. In this context, knowledge training focuses on the comprehension of the legal framework and the subject matter on which the EWC has a right to be informed and consulted; skills training may involve language tuition, or courses on organising communication, understanding financial statements or anticipating change in MNCs; and attitude training may embrace trade union values, intercultural differences and the development of identity and solidarity. The EWC survey asked respondents whether they had attended training events on 13 different topics. These topics were grouped into five different clusters: 'EWC basics', understanding the EWC legal framework, the EWC agreement and the definition of transnational and learning about ways in which the union can support the EWC; 'communication', learning how to organise a communication network and understanding industrial relations in different countries; 'management', learning how to deal with management, including with respect to negotiation skills and confidentiality obligations, and understanding the strategies of MNCs; 'skills', learning other languages and understanding financial data;

13. Anecdotal evidence suggests that a reluctance on the part of management to release EWC representatives so that they can attend training events may contribute to this situation, but there is no evidence within the survey to confirm this hypothesis.

Table 7.4 Content of training

Cluster		Attended %	Individual %	Inter-company %	Single EWC %
EWC basics	Understanding the EWC legal framework	59.2	73.4	67.3	64.3
EWC basics	Understanding which issues are transnational	50.5	54.4	62.4	56.7
EWC basics	Understanding the limits and the potential of the EWC agreement	53.9	61.9	62.3	62.4
EWC basics	Learning about trade union support to the EWC	36.2	44.6	50.3	38.9
Communication	Understanding workers' representation in different countries	35.4	44.2	43.2	41.7
Communication	Learning how to organise communication and networking in the EWC	30.8	41.5	40.1	35.9
Management	Learning how to deal with confidential information	40.4	52.1	51.1	45.7
Management	Learning how to negotiate with management	28.3	40.5	31.9	30.6
Management	Understanding multinational company strategies	20.7	31.5	26.5	26.0
Skills	Learning other languages to communicate in the EWC	25.9	46.8	28.8	29.1
Skills	Learning how to read financial information	29.5	36.8	36.5	33.8
Broader agenda	Learning about what the EWC can do regarding health and safety or environmental issues	22.0	29.7	27.5	27.0
Broader agenda	Learning about what the EWC can do regarding equal opportunities	18.6	25.3	24.2	24.0
N		889	183	381	505

and the 'broader agenda', learning about what the EWC can do regarding health and safety, the environment and equal opportunities.¹⁴ Table 7.4 identifies the proportion of EWC representatives who attended a training event that covered each of these topics during the three years prior to the distribution of the survey.

Most EWC representatives indicated that they had attended training that covered the basics of the EWC. Three of the topics with the largest proportion of attendees at training events appeared in this cluster. Training on trade union support for the EWC was the outlier within this cluster with 36.2 per cent attendance, in part reflecting the impact of non-members among the respondents. Among trade unionists, 39.0 per cent attended such training compared to 18.9 per cent of the non-members. Training on topics within the communication cluster was also fairly well attended with more than

14. The grouping of the topics into clusters was cross-checked by a factor analysis using a promax rotation.

30.0 per cent of respondents having completed courses on one of the two topics. It is no surprise that training covering worker representation in different countries figures large in the training agenda, as many early misunderstandings within EWCs arose from the assumption that all representatives had similar, rather than very different, underpinnings to their representative positions (Gohde 2005). Such training has also been shown to promote transnational understanding, cooperation and action (Martinez Lucio and Weston 2007).

