EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG

Employment and Social Governance
Social dialogue

MINUTES
PLENARY MEETING
12/05/2017

Chair: Fons Bakkes (Intergraf) and Simon Dubbins (UNI Europa Graphical)

1. Opening of the meeting – Approval of the draft agenda

The draft agenda was approved.

2. State of the industry - market insights (Smithers Pira)

Mr Nick Waite presented a comprehensive overview of recent trends in the printing industry (see presentation in annex). He explained that the observed trends remain similar to those presented two years ago: overall declining demand and rising automation resulting in decreased levels of employments; packaging/labels follow the economy and are thus on the rise; graphic printing is declining (magazines/newspapers suffering whilst books are steady); catalogues printing is declining.

Mr Waite concluded by stating that the sector is more reactive than proactive and could be more active in developing new products.

3. Adapting Successfully to the impact of the 4th industrial revolution in the printing industry

a) Lessons learned since 2010 (EU Project)

John Kirkham (JK) recalled the 2010 project whose research revealed trends of overcapacity, declining prices, increasing costs, digital technology and cheap imports from Eastern Europa/China, recession. The project resulted in a report and a toolkit which is considered useful by members.

In 2017, the printing industry looks more optimistic, smaller but generally healthier. JK confirmed the trends presented under point 2.

b) Skills & competencies required today

JK explained that an ageing workforce and the difficulty to attract young people are the biggest challenges faced by the industry which is usually perceived as old. Another challenge lies in the evolution of skills (e.g. merging of IT and design skills).

c) Recommendations to stakeholders

JK listed some initiatives which could make the industry more successful and sustainable such as a second version of the toolkit (interactive/online), conferences and learning seminars based on the toolkit, more sharing of best practice, reinforced continuous learning and development, use of game applications to stimulate learning, move to cross-industry collaboration. Some interactive ranking of the initiatives took place during the meeting and the results will be analysed to feed the next programme of the Committee.

Some delegates commented on the presentation: Germany (workforce average age of 55, problems for recruiting skilled staff despite good training system); UK (industry must be more attractive but the potential in own workforce should also be better exploited e.g. young women); France (share the challenges identified and will launch a major campaign about apprenticeship using social media).

4. EU project funding opportunities

Chiara Riondino presented the "Blueprint for sectoral cooperation on skills" which is the 3rd lot of a call for proposals for Sector Skills Alliances under the Erasmus+ programme. This first call concerns 6 sectors: automotive, defence, maritime, space, textile/clothing/leather/footwear, and tourism. Next call will be launched in autumn for another set of sectors (selection to be confirmed).

The paper industry (CEPI), alongside the graphical industry (Intergraf), is being considered as a potential sector ("Forest-Based Industries"). This could be of interest for the graphical industry. See presentation in annex.

5. Lifelong learning

a) Best practices from the education sector – ZFA Medien

Thomas Hagenhofer (TH) presented the project "Social Virtual Learning" which was funded by the German Minister of Education & Research. This project was developed to attract more young people in the industry and to tackle the various challenges observed: speed of technological change, increased diversity of machines, adjust education to a generation of digital natives.

They developed an interactive system based on the concept of augmented reality where students can virtually work/assemble machines and collaborate with other students. First results are encouraging as it provides the feeling of a real machine and gives access to deep knowledge whilst experienced as an education game. Final conference takes place in June 2017. They applied for a follow-up project as a major hurdle encountered is the unavailability of 3D models.

Delegates (IT, NL) raised a few questions related to the practicality considering standard classroom of 24 students, the cost of education and the necessity to evaluate results on real machines. TH confirms that this is indeed a new teaching method which proves effective (assessed improved teaching results by 15%). Schools cannot afford to buy the large variety of expensive and state-of-the-art printing machines. Such instruments are therefore a response to that problem.

b) Best practices from the education sector - Grafoc

Herman Staes (HS) shared another experience of a pilot project aiming at educating job seekers on the workplace rather than in a training centre (with VDAB in Belgium). Trainings take place in the job seeker's neighbourhood and are organised in function of

vacancies. Main objective was to tackle the obstacle of mobility. It does not however provide a recognised education certificate. See presentation in annex.

6.   Digitilization

a)   Education and training at Roularta

Pol Debuysere presented the training policy in place at Roularta (see presentation in annex) which supports both the company in achieving its goals and the development of employees. Key elements are: the nomination of mentors (learning from each other); the establishment of a 2-yearly training planning collaboration with the works council and union delegation; the mapping of competences on the basis of employees' tests/screenings; training plan for vulnerable/risks groups (45+, long absence, employees with warning). Education/training is increasingly discussed in work council.

7.   Lessons learned (open discussions)

In the exchange, several delegates congratulated the organisers for the agenda, interesting practical examples and good collaboration throughout the meeting. More discussion on the directions that printing companies could take to ensure their sustainability would be welcome. It was highlighted that more collaboration with the paper sector could be sought as some topics are similar they could benefit from some joint work. It was noted that sharing the programme longer in advance might be useful to attract more delegates (especially on the side of employers).

8.   AOB

None.

Annexes

- Point 2 – State of the industry
- Point 4 – Skills Alliance and Blueprint
- Point 5b – Best practices education sector - Grafoc
- Point 6a – Education and training - Roularta

Annex: List of participants 12/05/2017

Employers	*Workers*
Mr Fons BAKKES (NL) Ms Beatrice KLOSE (EU) Mr Sjoerd WANROOIJ (NL) Ms Karen D'HAESELEER (BE) Ms Dagnija VANAGA (LV) Ms Valérie BOBIN (FR) Ms Monica SCORZINO (IT) Ms Diletta SCATTOLIN (IT) Mr Herman STAES (BE) Ms Alison GRACE (EU) Mr Marcel LAMAIN (NL)	Mr Simon DUBBINS (UK) Mr Nicola KONSTANTINOU (EU) Mr Jose Carlos RUIZ (ES) Mr Alfredo SANCHEZ (ES) Mr David LETAILLEUR (FR) Mr Georg Pall Skulason (ICE) Mr Ingi Rafn OLAFSON (ICE) Mr Ian TONKS (UK) Ms Louisa BULL (UK) Mr Pier VERDERIO (IT) Ms Veronique ERNOULD (EU) Mr Thomas HAGENHOFER (DE) Mr Hans Hachim SCHULZE (DE) Mr René RUDOLF (DE) Mr Aldis MISEVICS (LV) Ms Nina MEZAN (SL) Mr Niels EDVARD KILLI (NO) Mr Pol DEBUYSERE (BE) Mr Patrick VANDENBERGHE (BE) Ms Ann VERHELST (BE)
11 employer representatives **(7 women, 4 men)** **(2 EU, 1 EU-13, 8 EU-15)**	**20 worker representatives** **(4 women, 16 men)** **(2 EU, 2 EU-13, 13 EU-15, 3 non-EU)**
Other participants	
Mr John KIRKHAM – Facta Consult Mr Herman STAES – Grafoc Mr Nicholas WAITE – Smithers Pira	
European Commission	
Mr Isabelle Laurent (EMPL.A.2)	