

SECTORAL SOCIAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE FOR MARITIME TRANSPORT

13 MARCH 2017

DRAFT MINUTES

Chair: Mr Tomas Abrahamsson

1. APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT AGENDA

The SSDC approved the draft agenda for the SSDC meeting of 13.03.2017.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE SSDC MEETING OF 27.10.2016

The minutes of the previous SSDC meeting were approved.

3. MATTERS ARISING

a. Mid-term review of the EU maritime transport strategy

With regards to the mid-term review of the EU maritime transport strategy, the discussion focused among others on the definition of "attractiveness", which was attributed to shortage of opportunities in the maritime sector. It was suggested that this point will be followed bilaterally by the social partners. ETF mentioned that it had produced an assessment of the Commission report and shared it with ECSA. ECSA acknowledged the ETF assessment but stated that it had not yet produced any assessment of its own that it could share.

b. The 2017 European Shipping Week (ESW)

The overall impression regarding the organized 2017 European Shipping Week (27th February – 3rd March) was positive; reference was made in particular to the joint ECSA/ETF seminar on the 27 February – with the Chair and ETF considering that it was very well organized

ECSA indicated that the ESW went very well and that many decision-makers attended the event, even more than during the previous ESW in 2015.

ETF highlighted the importance of the Seminar on Social Dialogue during which frank discussions took place, including the intervention of the previous Deputy Director-General of DG MOVE, Mr Karamitsos who declared, among other things, that he regretted the failure of the proposal for a Manning Directive and highlighted how fear of retaliatory action proved baseless given the attitude of China who were given access to European shipping markets but refused to grant reciprocal rights to European shipping. It was also highlighted that constructive debates took place during the Flagship conference and that the event got good press coverage.

ECSA made comments of the same vein, stressing that it was pleased by the results of the event. The week was well attended, had quality speakers and reflected a general enthusiasm for the shipping sector. Concerning the joint event with ETF, ECSA agreed it was not just an afternoon of platitudes. The fact that this event was staged and well attended was very encouraging and ECSA hoped to be able to hold similar

events with ETF at future ESWs. The presentation of the project from the consultants was equally good and should be repeated in future editions. It noted the ETF conference on 28 February was very interesting albeit polemical- thought and debate provoking. ECSA pointed to the useful contributions of Director Kopczynska of DG MOVE and her question to ETF and ECSA – what are the ways to facilitate Europeans to work at sea?

DG MOVE commented in a favourable manner the event and indicated that it probably was the best way to work on issues linked to the sea also for the future.

ETF indicated that some of the topics raised in the ESW should be discussed in the framework of the European Social Dialogue. It felt that the aim should be to move the debate on from the concept of a common EU maritime space focused on customs and administrative burdens to one that includes the real social issues around jobs and training opportunities for EU seafarers.

For ETF, it is clear that the real benchmark in terms of the competitiveness of European shipping is to include the social dimension and the continuous improvement of the minimum international standards outlined in the MLC, 2006.

ECSA replied by saying that what needs to be discussed is how the future of the shipping industry in Europe can be secured in terms of creating job opportunities, while remaining, at the same time, competitive.

The sector will have to deal with technological changes and other drive changers. Jobs will disappear and will have to be replaced. A joint reflection on how the sector will change in the next 5-10 years would be needed.

Chair concluded that this year's ESW was better than the previous one two years earlier. He thanked ECSA for hard work in organizing it.

c. Administrative burdens for Seafarers: setting up of an Industry Task Force

DG MOVE (Jukka Savo) presented the Reporting Formalities Directive and developments on its ongoing evaluation, including impact on administrative burden for seafarers.

The REFIT evaluation is ongoing and the stakeholder feedback is being analysed. It is clear that the Directive has not produced the expected results. The reporting formalities have been fully harmonized only in a few Member States and information has to be often resubmitted. Paper is still commonly used. The information is very seldom reused for reduction of administrative burden on consequent port calls.

The Commission evaluation report is expected to be ready this summer.

ECSA noted nervousness that if the new proposal is only adopted in mid-2018, discussions will be delayed/ it will suffer repercussions of a new Commission and new EP in beginning 2019. It therefore asked if this can be somewhat fast-tracked.

DG MOVE noted that mid2018 is very soon as the IA process takes 18 months and hasn't started yet. It noted that in order to fast-track the issue it is trying to piggyback it on other issues like Digital Single Market.