In the management cluster of training, there is more diversity. While 40.4 per cent of EWC representatives reported having attended a course on how to deal with confidential information, fewer had attended training on how to negotiate and on understanding the strategies of MNCs. Three points arise from this diversity. First, the relatively low attendance at courses on negotiating with management may reflect the impact of skills already acquired before selection to serve on the EWC. Many EWC representatives were serving as representatives and dealing with management in their own countries before assuming their transnational role and, hence, have acquired negotiation skills. The low attendance at courses on negotiating skills may also result from the absence of negotiations at many EWCs (see Chapter 10). Second, the relatively high attendance on courses covering confidentiality is an indicator of the sensitivity attached to the issue. Confidentiality will be examined in more detail in Chapter 8. Third, courses on understanding the strategies of MNCs are extremely difficult to deliver and are relatively rare, because the range of strategies employed by MNCs is vast and each EWC is confronted with a unique set of managerial strategies, with the consequence that an appropriate course would have to be tailor-made for each EWC. In most trade union organisations and pan-European training institutions, there are insufficient resources available for such an approach.

The absence of language skills is often cited as one of the obstacles for effective EWC functioning (Miller 2002; Pulignano and Turk 2016). Although, during the formal meetings, interpretation and translation facilities may mitigate language barriers, the development of informal understandings that are essential to building trust and solidarity require some commonality of language. Furthermore, interpretation and translation facilities are not available to all EWCs (De Spiegelaere and Jagodziński 2015: 39). It is noteworthy that half of all EWC founding agreements in 2015 made explicit reference to the availability of language training for EWC representatives (De Spiegelaere and Jagodziński 2015: 38). It is thus surprising that only 25.9 per cent of EWC representatives reported having attended language training: that is, about half of those who were eligible to do so by reference to EWC founding agreements. This discrepancy may result from the difficulties of acquiring a new language to a level suitable for work purposes: acquiring a new language requires a huge commitment that may be of longer duration than the term of office of the EWC representative.

The topics of training attended by the fewest number of respondents were those within the broader agenda cluster, suggesting that EWC representatives do not place a priority on EWCs as a means of improving health and safety, environmental and equality issues. Courses on such topics were attended by between 18.6 per cent and 22.0 per cent of EWC representatives. Again, these results are not entirely unexpected, as the issues

of equal opportunities and gender equality were pursued through the consultation process by relatively few EWC representatives (see Table 4.1), even though regulations on these issues have been adopted at European level. It should be noted, however, that wide-ranging health and safety and environmental regulations have been adopted at European level and were pursued by relatively large numbers of EWC representatives through the consultation process (see Table 4.1). In short, the relationship between regulation, information and consultation practices and training differs with regard to items from the broader agenda cluster listed in Table 7.4. More training on issues that do not appear on the agenda of EWCs is clearly a priority if EWC agendas are to be broadened.

In summary, this section has established three points with regard to training provisions. First, management do not have a significant role in the selection of the training provider in the majority of instances, suggesting that EWC representatives have a relatively free hand in the selection of the training provider. Second, since 2007, there has been a marked shift away from inter-company training towards training involving representatives from a single EWC. This may reflect an increased emphasis within training programmes on the generation of solidarity, trust and an identity within the EWC. Third, two decades after the adoption of the Directive, the content of training remains focused on the basics of the EWC, although specific items that feature prominently within training programmes, such as communication and confidentiality, indicate areas of concern regarding EWC functioning among representatives.

Is training effective?

This section proceeds in two stages. The first stage identifies the general effect of training by comparing attitudes of EWC representatives in receipt of training with their counterparts who had not received any training in the three years prior to the distribution of the survey. The second stage examines the impact of training covering specific topics on the views of EWC representatives towards these topics. From the outset, it is acknowledged that survey-based research cannot unambiguously demonstrate the effectiveness of training. Many of the associations discussed below, for example, could plausibly have a different causality or be the result of the impact of a third variable. Multivariate analysis is required to investigate causality in greater detail.¹⁵

General effect of training

Underpinning training provisions from the perspective of EWC representatives and trade union organisations is the desire to improve the efficacy of EWCs. Case study evidence shows that training may promote trust, an increased likelihood of reaching a unified position and a more European perspective among EWC representatives (Mählmeyer et al. 2017; Timming 2006; Knudsen et al. 2007). Similar research also links training to the creation of an environment for transnational labour action (Erne

