



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

Employment and Social Governance
Social dialogue

EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES SECTORAL SOCIAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE

Plenary Meeting

12 October 2017

MINUTES

Participants:

Employer representatives

Mr Brian Ricketts, EURACOAL, Belgium
Ms Magdalena Chawula-Kosuri, EURACOAL, Belgium
Ms Corina Hebestreit, Euromines, Belgium
Ms Kasia Palaczanis, Euromines, Belgium
Ms Beata Staszko, Euromines Poland
Mr Rafał Szkop, Euromines, Poland
Ms Florence Lumen, IMA Europe, Belgium
Mr Akos Zoltay, Euromines, Hungarian Mining Association
Ms Cecilia Andersson, SveMin, Sweden

Employee representatives

Ms Corinna Zierold, industriAll, Belgium
Mr Jean-Pierre Damm, FNEM FO, France (in the chair)
Mr Luis Angel Colunga, industriAll, Belgium
Mr Bernhard Rothleitner, industriAll, PRO-GE
Mr Szabolcs Beothy-Feher, BDSZ, Hungary
Mr Ferencz Rabi, BDSZ, Hungary
Mr Alberto Simoes, SIMA, Portugal
Mr Vladimir Topalov, Podkrepa SMF, Bulgaria
Ms Desislava Kancheva, Podkrepa SMF, Bulgaria
Mr Victor José Fernandez Vazquez, FITAG-UGT, Spain
Mr Crespo Torres, CCOO de Industria, Spain

European Commission

Mr Strohbach, DG EMPL

1) Adoption of the draft agenda and the draft minutes of the last meeting

The meeting was chaired by Mr Damm. The draft agenda was approved.

2) Adoption of the draft minutes of the last meeting

The adoption of the minutes of the SSDC meeting on 4 July 2017 was postponed to the next meeting.

3) Industry4EU initiative

Ms Hebestreit informed about the EU industrial policy strategy. The Council intends to discuss the long-term objectives (focus on 2030 and beyond) for industrial policy during the

Competitiveness Council on 30 November 2017. The COM communication "Investing in a smart, innovative and sustainable Industry - A renewed EU Industrial Policy Strategy" which was presented on 13 September 2017 will be used as the basis for all discussions. In addition, more than 130 industry associations representing different sectors have established the initiative Industry4EU and drafted several position papers to demand better support for the European industry from the EU institutions. The recent position paper will be discussed with the EU Presidency and the Council on 23 October 2017. The paper focuses mainly on strengthening Europe as an environment which is business-friendly, emphasises skills & training, research and innovation, offers access to financial means, to trade and the internal and international markets. As a result of these discussions the industry expects the COM to provide a detailed action plan.

Moreover Ms Hebestreit referred to the raw materials initiative which underpins the European industrial policy. She highlighted in particular the topics skills, climate policies, the circular economy package, resource management (internal market) and the financial framework. More detailed information on the key topics of this initiative can be found in the presentation.

Social partners welcomed the initiatives towards a renaissance of the European industry. However, more efforts from the COM were demanded to strengthen the competitiveness of the European industry and to ensure sustainable employment. With regard to the raw materials initiative better cooperation between the COM services was requested. In addition, social partners discussed as to how to improve their cooperation when preparing joint documents/initiatives.

4) Technology Platform on Coal – Euracoal

Mr Ricketts informed that the coal platform will be announced in Strasbourg on 11 December 2017. This platform aims at a successful transformation of coal mining regions and at expanding carbon-intensive regions in the future. It is part of the Clean Energy for All Europeans Package to boost the clean energy transition (identifying, developing and implementing projects) by bringing more focus on social fairness, structural transformation, new skills and financing of the real economy. The coal platform should allow a multi-stakeholder dialogue on the policy framework and regulations and should help them to foster partnerships and learn from each other's experiences. Mr Rickett pointed out that Euracoal carried out several informal dialogues with the COM. The use of existing funds is key in order to provide tailored support to guide structural change in the regions concerned (2 types: coal will be used in the long run/coal production will end shortly or in mid-term). Euracoal supports this COM initiative and has shown its commitment by preparing its own project which is called Coaltech 2051 and is a multinational network of technologists.

Mr Ricketts underlined that coal is still an important source of energy in other parts of the world (China, Japan, USA). He highlighted the increasing importance of clean coal. Therefore CCS storage capacities are needed. However, Europe has currently no large scale CCS project (only a few pilot projects). The European focus is on increasing the energy efficiency (Europe 2020 target). Another option is the use of coal. The power plants have to be equipped with state of the art technologies and thus, investment (public/private) is crucial. With regard to imports of coal Mr Ricketts mentioned that the EU position is not clear yet.

