

HRMWE Research Seminar 2014-2015

Changing employment relations in European workplaces: a conceptual framework for understanding '*public service multinationals*' in Belgium, France and the UK

12th November 2014

4:00 - 5:30pm, NUBS 2.05

Presented by

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Abstract

The roles of multinational companies in supporting and even delivering essential 'public' services is a major challenge for trade unions in Belgium, France and the UK. Different traditions of what constitutes a 'public service' in each country as well as collective bargaining arrangements and other institutional mechanisms all impact on employment outcomes for staff. Furthermore, three distinct approaches to diversity management (and their legal bases) mean that necessarily different approaches will be taken in relation to the inclusion of migrant workers by both managers and union representation within the same multinational employer across the three countries. This seminar presentation seeks to explore the specific concept of the 'public service multinational' as a distinct organisation type that provides a unique and growing challenge to unions as well as employment relations scholars. The explicitly political nature of many of these organisations as they seek to gain and retain public contracts requires renewal of the established field of employment relations in multinational companies with its emphasis on the manufacturing and heavy industry sectors which actually represent a dwindling proportion of modern employment in Europe.

About the Speaker

Ben Egan is an early stage researcher on a Marie Curie initial training network, Changing Employment, co-ordinated from the University of Strathclyde, and a PhD student at the Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium. Before starting this in 2013, Ben spent five years as a trade union full-time officer in the UK, working mostly in the education sector.