15. Future publications planned by the authors will include multivariate analyses.

Table 7.5 Impact of training

	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree %	Strongly disagree %	Don't know %	N
Between EWC meetings, I have frequent contact with the EWC representatives from other countries							
No training	9.5	26.5	23.6	29.7	8.6	2.1	510
Up to 2 days' training	11.8	38.7	24.1	15.0	8.1	2.2	352
3 or more days' training	11.2	40.1	22.1	19.6	6.1	1.0	507
Employee representatives always try to come to a common position							
No training	11.0	49.5	23.7	8.7	2.4	4.7	498
Up to 2 days' training	15.3	53.4	19.1	7.3	0.5	4.5	352
3 or more days' training	11.9	60.6	17.3	6.7	1.2	2.4	492
The EWC helps me to gain a better understanding of matters occurring within the company							
No training	22.5	55.2	13.2	2.6	2.1	4.5	483
Up to 2 days' training	24.8	57.4	14.7	0.9	0.0	2.1	348
3 or more days' training	29.5	59.7	7.0	2.7	0.4	0.8	483

2008). Survey research shows that training may lead to more intense communication between meetings (Waddington 2011: 137).

Table 7.5 examines some of these propositions by reference to the survey data of 2018. Among EWC representatives who had received no training during the three years prior to the survey, 36.0 per cent reported that they have frequent contact between EWC meetings. This proportion rises to 50.5 per cent among EWC representatives who had experienced up to two days' training and to 51.3 per cent among EWC representatives attending three or more days' training. These findings thus consolidate the results from the 2007 survey insofar as training is associated with more intense communication among EWC representatives between meetings. It should be noted, however, that more than 23.0 per cent of representatives who had attended training did not agree that they had frequent contact between EWC meetings, suggesting the impact of other factors on the frequency of contact or that the training received was not effective.

Training is also related to attempts to reach a common position among the representatives at the EWC. While 60.5 per cent of EWC representatives who had not attended training thought that they tried to come to a common position, 68.7 per cent of those with two or more days' training and 72.5 per cent of those with three or more days' training took the same view. Regarding the frequency of contact and trying to establish a common position, the longer the duration or the higher the frequency of training, the greater the likelihood of a positive outcome. Although not tabulated here, a similar

result is obtained regarding the proportion of EWC representatives who identify their perspective as European: 30.8 per cent of EWC representatives attending three or more days of training defined their perspective as European. Unlike the tabulated results, however, one or two training days are not related to having a European perspective,¹⁶ suggesting that the number of training days is also a key factor in the development of a European perspective.

Table 7.5 also examines the relationship between training and an understanding of company matters. There is a direct relationship between the number of training days and the understanding of company affairs: 89.2 per cent of EWC representatives with three or more days' training agree that training helped them understand the company compared to 82.2 per cent of those with one or two days' training and 77.7 per cent of those with no training at all. In the circumstances documented in Table 7.5, training thus appears to increase the efficacy of EWCs from the perspective of the representatives.

Attendance at training events has no apparent impact on the perception of EWC representatives of the quality of information and consultation processes over a range of agenda items raised at the EWC. This is contrary to expectations derived from case study evidence that suggests that training facilitates learning effects both within and between EWCs (Gilman and Marginson 2002). Indeed, a key argument advanced by trade union organisations is that training is essential to overcoming the shortfalls inherent in EWC legislation (EFFAT 2009; UNI Europa 2011). Table 7.6 extends the analysis of training by examining whether training assists EWC representatives in overcoming the limitations of the Recast: that is, does training enable representatives to secure improvements in the core information and consultation functions of EWCs?

