



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG

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

30 November 2011

**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE 28/11/11 PLENARY SESSION MEETING OF  
THE TANNING AND LEATHER SECTORAL SOCIAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE**

Those present:

Trade union representatives:

1. Ms Paula Alves (ES), FITAG-UGT
2. Mr Claudio Belloni (IT), FEMCA
3. Mr Joël Gallice (FR), Fédé. CGT THC
4. Mr Michel Holger (DE), IGBCE
5. Mr Gerald Kreuzer (AT), Pro-Ge
6. Mr Michal Menes (PL), FNS 7281
7. Mr Luc Triangle, (EU) FSE :THC,
8. Mr Lajos Zöldi (HU), BDSZ

Employers' representatives:

1. Mr Josep Ballbé (ES), CEC-FECUR
2. Ms Maurizia Contu (IT), UNIC
3. Ms Rachel Garwood (UK), UKLF
4. Mr Gustavo Gonzalez-Quijano (EU), COTANCE
5. Mr András Kocsis (HU), BCE
6. Mr Paul Pearson (UK), UKLF
7. Mr Serge Ramière (FR), FFTM
8. Mr Reinhard Schneider (DE) VDL

Observers:

Mrs Andrea Husen (EU) FEM/EMF  
Mrs Lidia Luca, (EU) Shipbuilding Employers'  
Mr Mike Moser (UK), IFTF  
Mr Peter Beckett (EU) IFTF

European Commission

DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion:

Ms Nataša Kokić  
Mr Norbert Schöbel

DG Enterprise and Industry:

Mr Laszlo Kojnok  
Mr Jean-François Aguinaga

## **1. Textile labelling legislation - state of play - Presentation by Mr Jean-François Aguinaga, Head of Unit, DG Enterprise and Industry**

Mr Aguinaga (European Commission) made a presentation on Textile labelling legislation (See power point presentation attached) followed by a debate.

Mr Joël Gallice (France) asked for clarifications in relation to the launch of a new study on regulating the labelling of leather and leather products. Mr Aguinaga explained that a first draft of this study would be available at the beginning of next year with the aim to identify the problems, if any. In his view, it is crucial to take into account consumers and workers interest. In reply to Mr Gonzalez Quijano, he explained that stakeholders would only be involved when presenting the draft final report.

Regarding the question on marginalisation of leather industry in Study on fashion industries he explained that Cotance's written statement would be examined and that the consulting company would need to apply the same approach for the leather and textile industry.

Mr Luc Triangle (ETUF-TCL) said that the study on allergies would be very important for the new project "On line risk assessment tool for health and safety at work". He also underlined the need to involve social partners in the study on the competitiveness of fashion.

Conclusion: New study on labelling will aim to find out the problems in tanning and leather industry. The study concerning allergies relates to the textile industry only. As regards the study on fashion industry, the consultants would need to have the same approach for textile and tanning industry. Social partners, where appropriate, will be put into contact with DG ENTR person in charge of study on allergies (Ms Eva Patricia Hualde Grasa).

## **2. Approval of the minutes and the agenda**

The proposed draft agenda for the meeting was approved with minor modifications. The draft minutes from the last meeting will be approved at the next meeting upon the receipt of French translation.

Mr Norbert Schöbel (DG EMPL) made an introduction mentioning the Commission's work programme. A presentation will take place during the next SSSC including items on possible consultations of social partners and upcoming impact assessments. He underlined that Croatia would sign the Accession Treaty on 9 December and from that date social partners from Croatia could actively participate in Social Dialogue Committees. Therefore, social partners are encouraged to invite their Croatian members; however more information on budget procedures still needs to follow.

Mr Gonzalez-Quijano welcomed the new counterparts of COTANCE in the Commission and in the Social Dialogue Committee. Mr Jean François Aguinaga, new Head of Unit in charge of leather (Fashion Industries) replaced Mr Girao. Mr Luc Triangle became new Secretary General of ETUF-TCL. New Chair is Nataša Kokić (DG EMPL).

## **3. "Social dialogue and joint action to support a sector in crisis/or undergoing change"- Presentation by Andrea Husen, Senior Policy Advisor European Metalworkers' Federation**

Ms Andrea Husen and MS Lidia Luca presented the shipbuilding sector (See power point presentation).

During the discussion Mr Luc Triangle underlined some interesting links with the tanning and leather sector. In his view, it would be good to have some joint actions in the future since the challenges are more or less the same for both sectors. Mr Gonzalez Quijano emphasised the good relation of the shipbuilding sector with the European Parliament which is a good

example for the tanning and leather industry to follow. As regards state aids, some joint actions could be taken into consideration.

Conclusions: Some future joint action could be envisaged with the shipbuilding sector. Tanning and leather sector should have closer relations with the European Parliament.

#### **4. Evaluation of the Code of Conduct and its review**

Power point presentation is in the attachment.

Mr Gonzalez Quijano explained the structure, the main features and the development of the Code of conduct. The first one has been signed between ETUF and Footwear industry and the focus was on child labour as it was a big issue. It has been followed by a Code of conduct between ETUF and Euratex. The third generation is the Code of Conduct ETUF-TCL with Cotance in 2000. This is the most complete and stringent Code of conduct of all sectors. It has been implemented in Member States into their collective agreements which means that it became part of social dialogue where the employer's organisations together with trade unions commit on a certain number of rules.

