

## S S D C "FURNITURE" WORK PROGRAMME 2008

ISSUES	METHODOLOGY	WHO	OUTPUT
Training & education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identification of joint issues               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Impact training systems on competitiveness</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Valorize the work to attract young persons</li> <li>▪ Upholstered furniture qualification definition and comparison</li> </ul>	<p>Workgroup Training</p> <p>Workgroup Training</p> <p>Workgroup Training &amp; Project partners</p>	<p>Preparation of a joint recommendation and of joint initiatives</p> <p>Project</p> <p>Study and certificate</p>
Occupational health and safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Work environment and health hazards, legislations and practices - a.o VOC's, Wood dust, Formaldehyde; seminar to identify best practices at national level</li> <li>▪ Formaldehyde classification; legislations in other parts world</li> <li>▪ Follow-up accident reduction project</li> </ul>	<p>Management Committee Project partners</p> <p>Management Committee Both social partners UEA EFBBW EFIC</p>	<p>Best practices guide seminar</p> <p>Joint opinion</p> <p>Dissemination</p>
Competitiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation competitiveness study DG E</li> <li>• Competitiveness priorities</li> </ul>	<p>Management Committee Management Committee</p>	<p>Joint opinion on study Joint recommendations</p>
Follow-up activities in the candidate countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New meetings in the candidate countries on health and safety subjects</li> </ul>	<p>Management Committee &amp; Project partners</p>	<p>Seminars Joint declaration of social partners in enlargement countries</p>

Issue: Training and education; Impact of training systems on the competitiveness

The social partners want to try and identify the costs and benefits connected to the different (vocational ) training and education systems to evaluate their impact on the competitiveness. They also want to compare the direct and indirect advantages to the alumni of the different systems during their professional career. The Workgroup Training and Education of the social dialogue committee furniture will look into the subject to make recommendation to the plenary meeting. Ultimate goal will be to come to a common recommendation on the most effective training systems both for employers and for employees.

Issue: Training and education; Valorisation of work in the sector

Shortage of qualified workers is becoming one of the most serious problems of the sector, not only in EU 15 but also and even more in EU27. The Workgroup Training and Education will analyse best practices in promoting and increased participation of workers both in the sector and in similar labour intensive sectors. Specifically the perception of the sector by new entrants can be analysed in view of formulating actions or recommendations.

Issue: Training and education; Upholstered furniture training and qualification

Mobility of the workers in the sector on EU level becomes more important to offset the shortage of workers. The definition of the qualifications for upholsterers would be a start to help increase such mobility. It would be necessary to analyse existing training and qualifications expected by the employers. Goal could be to come to a EU certificate that would guarantee a certain level of competences acquired either through schooling or directly. The Workgroup Training and Education will the needs to come to the definition of such a certificate and how to add the elaboration to existing initiatives. Involvement of training institutes etc. will be a required.

Issue: Occupational health and safety; work environment; guidelines

The furniture industry are confronted with a number of problems in the working environment that are not always dealt with in the best possible way. The management committee will formulate a project that will make an overview of the situation concerning the work environment in the furniture industry.

In the context of both earlier projects and also of current discussions in the EU and in several member States, it has become clear that there are many problems with the application of existing legislations that concern the working environment in the sector specifically concerning carcinogenic materials eg wood dust, VOC's formaldehyde. In other countries there has been systems put in place that help and assist the companies to achieve compliance with such regulations (eg in France, the social security system intervenes in the cost of reducing the exposure to wood dust in the factories). The project will identify first of all the issues, their legislative situation, and how it is being dealt with (best

practices) to be presented in some sort of best practice guidelines. The results would be presented in a seminar addressed to the sector social partners in the EU countries. Such a seminar will also allow formulating joint opinions on subjects that are still under discussion.

Issue: Occupational health and safety; formaldehyde

Formaldehyde has been classified as carcinogenic by the WHO; in France there is a legislation that classifies Formaldehyde as carcinogenic, in the US there is a new legislation that limits the exposure to formaldehyde; the EU is examining whether to classify formaldehyde as carcinogenic. As sector directly concerned the social partners should formulate a joint opinion. Using the information collected in the work environment project the management committee will prepare a joint opinion on the subject, if possible in cooperation with consumers and other interested parties.

Issue: Occupational health and safety; accident reduction

The individual social partners will continue to promote the results and best practice guidelines of the accident reduction project to their members, not only through an internet site but also giving presentations in seminars and meetings organised for other reasons.

Issue: Competitiveness DG Enterprise study

The management committee will prepare a joint opinion of the study executed by DG Enterprise as soon as this is generally available.

Issue: Competitiveness; Priorities

In the context of the furniture competitiveness conference organised by DG Enterprise in January 2005, DG Enterprise asked the social partners to formulate three priority measures that would lead to cost reduction and three measures that would lead to increased markets. The management committee will examine what can be joint recommendations to DG Enterprise of the European Commission and prepare a joint opinion.

Issue: Follow-up activities in the enlargement countries

The management committee will prepare a project to organise similar seminars on accident reduction and work environment in the enlargement countries as those are currently not part of the ongoing projects. The project will be conceived as a continuation of the transfer project on social dialogue and will follow a similar structure. Project management committee could parallel the one for the work environment.

## Meetings:

Plenary meeting: the social partners want to organise two plenary meetings 2008. Dates can be set in function of the availability of meeting facilities.

Management Committee: the social partners will organise two preparatory management committee meetings. Meetings will be held in the offices of the EFBWW. No interpretation will be needed. Participants 6 of whom half from Brussels

Workgroup Training and Education : the social partners will organise two meetings of the workgroup Training and Education, if possible to coincide with the Management Committee meetings. The facilities of the EFBWW will be used for the meetings. It is possible that on the side of EFBWW a limited interpretation service is needed. Participants max 10 at least 2/3 from Brussels.