Training has no marked effects on the perceptions of representatives on EWCs as a source of information and consultation. Insofar as EWC representatives who had attended training were less likely to rate their EWC as an effective means of influencing management than their counterparts with no recent attendance at a training event, it is also clear that training does not lead to additional influence over corporate decision-making. Several competing, but not mutually exclusive, factors may contribute to an explanation of this situation. First, the shortcomings of the Recast are too wide-ranging to be overcome through training provisions. Second, the learning effects arising from training are more limited than envisaged, maybe as a result of inadequate content or intensity. Third, managerial resistance to engagement in information exchange and consultation and to the ceding of influence over corporate decision-making is so pronounced that training is an insufficient remedy. Fourth, training raises expectations to the extent that, after attending training events, EWC representatives are disappointed by the quality of the information and consultation procedures at EWCs. This sense of disappointment may also be accentuated by comparisons with experiences of national systems of information and consultation. At this juncture, there is no reason not to suggest that all these factors are influential to some degree.

16. The results on the development of a European perspective are not tabulated because the question was formulated differently from those reported in Table 7.5. Among EWC representatives with no training, 18.3 per cent defined themselves as expressing a European perspective, a larger proportion than the 17.3 per cent of those who had attended up to two days' training.

Table 7.6 Training and core EWC business

	Very effective %	Effective %	Neutral %	Ineffective %	Very ineffective %	N
Are EWCs an effective source of information?						
No training	25.9	49.5	18.9	3.4	2.3	476
Up to 2 days' training	23.0	54.3	18.1	2.4	2.2	352
3 or more days' training	23.8	55.2	14.2	4.1	2.7	495
Do EWCs serve as an effective means of consultation?						
No training	13.3	37.6	26.4	17.6	5.1	470
Up to 2 days' training	9.9	33.6	27.1	21.4	8.0	347
3 or more days' training	12.0	37.9	27.6	13.4	9.1	489
Do EWCs provide an effective means of influencing management decisions?						
No training	4.3	18.9	33.4	32.4	11.1	473
Up to 2 days' training	3.1	16.3	36.3	26.2	18.2	349
3 or more days' training	4.3	15.3	39.0	26.8	14.6	489

Note: These responses are only from those EWC representatives who had attended at least one EWC meeting.

Specific effects of training

The failure of training provisions to promote improvement in the core information and consultation activities of EWCs raises the question: does training work in any other specific circumstances? To address this question, the analysis turns to the impact of specific training on perceptions of the topic on which training was provided. Put simply, if an EWC representative has received training on EWC regulations, it is anticipated that the representative would have an improved knowledge of the regulations compared to an EWC representative who has had no training on this topic. Table 7.7 presents the results and demonstrates that attendance at training events often has a marked effect on the perceptions of EWC representatives.

The impact of 'training on understanding the legal framework' on 'knowledge of the Recast', of 'training on understanding which issues are transnational' on 'the frequency of discussions on transnationality', of 'training on understanding workers' representation in different countries' on 'trying to come to a common position', and of 'language training' on 'relating to other employee representatives in Europe' is marked. EWC representatives in receipt of training on these topics were more likely to agree with the statement relevant to the training than EWC representatives who had not attended such training. In these circumstances, specific training seems to improve the functioning of the EWC from the perspective of the representatives. These findings also point to factors

Table 7.7 Specific effects of training

	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree %	Strongly disagree %	Don't know %	N
I have a very good knowledge of the content of the Recast							
No training on 'understanding the legal framework'	5.0	25.5	28.4	29.5	6.6	5.1	796
Training on 'understanding the legal framework'	14.2	45.7	26.7	11.6	0.4	1.4	532
There are frequent discussions on whether an issue is transnational							
No training on 'understanding which issues are transnational'	6.8	26.5	27.9	21.4	3.7	13.8	881
Training on 'understanding which issues are transnational'	13.4	32.8	25.8	17.2	4.8	6.2	440
Employee representatives always try to come to a common position							
No training on 'understanding workers' representation in different countries'	10.5	53.1	21.6	8.7	1.8	4.3	1,020
Training on 'understanding workers' representation in different countries'	16.6	62.2	13.5	4.5	1.1	2.2	346
EWC representatives often challenge management over which issues are confidential							
No training on 'learning how to deal with confidential information'	11.4	31.1	28.0	18.1	4.7	6.7	970
Training on 'learning how to deal with confidential information'	16.7	39.7	20.1	15.1	4.3	4.1	417
The EWC helps me in relating to other employee representatives in Europe							
No training on 'learning other languages to communicate in the EWC'	26.9	58.2	9.5	1.5	0.6	3.3	1,056
Training on 'learning other languages to communicate in the EWC'	39.8	49.2	6.6	2.7	1.3	0.5	263

