



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

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

Brussels, 19 June 2013

**SECTORAL SOCIAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE MEETING
EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES**

**ALBERT BORSCHETTE CONFERENCE CENTRE
19 APRIL 2013**

MINUTES

Participants:

Employer representatives

Ms Miette Dechelle, UEPG, Belgium
Mr Zygmunt Borkowski, EURACOAL, Poland
Ms Gitta Hulik, EURACOAL, Belgium
Ms Marina Schneider, EURACOAL, Germany
Ms Cecilia Anderson, EUROMINES, Sweden
Mr Ferdinand Gens, EUROMINES, Germany
Mr Andrzej Niechwiej, EUROMINES, Poland
Ms Katarzyna Palaczanis, EUROMINES, Belgium
Mr Manfred Steinhage, EUROMINES, Germany
Mr Rafał Szkop, EUROMINES, Poland
Ms Krisztina Vujkov Tomor, EUROMINES, Hungary
Mr Ákos Zoltay, EUROMINES, Hungary
Ms Claire Lanne, IMA-Europe, Belgium
Ms Florence Lumen, IMA-Europe, Belgium

Employee representatives

Mr Jean-Pierre Damm, FNEM FO, France (in the chair)
Ms Corinna Zierold, IndustriALL, Belgium
Mr Juan Carlos Alvarez Liebana, CCOO, Spain
Mr Patrick Carragher, BACM, United Kingdom
Mr Victor José Fernandez Vazquez, FITAG-UGT, Spain
Mr Lars-Erik Folkesson, IF METALL, Sweden
Mr Krzysztof Leśniowski, NSZZ "S", Poland
Mr Dariusz Potyrała, ZZG, Poland
Mr Ferenc Rabi, BDSZ, Hungary
Mr Bernhard Rothleitner, PRO-GE, Austria
Mr Károly Stanitz, BDSZ, Hungary
Mr José Luis Villares Suarez, CCOO, Spain

European Commission

Mr Murad Wiśniewski, DG EMPL, Belgium
Ms Katrien Vander Kuylen, DG EMPL, Belgium

1. Adoption of the agenda

The draft agenda was adopted with two amendments: point 5 was deleted, due to the unavailability of Mr Sylvain Lefebvre of IndustriALL; and the European network on silica (NEPSI) was included under any other business.

2. Adoption of the minutes

The draft minutes of the last SSDC meeting of 22 February 2013 were adopted with one amendment concerning Mr Ferenc Rabi's statement under point 4.

3. ESCO

Ms Katrien Vander Kuylen presented the European taxonomy of Skills, Competences and Occupations (ESCO) that was in the process of being established by the Commission. She finished her presentation by inviting the organisations represented on the committee to join the sectoral ESCO reference group on heavy industry and mining that would be formed at the end of April 2013, pointing out that EUROMINES had already joined.

Mr Zygmunt Borkowski asked about practical successes in job-matching. Ms Vander Kuylen cited the recent improvements to make the search on the job mobility portal EURES more focused as a success. Prompted by Ms Miette Dechelle on reference groups, she gave examples of existing reference groups in other sectors and the different stakeholders that belonged to them in addition to social partners. Probed further by Ms Dechelle on whether information could be circulated to the committee, she made clear that members of the reference groups were even encouraged to spread information in their respective networks. Ms Claire Lanne raised contributions from beyond the formal members of a reference group, which were generally possible but subject to the functioning of individual reference groups. Ms Krisztina Vujkov Tomor asked about the modalities of appointing members to the reference group. Ms Vander Kuylen explained that members could be replaced at any time, but new members would have to undergo the same appointment procedure by DG EMPL as the original members during the establishment of a reference group. Mr Victor José Fernandez Vazquez inquired why mining and heavy industry had been grouped together. Ms Vander Kuylen responded that both sectors were small and overlaps between stakeholders existed. Mr Manfred Steinhage requested a list of the members of the reference group, which Ms Vander Kuylen agreed to furnish. She also agreed to update the committee on ESCO in about a year's time, as requested by Mr Jean-Pierre Damm.

4. Future work on skill needs

Ms Katarzyna Palaczanis held a presentation on skills requirements in extractive industries. She commenced with demographic trends, which showed a decline in the number of people entering education across Europe, and went on to focus on Sweden and Poland – two countries with strong mining activity. Following an overview of mining education in Europe, where most mining universities had been transformed into technical universities, she presented surveys carried out in Sweden, Poland, the Czech Republic and Bulgaria as well as Australia and Canada. She concluded by stressing that EUROMINES supported ESCO.

Referring to her point about communicating the industry to young people in Europe, Mr Damm asked how new technologies and other competences they could acquire in the industry could be communicated effectively at a time when industry was being destroyed in Europe, most notably in France. He called for the presentation to be followed up by the committee.