Trade union representatives pointed out that the ongoing closure of coal mines in Europe and the related job losses cannot be accepted. The coal industry is only one contributor to CO₂ emissions. Therefore abandoning the European coal industry will not solve the emission problem, neither in Europe nor in the world. Trade unionists criticised heavily the EU energy policy which lacks a concept for supporting the people concerned. It was pointed out that the transformation process will create enormous problems not only for the coal production but

also for the power plants as some Member States' energy production like Bulgaria (50%) depends heavily on coal (lignite).

Social partners agreed on closely monitoring what is going on in the coal sector and on putting this topic on the agenda for the SSDC meetings in 2018.

5) Horizon 2020 programme on land planning

Ms Hebestreit informed that the first meeting of the recently approved project mineland (sustainable land management/*planning*) within the Horizon 2020 programme will be in January 2018. Social partners agreed on inviting the responsible colleagues from DG GROW in order to learn more about the results of the various ongoing land use projects and how they will impact future investment in mining.

6) Skills and Education:

a. Hungarian Initiative in the Coal Mining Sector – Member of Euracoal

Mr Rabi presented the initiative for training in the mining sector in Hungary. He referred in particular to the Faller Jenő Vocational School in Várpalota which has a long tradition in that respect. Currently more than 600 people are trained at this school. In addition, he mentioned the Faculty of Geoscience Engineering at the Miskolc University which is the only university in Hungary offering engineering courses related to geosciences.

Mr Rabi pointed out that social partners in Hungary have continuously taken measures to improve skills/training of the workforce. In addition, a regular exchange among the regions in Hungary and abroad was ensured. However, the number of miners and people in the mining sector is small. For young people/students the attractiveness of the mining sector is limited.

b. Czech example – Euromines

The presentation was not available.

7) Social partner involvement in a platform on coal dependent regions – internal discussion/discussion of a draft letter

With regard to the platform for coal and carbon-intensive regions in transition Euracoal drafted a letter. Some further amendments were made by industriALL. The letter refers to the expertise within the sector and underlines the commitment of the social partners to actively contribute to the envisaged platform. All parties representing the sector at European level will sign the letter. The letter should be sent to VP Sefcovic soon in order to clearly underline the position of social partners in the extractive industries sector and this Committee.

8) Health & Safety updates

a. Result of the CMD amendment/processes generating respirable crystalline silica and NEPSI news

Ms Lumen presented the recent developments with regard to the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive and the NEPSI agreement.

For the first amendment of the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive including RCS processes a provisional agreement was reached within the European institutions on 29 June 2017.

This agreement received a favorable vote by the COREPER on 11 July 2017 and by the EMPL Committee on 30 August 2017. The Parliament Plenary is due to cast its vote on 23 October 2017.

Ms Lumen highlighted the main outcomes of the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive for the sector which are:

- Annex I contains a list of substances, preparations and processes
- Annex III contains limit values for respirable crystalline silica dust: 0.1 mg/m³
- Article 18a "The Commission shall ... evaluate the need to modify the limit value for respirable crystalline silica dust.

In addition Ms Lumen underlined that with the recital (6) of the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive the importance of the NEPSI agreement was recognized. This helps social partners to continue implementing the NEPSI agreement.

9) Current developments concerning European Social Dialogue (Andreas Strohbach, DG EMPL)

Mr Strohbach informed about the planned proclamation of the European Pillar of Social Rights by the Council of the EU, the European Parliament and the Commission during the Gothenburg Social Summit for fair jobs and growth in Gothenburg on 17 November 2017. The Summit, jointly organised by the Commission and the Swedish government, is meant to take forward the debate on the social dimension of Europe in going forward. The Social Pillar aims at strengthening the social *acquis* and delivering more effective rights to citizens. It focuses on employment and social aspects and on ensuring that the European social model is fit for the challenges of the 21st century. The objective of the Pillar is to contribute to social progress by supporting fair and well-functioning labour markets and welfare systems. Mr Strohbach underlined that social partners have to play a central role when it comes to the follow-up and implementation of the Pillar.

10) AOB

Ms Zierold presented the draft work programme of this Committee for 2018. She highlighted 3 main topics which are health and safety, skills and qualification as well as energy and industrial policy.

Social partners suggested specific topics to be added to the work programme before approving it.

Euracoal will take over the presidency of this Committee in 2018. **The new chair will be** and Vice President will be Mr Damm.

The Chair thanked the participants and closed the meeting.