other than training as underpinning the failure of training to improve the performance of EWCs on their core information and consultation activities reported above. Similarly, EWC representatives in receipt of training on confidentiality were more likely to report that they challenged management decisions on confidentiality (56.4 per cent) compared to those who had received no training on the topic (42.5 per cent). Learning about the detail of confidentiality provisions from a trainer would thus appear to promote challenges to managerial decisions. Managerial approaches to confidentiality and their impact are examined in Chapter 8.

This section demonstrates that the impact of training is mixed. Training, particularly that of a longer duration or spread over a number of days, is related to improvements in the performance of a range of activities associated with EWCs, and training on specific topics promotes greater satisfaction among representatives with the handling of these topics by the EWC. Training, for example, is related to an improved knowledge, more attempts to reach agreed positions, and more assertive approaches towards management among EWC representatives. Training, however, is not related to improvements in the core information and consultation activities of EWCs. In these areas, it is clear that training *per se* is insufficient and that other factors impair development.

What are the current training requirements?

Rather than focus on the training that has been received and its impact, this section assesses the current training requirements of EWC representatives. At points, the analysis identifies the current training priorities of EWC representatives and compares these with the situation before the Recast in order to establish whether the right to training included in the measure has changed attitudes towards training among EWC representatives.

EWC representatives were asked to specify from the 13 topics listed in Table 7.4 the topics on which they require further training. No fewer than 17.5 per cent of EWC representatives reported that they had no training requirements, whereas 30.7 per cent required training on between one and six topics, 32.5 per cent on between seven and 12 topics, and 19.3 per cent on all 13 topics. Two principal factors impinge on this distribution: existing training undertaken and length of tenure as an EWC representative. Among those who had no training during the three years prior to the distribution of the survey, for example, 34.8 per cent of EWC representatives expressed a desire for further training on all 13 topics, while only 6.0 per cent of those who had completed two or more days' training adopted the same position. Similarly, 30.0 per cent of EWC representatives with no more than one year of tenure wished to receive training on all 13 topics compared to 9.1 per cent of representatives with tenure of 10 years or more.

Taking the same 13 topics for training, Table 7.8 presents the overall demand for further training from EWC representatives, the demand from those already in receipt of training on the topic, and the demand from those yet to receive training on the topic. In terms of overall demand, between 50.0 per cent and 60.0 per cent of EWC representatives indicate that further training is required on most topics. At one pole in the range are the

Table 7.8 On which topics is further training required?

Cluster	Topic	Total requiring further training %	Some training received on this topic, but further training required %	No training received on this topic, and some training currently required %
EWC basics	Understanding the EWC legal framework	50.9	11.2	77.9
EWC basics	Understanding which issues are transnational	48.7	6.9	70.6
EWC basics	Understanding the limits and the potential of the EWC agreement	51.2	9.2	74.8
EWC basics	Learning about trade union support to the EWC	53.2	9.6	67.6
Communication	Understanding workers' representation in different countries	60.0	12.6	75.0
Communication	Learning how to organise communication and networking in the EWC	58.3	12.2	70.2
Management	Learning how to deal with confidential information	41.1	7.0	55.4
Management	Learning how to negotiate with management	54.4	10.3	66.1
Management	Understanding multinational company strategies	61.5	10.9	70.1
Skills	Learning other languages to communicate in the EWCs	57.6	13.6	68.3
Skills	Learning how to read financial information	60.1	15.1	72.4
Broader agenda	Learning about what the EWC can do regarding health and safety or environmental issues	59.8	11.7	68.6
Broader agenda	Learning about what the EWC can do regarding equal opportunities	59.4	9.0	66.7
N		1 339	179-559	780-1,160

