



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG

Employment and Social Legislation, Social Dialogue
Social dialogue, Industrial Relations

Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee on Postal Services
Working group meeting on 10 May 2011, Brussels
Accident prevention and exchange with other sectors working groups
Minutes

1. Accident prevention working group

The meeting was chaired by Ms Ausprung (POSTEUROP), who welcomes the new representatives of Magyar Posta, Mr Balazs from the company's accident prevention department and Ms Laskay from the international relations department. The Chair invited all the participants to introduce themselves.

The Chair explained that she would assure the chairmanship of the accident prevention working group on an interim basis, since the representatives from Magyar Posta did not want to continue as chair. It is important to finish the ongoing work and to be able to present results to the plenary meeting of the social dialogue committee in September.

The Chair gave a presentation of the state of play of the working group's activities.



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She reported that a telephone discussion had taken place between the working group members from both sides in order to finalise the questionnaire.

Ms Castellarnieu-Dupont (UNI Europa) expressed her satisfaction with the work done, with the final questionnaire asking questions that are important to both sides. She considered that the questionnaire was of good quality, but that there were some very technical questions. These may be difficult to answer by some trade unions, but all will make their best effort. While UNI Europa did not have any particular problems with the contents of the questionnaire, there were still some open queries regarding the timing and the technical details for sending out the questionnaire.

The Chair recognised that some questions may be difficult to answer, and that this would also be to the companies. If there is no data for a particular question, this is a result in and of itself. Everyone will make an effort to answer the questions to the full extent possible.

Ms Mir (UNI Europa) agreed that the questionnaire was well structured. She hoped that this would be a good instrument to prevent accidents in the future, since prevention is most important.

Ms Laskay (POSTEUROP) wondered about the reference period that the questionnaire would refer to.

The Chair, Ms Kromjong (POSTEUROP) and Ms Castellarneau-Dupont (UNI Europa) agreed that the questions should be answered for the calendar year 2010, which will still need to be specified at the beginning of the questionnaire.

Ms Castellarneau-Dupont (UNI Europa) requested that the questionnaire would also be translated into French.

The Chair responded that this could be done on a case-by-case basis and that the work would proceed in English and French.

Ms Kromjong (POSTEUROP) cautioned about the effects of receiving responses in languages other than English, which would add a large amount of complexity in the analysis.

Mr Baldwin (UNI Europa) pointed out that many questions only required a checkmark or a yes/no answer, so that understanding the replies wouldn't depend on the language in most cases.

The Chair agrees, but underscored that the analysis would be carried out in English. She enquired about the timeline for sending out the questionnaires.

Ms Castellarneau-Dupont (UNI Europa) recommended the end of June at the latest, since it would be very difficult to manage in July and August.

The Chair agreed with this suggestion. An Excel sheet would be used to collect the figures and a background report with the main results could be prepared. The first results would be presented in the plenary meeting of the social dialogue committee on 27 September. For this purpose a telephone conference should take place at the end of August or the beginning of September, so that the working group members could agree on the presentation for the plenary.

Mr Schwarz (European Commission) pointed out that the format of the output of social dialogue activities was independent of project funding by the Commission. Therefore the accident prevention working group could produce a brochure, report or best practice guide and adopt it as a document of the social dialogue committee, even if there is no funding provided by the Commission.

Ms Mir (UNI Europa) suggested that the working group should cooperate with the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work in Bilbao. The agency undertakes activities to promote healthy workplaces. The agency could also be used as a contact to disseminate the results of the questionnaire.

Ms Kromjong (POSTEUROP) supported that suggestion. The Chair cautioned that it would remain to be seen whether the quality and quantity of feedback received make it worthwhile to contact the Bilbao agency.

Ms Castellarneau-Dupont (UNI Europa) highlighted that the most important task was to encourage the relevant colleagues to participate and to answer the questionnaire.

The Chair agreed and pointed out that a number of questionnaires had been launched in the social dialogue committee's different working groups. The enthusiasm to answer another one is therefore likely limited.

Mr Mir (UNI Europa) brought the Safety and Health Management System of the ILO to the attention of participants. She pointed out that 28 April was the world day for safety and health at work. The approach used by the ILO to support accident prevention is in line with the work done in this working group.

2. Exchange with other sectors working group

Ms Ausprung (POSTEUROP) chaired the meeting and explained that the chairmanship would be assured on a rotating basis between various POSTEUROP representatives.

Mr Schwarz (European Commission) gave an overview presentation on the tools available at EU level for sharing knowledge on restructuring. These include the European Monitoring Centre for Change (EMCC), hosted by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) in Dublin, the European Commission's project on anticipating restructuring in enterprises (ARENAS) and the interactive Anticipedia website, hosted by the Commission's Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion.



Restructuring EU.ppt

The Chair presented the state of play of the working group's activities.



Exchange with other
sectors working group

The Chair also reported that short exchanges took place on the employers' side with the sectoral social dialogue committees for telecommunications and for banking. Both currently work on issues related to skills and training.

Ms Wiesner (UNI Europa) asked to be informed before each meeting of the working group on what is to be presented. On this occasion she was surprised, which should not happen again. She wondered whether the old approach to the work was now abandoned. She stated for the record that UNI Europa had contacted all the trade unions of the selected sectors and had obtained positive responses from all of them.

The Chair and Ms Kromjong (POSTEUROP) clarified that work had continued, but that it became clear that the willingness on the employers' side of other committees to enter into an exchange with the postal services committee was very limited. It was therefore necessary to discuss how to proceed. Different sectors could be contacted and the topics could be changed.

Ms Wiesner and Ms Berger (UNI Europa) suggested proceeding separately on the employers' and the union side. The working group could draw up a collection of

questions, which would then be explored separately with both sides of the other committees. This is of course easier for the trade unions, since longstanding contacts already exist.

Ms Mir (UNI Europa) pointed out that in her experience the social dialogue committee obtained the best results when it was working together, instead of both sides working separately.

Ms Wiesner (UNI Europa) agreed, yet saw no other way to make progress. The goal would of course remain, bringing together the results from the two sides later.

Mr Costa (POSTEUROP) was of the opinion that the objective of the working group needed to be discussed. It appeared to him that ends were being confused with means. The working group should serve as a place of reflection at the service of the entire social dialogue committee and should focus on issues of interest to the committee. For this purpose the working group could invite external experts, for instance from BUSINESSEUROPE, CEEP or the ETUC, to speak and discuss on specific topics.

The Chair underlined that the question about the working group's objectives was important. A reflection on the goals appears necessary and the group should move away from the singular focus on restructuring, as this is such a sensitive topic.

Ms Wiesner (UNI Europa) suggested starting this process by desk research. A one-page summary could be produced on each sector of interest. Afterwards experts could be invited to speak on specific projects.

The Chair agreed to this suggestion and expressed her hope that this could already take place at the plenary meeting in September. She then thanked the participants and the interpreters and closed the meeting.