DG MOVE said social partners can have more discussions in industry to promote a single solution – as DG MOVE hears a lot of complaints but at the same time it also receives different voices from national associations on the willingness to go for one solution.

ETF suggested to fine-tune the work as social partners and to organize for a campaign to assist the process and endorse the joint work on this. It was agreed to work with the EP to try to get a message from the TRAN committee for e.g. through a public hearing; to keep the MT and EE Presidencies on board with the topic; to try for joint amendments in any documents related to digital single market.

d. Harassment and Bullying

ETF noticed that ECSA did not update its website nor the number of times its link has been viewed. ETF also encouraged both of the social partners to promote women's integration through the event on 8 March.

ECSA said that it updating the relative links and intended to host the material on its new website. It is ready to keep on acting on this issue.

ECSA reminded that the maritime transport sector is the only one which adopted global guidelines on this issue; which is something the social partners should be proud of in fact, these guidelines could act as a reference to others. It noted that their impact on reducing incidents will depend on a lot of things apart from the guidelines- a lot of time it is more an issue concerning cultural differences. ECSA hoped the material could be helpful to changing behaviours and used in training programmes and used before incidents happen.

e. Projects: Blueprint on Sectoral Cooperation

DG EMPL (Chiara Riondino) presented the Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills as a new framework for strategic cooperation between key stakeholders in a given economic sector to deliver sector-specific skills solutions. It was conceived to mobilise stakeholders from industry, education and training and employment to use resources and funding instruments more efficiently to implement new demand-driven sectoral skills strategies in Europe that join up demand and supply concerns.

Its main objectives are to translate the sector's economic growth strategy into skills needs (e.g. new skill requirements, new job profiles, requalification of current workforce); and to develop concrete actions to satisfy those needs (e.g. new vocational education and training curricula, new qualifications). For the current call under the Erasmus+ Programme (deadline 2 May), six pilot sectors have been chosen: the maritime technologies, tourism, automotive, space, defence and textile, leather, clothing & footwear. Other sectors were being considered for a second call, likely to be published in the autumn, including maritime shipping.

ETF indicated its support for such a project and also its possible interest in applying for this call, in particular since the issue of skills shortage is important, even more so than the skills mismatch.

ECSA concurred on the fact that this call seemed to potentially be an opportunity for the social partners and the shipping industry here. Other industries are looking to where they would be in years to come – so should shipping! ECSA asked if this would solely be linked to EU or also to regions linked to EU – e.g. Black Sea.

DG EMPL said the projects need to be defined by the sectors themselves so there is the opportunity to shape the criteria according to the needs of the sector. They very much valued a forward skills strategy and to link it to opportunities in education and training. DG EMPL said the project must be European and the partners must be European but there was an opportunity to associate partners.

4. REPORT ITEMS

a. Malta's EU Presidency: possible joint initiatives

The Chair noted that the Maltese Presidency had done a lot in this sector. He noted the Ministerial Stakeholder conference to be held at the end of March, where the Valletta declaration is expected to be agreed.

ETF reminded that there will be a Ministerial Stakeholder Conference in Malta (28-29 March) to which ETF's Secretary-General, Mr Chagas, will take part.

ETF indicated its willingness to add something to the Valletta Declaration, in particular on topics such as employment, labour market and jobs. ETF added that the Digital Assembly could also be an occasion to publish a joint statement on administrative burden.

ECSA noted that it agreed that the two Secretariats could try to come out with some joint statements on upcoming events under the MT Pres – in particular, the Digital Assembly in June was a good occasion to reiterate the joint messages sent to the REFIT exercise on the RFD in December 2016. .

ETF informed the Committee that it has had a meeting with the Maltese Transport Minister in December 2016 to discuss issues at stake on the agenda of the upcoming Valletta Stakeholder Conference.

The Chair concluded that through contacts between the secretariats, ETF and ECSA could try to come up with joint statements on the MT Pres events – e.g. the Ministerial/stakeholder conference, the Digital Assembly in June.

b. Schengen Visa Code : update on the ongoing legislative procedure

ECSA indicated that negotiations on the file are blocked in the trilogue exercise and that since the last SSDC (that took place on 27 October 2016), there have been no developments. One of the issues is that the European Parliament insists on including provisions on a humanitarian visas into this file. It noted that after having met with the MT Presidency in January 2017, the social partners drew up joint statements on this issue, in particular highlighting that there may be a regression of seafarers' rights if some proposals in the Council's mandate find their way through to any finally agreed text.