41.1 per cent of EWC representatives stating a desire for further training on handling confidential information, a particularly low figure given that 39.6 per cent of EWC representatives report that management cite confidentiality as the reason for refusing to disclose information. Given the controversial nature of confidentiality within EWCs, this result suggests that EWC representatives may obtain training on this topic from elsewhere, such as within national systems of workplace representation. At the other pole in the range of demand for further training are the topics of understanding MNC strategies (61.5 per cent) and learning to read financial information (60.1 per cent). Demand for further training on these topics surpasses demand for training on all other topics and indicates a desire among EWC representatives to understand how MNCs operate. Insofar as many managers express concern about the limited knowledge of EWC representatives on the operation of MNCs (Pulignano and Turk 2016: 18–19), the desire among EWC representatives for further training on these topics may be a source of relief to managers, as it is an indicator of the desire among EWC representatives to undertake their duties. The emphasis assigned to understanding MNC strategies poses questions for trade union organisations regarding the delivery of such training. As discussed in the context of Table 7.4, the strategy of each MNC is, to a considerable

degree, unique, as well as being subject to repeated change. Training to allow EWC representatives to understand the strategy of 'their' MNCs thus has to be tailor-made. Very few, if any, trade union organisations have the resources to fund such specific training on the scale required. An indicator of the extent of the challenge that the provision of such training constitutes for trade union organisation and pan-European training institutions is that the demand for training on understanding the strategies of MNCs rose by 32.9 percentage points and, for training on financial information, by 26.2 percentage points between 2007 and 2018.¹⁷ In short, training provisions are failing to meet the demand for training on these topics.

The second column of data presented in Table 7.8 indicates the demand for further training on topics on which EWC representatives have already undergone training. As anticipated, and reflecting the value of the training already received, the demand for additional training among EWC representatives is much reduced. On most topics, between 9.0 per cent and 12.5 per cent of EWC representatives report that extra training is required. The demand for more training on the reading of financial information and on understanding the strategies of MNCs remains prominent among representatives already in receipt of such training, highlighting the centrality and complexity of these topics to experienced EWC representatives. Topics involving the organisation of communication and networking, language skills and understanding the legal framework also appear towards the top of the ranking, indicating a breadth of demand that requires considerable resources if it is to be met.

The final column of data reported in Table 7.8 charts the demand for training among EWC representatives yet to receive training on the topic in question. More than 55.0 per cent of EWC representatives in this category require training on all of the listed topics, and more than 66.0 per cent require training on most topics. The demand for training is primarily driven by EWC representatives who have recently taken up their term of office and is also high among those who have attended very few training days. In consequence, topics from across the range are prioritised with particular emphasis placed on those within the EWC basics and communication clusters, as earlier anticipated (Gohde 1995), indicating a need among experienced national representatives to acquire skills specific to EWCs. This raises strategic questions for trade union organisations as the main providers of training for EWC representatives: do trade union organisations focus on training for new representatives, or do they develop more sophisticated training programmes on topics such as MNC strategy and finance aimed at more experienced EWC representatives in the hope that such programmes may enhance EWC performance?

17. The early data are drawn from the 2007 survey, when 28.6 per cent of EWC representatives indicated a desire for further training on understanding the strategies of MNCs and 33.9 per cent for training on analysis of company results. The wording used in the two surveys differed marginally on these topics. In 2007, the wording was 'analysis of company results/financial information' and 'company/management strategies in other EU Member States', whereas, in 2018, the wording was 'learning how to read financial information' and 'understanding multinational company strategies'. It is acknowledged that these differences may account for some of the variation between the results of 2007 and 2018.