5. OELs for NO₂

Mr Steinhage informed the committee of a phone call with the Scientific Committee on Occupational Exposure Limits (SCOEL), which had changed its draft recommendation for exposure limits to NO₂ from 0.2 to 0.5 ppm. For NO, it would give a draft recommendation in the range of 1 ppm. Mr Steinhage considered these limits as very low, since the old limits in Germany were 5 ppm for NO₂ and 25 ppm for NO. The committee now had to wait for the draft recommendations to be made in June, in order to react.

6. ETS

Mr Murad Wiśniewski held a presentation on the future of the Emissions Trading System (ETS), provided by the responsible service at DG CLIMA, which was holding a stakeholder forum on the same day and could, therefore, not attend the committee meeting. Several committee members also attended this stakeholder forum on the green paper on a 2030 framework for climate and energy policies.

Ms Gitta Hulik criticised the Commission for having drafted changes to the ETS in the form of its proposal on the back-loading of trade allowances, which had ultimately been voted down by the citizens' representatives in the European Parliament. With regard to the green paper, she raised the question if the Commission was competent to re-open the climate policy package, while it was not competent to open the Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) package. Second, she asked why carbon allowances should be back-loaded if emission targets would be met anyway. She went on to say that there was no reason why sectors, such as agriculture, should not be covered by the ETS. Third, she questioned the fairness of further burdening member states that were already under a heavy burden to comply with the ETS. In her view, international mechanisms should not be touched. Furthermore, she criticised the market entry of renewable energy as a distortion of market forces, due to the heavy subsidies for research and development on renewables. Asking where the money for all the market intervention should come from in the future, she opined that more money should instead be invested into the modernisation of existing energy sources.

Mr Fernandez Vazquez alleged that carbon emissions were demonised in Europe, often by academics without sufficient knowledge in the field. He stated that there were emissions of more than 200,000 different substances, with CO₂ being the least harmful of all greenhouse gases. Furthermore, renewable energy sources produced as much CO₂ as coal and agriculture as much as all extractive industries, while Brussels airport alone emitted as much CO₂ as mines that were being closed down. Lastly, he posited that carbon emissions would simply be imported if Europe abandoned its extractive industries to countries like Russia. Mr Fernandez Vazquez criticised the debate to be focused exclusively on climate change and not on energy policy. He worried that stakeholder consultations were not serious and the committee would not be listened to.

Mr Wiśniewski reassured the committee that its position would be taken into account, both through the outcomes of social dialogue and during the stakeholder consultation. He cited the joint opinion on ETS back-loading adopted after the last meeting, which had contributed to the result of the vote in the European Parliament, as a clear sign that the voice of the committee had an impact on decision-making. He also explained the different positions of the Commission and the European Parliament as well as the different policy priorities of different Commission DGs. However, Ms Hulik criticised that coal had not been included among indigenous energy sources in the green paper. Mr Damm referred to diverging interests in the European economy as reflected in falling share prices after the vote against back-loading. On a proposal by Ms Zierold, it was decided to hold a bureau meeting in early June to co-ordinate participation in the stakeholder consultation.

7. Safer by Design

Ms Dechelle presented the Safer by Design project, outlining the budget and a roadmap that had been adopted the previous month. She referred to the call for proposals published by unit B1 at DG EMPL the previous week, and proposed to send the application documents to all social

partners represented on the committee as associate organisations, when the application would be finalised in collaboration with the German professional co-operative for chemicals and raw materials (BG RCI). A discussion on the timeline of the project – to run from 20 October 2013 to 19 October 2014 – with the participation of Ms Lanne ensued.

8. Upcoming events

Ms Florence Lumen introduced the European Minerals Day, which was to take place as a series of events across Europe on 24-26 May 2013. An exhibition was planned to be held on 6-8 May in the European Parliament and the event was to be promoted by an inter-group on 15 May.

9. Any other business

Ms Lanne referred to the decision taken at the previous meeting to exceptionally allocate three hours of the present meeting to the NEPSI Council, which had not been accepted by the Commission. The letter to Mr Jean-Paul Tricart, head of unit B1, requesting a full-day meeting for the NEPSI Council without travel reimbursement but with interpretation every year from 2014, was meant to be discussed and signed at this meeting of the NEPSI Council, but would now have to be postponed to another occasion. Mr Wiśniewski advised the committee to send the letter at the earliest convenience and explained the reasons that could speak against granting the request from the Commission's perspective. A discussion on the content of the letter ensued. Ms Lumen mentioned an effectiveness study to prove the positive impact of the best practices identified under NEPSI on exposure levels. She reported several meetings on this matter with IndustriALL and progress on the study. Mr Steinhage stressed that NEPSI was no longer a project, but the first multi-sectoral social partner agreement. Mr Damm reaffirmed the uniqueness of NEPSI in this respect, which meant that it could not serve as a precedent for any other project.