



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities DG

Social Dialogue, Social Rights, Working Conditions, Adaptation to Change
Social Dialogue, Industrial Relations

Brussels, 12 January 2010

SECTORAL SOCIAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE "CHEMICAL INDUSTRY"

WORKING GROUP MEETING

held on 30 November 2009 in Brussels

DRAFT MINUTES

I) Working group " Competitiveness, Employment and Industrial Policy"

Chairpersons: Reinhard Reibsch (EMCEF) and Ladislav Novak (ECEG)

1. Opening and welcome

The social partners were welcomed by Reinhard Reibsch (EMCEF) and Ladislav Novak (ECEG).

2. Approval of the agenda and approval of minutes of the last meeting

The agenda and the minutes of last meeting were approved.

3. Update on REACH implementation

Sylvie Grajales (DG ENTR) updated the social partners concerning registration, substances of very high concern, classification & labelling, ECHA and other relevant issues (annex 1).

Social partners were invited to reflect on possible contributions to address the current challenges through measures within their sectoral social dialogue. Social partners discussed the challenges for SMEs, the deadline for registration, risks for companies,

language problems, national helpdesks, the need for outside experts to prepare dossiers and toxicologists and possible differences within the quality of dossiers.

Sylvie Grajales said that an extension of the registration deadline would not be possible, that high efforts would be made to translate as much as possible and that national helpdesks are available to assist in the local language.

4. European Commission consultation 'EU 2020'

Lars Engsted (DG EMPL) explained the background of the Commission consultation 'EU 2020' that has been launched on 24.11.2009. All stakeholders are invited to reply before 15.1.2010. The replies would be input for the Commission communication about the strategy for the next decade. He described the main areas of the document and said it should be subject to the next EU council in spring 2010. He underlined that there would be only very few focussed headlines which would be the main future challenges.

The consultation document can be found in all EU languages on:

<http://ec.europa.eu/eu2020/>

Social partners discussed labour market changes and needs for security and flexibility. They wanted to look at the website and respond to the consultation.

5. Preparation and update on United Nations climate change conference in Copenhagen 7 to 18 December 2009 / European Union emission trading system, EU ETS

J.-C. Lahaut (CEFIC) spoke about the preparation of the conference, the "2020 objective", the expectations and the possibilities for agreements and the necessity to agree benchmarks within the next year.

Social partners referred to their joint statement on the issue underlining the risks for enterprises in the case that no global agreement would be achieved.

6. Round table on the follow-up to the joint declaration on the global economic crisis and short country reports from the participants on the current economic development in the sector

Following the sectoral joint declaration on economic crisis of 13.5.2009 the national affiliates were invited to report on their national activities.

National affiliates reported on economic losses, dismissals, increased unemployment, more school based education programmes and other initiatives that would be necessary.

Since not all affiliates could report the missing ones were invited to report in writing.

7. Follow up on the High-Level-Group on the competitiveness of the European chemical industry incl. potential input and activities by social partners

No new developments could be reported.

8. Update on social partner project ‘strategies and activities to cope with the effects of demographic change’

FECCIA had launched a project to which ECEG and EMCEF are partners. It was decided to circulate information about this project to the participants.

II) Working group ‘Health and safety and Responsible Care’

Chairpersons: Jochen Wilkens (ECEG) and Reinhard Reibsch (EMCEF)

1. Opening

The social partners were welcomed by Jochen Wilkens (ECEG) and Reinhard Reibsch (EMCEF).

2. Approval of the agenda and approval of minutes of the last meeting

The agenda and the minutes of last meeting were approved. The report of OSHA Bilbao on activities in 2009 was postponed to the next meeting. It was also agreed to discuss recent developments in the nanotechnology in the next meeting.

3. Report on social partners project ‘External contractors on chemical industry Seveso sites – ECCIS’

Although the ECEG application for a grant for a project had been rejected by DG EMPL it has been decided to resubmit this application after having solved structural issues. It was considered important to find a concept for external contractors.

4. Report from CEFIC Responsible Care conference 2009 and on the overall progress of the Responsible Care programme in Europe and globally

Bernhard Thier (CEFIC) explained the CEFIC RC objectives, partnerships, award procedures and activities at global level (annex 2).

5. Report on ‘PRISME2’ project

Bernhard Thier (CEFIC) explained the background of the PRISME2 project. Numerous organisations are associated as partners to the project (annex 3).

6. European Commission activities on the revision of the Seveso Directives

Tobias Biermann (DG ENV) reported on the intentions to review the Seveso II Directive 96/82/EC concerning major industrial accidents (annex 4). An amendment of the Directive would be in particular necessary to adapt it to the new rules of the GHS system on classification and labelling. Furthermore, the Commission, supporting and promoting the development of CCS, recognizes that the Seveso II Directive could be a suitable

mean to regulate the safety of such CCS establishments where very large quantities of CO₂ are present.

The social partners wanted to be involved in the development of amendment of the Directive.

7. Activities around construction chemicals

Elisa Setién (EFCC) presented the main legislation applicable to construction chemicals (annex 5).

Social partners were concerned the users of chemical products would not pay high attention to the instructions for use. Sometimes there were language problems leading to misunderstandings. Cooperation with the producers of chemicals would be essential.

Social partners wanted to work together on improvements and to analyse what could be done.

8. Any other business

Social partners wanted to deal with 'nanotechnology' in the next meeting.

Next meetings:

3 March 2010 (WG)

11 May 2010 (Plenary)

7 July 2010 (WG)

14 October 2010 (WG)

2 December 2010 (WG)

The annexes can be downloaded from the "library" on the website of the SSDC Chemicals Industry: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=480&langId=en&intPageId=17>