Conclusion

Since 2007, the proportion of EWC representatives attending training events has declined marginally from 63.9 per cent to 60.9 per cent. The inclusion of a right to training in the Recast thus has not led to an intensification of training among EWC representatives. Furthermore, the demand for training among EWC representatives has risen since 2007 and remains high, particularly among those at the start of their term of office and on topics considered central to the functioning of EWCs. There are indications that the pattern of attendance at training events on specific topics shifts from training on basic issues to communication and then to gaining an understanding of the strategies of MNCs. It is clear that, between 2007 and 2018, the composition of training cohorts has changed markedly away from inter-company training towards single EWC training, possibly implying a focus on the development of trust, identity and solidarity within EWCs by means of the training provision.

Management have tabled long-standing criticisms of the skills of EWC representatives (Lamers 1998; ORC 2007), and these criticisms have not abated since the adoption of the Recast (Pulignano and Turk 2016: 18–19). While very few managers reported having amended the EWC founding agreement to accommodate the revised training terms of the Recast (Waddington et al. 2016: 58), EWC representatives report that managers neither play a major role in the selection of the training provision nor is opposition from management cited on a large scale as a reason for refusing access to training. If management do select the training provision, however, EWC representatives are likely to receive fewer training days compared to training provision selected by EWC representatives. In combination, these points suggest that there is little resistance among managers to a more wide-ranging training provision, particularly if such an approach enhances the skills of EWC representatives and, in the process, makes corporate strategic decision-making involving EWCs more efficient.

Trade union organisations are integral to the training provision available to EWC representatives and, after 2007, have emphasised single EWC training. The survey results of 2018 show that trade unionists are more likely than non-unionists to be in receipt of training in general and of more training days in particular. Similarly, EWC coordinators, the majority of whom are unionised, also appear to promote regular training courses that involve more days of training. Furthermore, as predicted by trade unionists immediately after the adoption of the Directive (Gohde 1995; Danis and Hoffmann 1995), training enhances the skills and raises the awareness of representatives in areas appropriate to fulfilling their duties within EWCs. Two challenges for trade union organisations are raised by these data. First, training of EWC representatives does not markedly improve the performance of EWCs. While this finding confirms the shortcomings of the legislation, it raises questions concerning the content of the training provision and the time and resources devoted to training. In short, can the content of training be amended to promote greater improvements in EWC practice, and do the marginal improvements in EWC practice that result from training justify the time and resources deployed by trade union organisations in providing training? A second challenge that has yet to be met by trade union organisations is the volume of demand for training from EWC representatives and the provision of training on some specialist

topics, notably the analysis of corporate financial information and on the strategies of MNCs. The fact that a marginally smaller proportion of EWC representatives had attended training in 2018 than 2007 and the Recast had introduced a right to training in the intervening period suggests that a considerable increase in the allocation of resources is required if the existing demand is to be met. The high demand for training among EWC representatives also raises questions concerning the total time allocated in EWC agreements for training: in particular, is this amount of time sufficient?

For European policy-makers, the findings of this chapter are far from straightforward. The Recast appears to have merely brought the legislation into line with practices agreed within many EWCs before its adoption. Very few managers, for example, report having amended EWC founding agreements following the adoption of the Recast, as practice was already compliant. Similarly, the Recast did not promote a substantial growth in the number of EWC founding agreements that included access to training for EWC representatives. In addition, there is no marked impact of training on the core information and consultation functions of EWCs, although considerable sums have been made available for training by the Commission. Given the wide-ranging impact of training on other EWC-related activities, the failure of training to have a marked impact on the quality of information and consultation procedures suggests that training cannot circumvent the structural problems inherent in the legislation in these areas.