The Code of conduct is available on the dedicated website: [http://www.euroleather.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=56&Itemid=78](http://www.euroleather.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=56&Itemid=78). It has been disseminated through the internet and promoted in new and old Member States. In order to become a member of Cotance, new member must accept the conditions of the Code of conduct. This is imposed and ensures that the Code of conduct is evenly implemented in all Member Associations.

Ms Maurizia Contu (UNIC) presented the Italian experience. In reply to Luc Triangle (ETUF-TCL) Ms Maurizia Contu explained that through training session and reference person in companies the application of the Code has been ensured. In addition, third parties carried out an inspection of the Code of conduct application.

Mr Gonzalez-Quijano underlined that the workers must be aware of this code as that it is part of the collective agreement.

Conclusions: Workers must be aware of this Code, notably in countries where it is part of the collective agreement.

It is foreseen for the next meeting to have an academic speaker with an economic background who could give the latest developments on Codes of conduct and practices from other agreements. Only after this introduction, an exchange of views can start within the Social Dialogue Committee about a possible review of the code of conduct.

#### **5. Adoption of the work program 2012**

Mr Gonzalez Quijano (Cotance) presented the Work programme for 2012. There are some new issues – as for example the inclusion of the leather industry as a core industry in the fashion study. He underlined the importance of the Social Agenda and the European Skills Council. Failure of this year was the development of the training project – Leonardo project for their industry. This could be presented once the European Skills Council project is advanced.

Mr Luc Triangle (ETUF-TCL) welcomed the common understanding of the important issues of the Work programme. He suggested to add one point under the Social chapter – how to manage the restructuring at the sectoral level. He underlined the importance of the European Skills Council that will be established on 6 December.

Conclusions: Agreement on the Work programme with the suggestion by ETUF-TCL to add one additional point under the Social chapter – how to manage the restructuring at the sectoral level.

## **6. Social affairs – Consultations of SP and recent policy developments –**

DG EMPL informed briefly on the adoption of DG EMPL's Work programme for 2012.

Conclusion: A detailed presentation on DG EMPL's Work programme for 2012 and the consultations of SP including the impact assessment will be presented at the next meeting in February 2012.

## **7. Projects**

Mr Luc Triangle (ETUF-TCL) presented Trade Union-led projects:

### **a. Skill Councils**

European Skills Council for Textile, Clothing and Leather will be established on 6 December 2011 – this is a very important point for EU textile and leather federations (ETUF-TCL, COTANCE and Euratex).

The Skills Council will be managed by the three social partners and they will establish a network of experts.

In certain countries and certain sectors National observatories are already working at the national level. Although the working mechanisms are different across Member States, their objective to attract young people to the sector is the same. The EU TCL Sector Skills Council web portal will be launched on 6 December and it will be accessible for all experts where they could have an exchange of best practices.

### **b. OIRA - On line risk assessment at health and safety at work**

This project is at the very beginning. It aims to develop an on line tool for SMEs. At this moment, the selection of the experts is ongoing.

SP will need to identify their animator and 3 experts from each side. It is very important to identify the leader for this tool.

Some suggestions came from Mr Gonzalez-Quijano (Cotance) related to the method of using this tool. Maybe it could be put on a DVD instead of being on-line having regard to the weak computer literacy of the sector's SME.

### **c. Climate Change**

This project is coming to an end and it deals with the impact of the climate change on the textile sector but the leather sector is associated. The round table will be organized on 10 January 2012 where the experts from Euratex, Cotance and ETUF-TCL will meet to discuss a draft report. The final conference will be on 26 January 2012.

## **Projects led by COTANCE**

### **a. Transparency of the origin and/or traceability of raw materials**

During the first phase of this project a company survey has been made which is examining the supply of raw materials and its traceability. The preparatory phase includes also the development of a number of briefs. The employer's organisations are in charge of preparing briefing notes on traceability techniques that exists, on method for tracing or for identifying the origin of hides and skins. Trade unions task is to identify in the media news that are putting the industry in the bad light because of the lack of transparency or lack of traceability of raw material. The main event will be in Spain – at the Assembly General of Cotance. The result of this project is a recommendation for further action that will be put to this SDCC.

### **b. Social Environmental Reporting III**

This project will include the first European social and environmental report that will be ready next year. The project will start in a couple of days. The main event will be in Bucharest in September 2012.

**c. Transparency - "Origin Assurance - The experience of the Fur sector" – Presentation by Mike Moser, Director of Communications, International Fur Trade Federation**

Power point presentation in the attachment

Mr Moser gave a presentation on traceability labelling in the fur sector. Mr Gonzalez Quijano underlined the importance of Mr Moser's presentation for Cotance's project on Transparency and traceability.

Upon request, Mr Moser gave some further explanations on the funding of the industry labelling and promotion scheme that is done through a specific levy at fur auctions. More explanations on fur industry can be found on the following website: <http://www.iff.com/>.

Conclusions: There are many activities on the agenda – some projects will make a difference in this industry, therefore, it will be important to ensure a good start and a good implementation (for example European Skills Council).

**8. Dates for 2012**

Meetings for 2012 will be as follows:

1 February – Working group meeting

29 May – Working group meeting

26 November – Plenary session.