ECSA concluded by saying that it is monitoring the situation while ETF indicated that in relation to the transit of seafarers, there was progress in respect to Ukraine, but that the most important thing was to improve the situation for seafarers.

c. Migrants at Sea

It was indicated that administrative procedures for migrants are needed for military people when they do rescue migrants. ETF and ECSA agreed that there was maybe scope for a new joint initiative here and that the secretariat would try to obtain concrete examples and strong feedback to submit to the Commission.

d. Commission study on the implementation of responsibilities of labour supplying countries pursuant to the MLC, 2006

DG MOVE (George Kirmizidis) reminded the SSDC that a presentation of the study was delivered during the SSDC meeting of May 2016 and Social Partners were given until end of the year for comments. The Chair noted that the social partners had issued a joint statement with some common positions on some aspects of the report's recommendations. ETF said it was eager to hear from the EU Commission on how it

would follow up on the recommendations and that it regretted the joint statement from social partners was very limited in scope. ECSA said that it had drafted a position but in order to be loyal/consistent to the agreed common position with ETF, where a common position was found with ETF, it substituted its position with the joint one. In parallel, Member State representatives at the COSS meeting have also received feedback on this study. Currently the Commission is analyzing the collected feedback.

e. SSDC Chairmanship/Vice-Chairmanship: Elections

The SSDC paid tribute to the work of the Chair, Mr Thomas Abrahamsson.

The Chair held the Presidency of this Committee since 1997, so for 20 years (with a break of two years).

Mr Abrahamsson, who announced that he was now stepping down as Chair, said that the SSDC has been fairly successful.

He reminded the agreements negotiated by the social partners in the past which have been transformed in Directives and also other very positive joint efforts such as the joint effort of ECS and ETF on the Directive on the exclusion of seafarers.

The Committee unanimously elected its new Chairman, George Koltsidopoulos from the Union of Greek Shipowners (UGS), and Vice Chairman Kenny Reinhold from the Swedish Union for Service and Communications Employees (SEKO).

f. Joint project

In relation to the 1st pillar of the project (the agreement of the social partners of the maritime transport sector of 5 December 2017 on the 2014 Amendments to the ILO MLC), DG EMPL explained that the agreement is currently being examined by the Commission; the Commission will come back to the social partners on this issue.

The Chairman noted that the reports on Pillars 2 and 3 were both presented at the Joint conference during European Shipping week by the researchers themselves – he now asked the SSDC what should be done with them and how should their outcomes/recommendations be taken forward.

ETF said it would be important to follow up the state of play for Pillar 1. Regarding Pillar 2 it said that it would be an opportunity for a joint call for specific funding on Maritime Apprenticeships and Training. As for Pillar 3 on health and safety a follow-up on several issues would be needed. In relation to the pillars 2 and 3, the social partners indicated their willingness to disseminate the results of the study and also to encourage use and exchange of best practices.

g. Work programme for 2017-2018 including a possible joint project on enhancing European Seafarers' skills.

The adoption of the joint work-programme was postponed. ECSA needed some time to consider and react to some new suggestions/additions submitted by ETF only at the end of the previous week. The Chairman therefore asked the spokespersons and the secretariats to work on the work programme and to try to reach agreement by written procedure before the next SSDC.

DG EMPL insisted on the importance of the approval of the work programme.

5. Exchange with former Deputy Director General of DG MOVE, Mr Fotis Karamitsos

The European Social partners invited Mr Karamitsos to a farewell drink on the occasion of his imminent retirement. Before the drinks Mr Karamitsos addressed the

SSDC indicating the main challenges that he had to address while at DG MOVE. He paid tribute to the work of the SSDC, since the social partners have been able to address, jointly, all the more relevant and challenging issues of the maritime sector. Whilst recognizing that this SSDC has indeed generated many concrete results that were later included in the EU acquis, or took the form of guidelines/reports in a number of relevant areas, Mr Karamistos encouraged the social partners to think "outside of the box" to improve employment access to the labour market for young Europeans against a background of high unemployment in Southern European countries in particular.

ETF praised Mr Karamistos for his encouragement and stressed that the support by the European Commission would greatly help the SSDC for maritime transport unleash its potential when addressing the issue of employment. Reference was made in particular to the potential of the Motorways of the Sea which, according to ETF should be considered as intra-community voyages – as opposed to international voyages – and designed to promote employment opportunities for European seafarers

6. DATE OF THE NEXT SSDC MEETING: Tuesday 27 June 2017