



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG

Employment and Social Governance
Social dialogue

SECTORAL SOCIAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE CHEMICAL INDUSTRY

Working Group
Competitiveness, Employment and Industrial Policy

Meeting 07 September 2017

Draft minutes

Chairs: Koen LAENENS (ECEG) and Alfons De Potter (industriAll Europe)

1. Opening and approval of the draft agenda

The draft agenda was approved.

2. Presentation of AGM

Rares Bularca presented the Commission's online tool to manage meeting's invitations and reimbursements which will be used for the organisation of the SSDC meetings as from the Plenary on the 8th of December (see annex).

Key messages to remember are:

- Notification emails will be sent to participants;
- First time use will require the creation of an EU login;
- Requests for reimbursements must be submitted within 30 days of the meeting. It will not be possible to claim a reimbursement past this deadline;
- No change to the invitation process (through the secretariats of ECEG/industriALL).

3. Roadmap 2015 – 2020 – current state of play

Alfons De Potter (AP) provided feedback on the final project conference which took place in Brussels from 13 to 14 June and gathered over 80 participants from 18 Member States. Three important joint texts were signed: (1) a Framework of Actions (FoA) on sustainable employment and careers development which aims at effectively anticipating changes, adjusting to the age pyramid and further working on the attractiveness of the sector; (2) a

Memorandum of Understanding on Responsible Care; and (3) a declaration on Brexit in which the parties committed to develop and publish a joint statement on joint core priorities. The latter is foreseen for September/October.

The final evaluation meeting of the project will take place in October.

4. The European Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition

Alexander Riedl (AR) presented the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition (see annex) which brings together Member States, companies, social partners, non-profit organisations and education providers, who take action to tackle the lack of digital skills in Europe. ECEG is a member of the coalition since end of 2016.

The objectives set by the coalition by 2020 are to train 1 million unemployed young people, to support upskilling and retraining of the workforce (in particular in SMEs), modernise education and training where possible; make use of available funds to support digital skills and further raise awareness.

AR called for all social partners to become members of the coalition by endorsing the objectives and principles of the charter and to take pledges (commitment to take actions).

AR also mentioned the project "Digital Opportunity Internships" which is a pilot project that the Commission intends to launch in autumn 2017. The objective is to provide 4-5 months paid work experience to 5000 to 6000 graduates between 2018 and 2020. Any company can propose to host interns. An online workshop will be held on 22 September 2017.

KL recalled that ECEG and industriALL have submitted a project application under the 2017 call for proposals "Support for Social Dialogue". The title is "The impact of innovation and digital transformation in the workplace: a sector-specific study of the European chemical, pharmaceutical, rubber and plastics industry". Projects are being evaluated by the Commission.

5. Chemical industry competence profiles.

Case study: European Maintenance Skills passport

Wim Vancauwenberghe presented the challenges of talent shortage linked to the occupation of technicians (see annex). Pressure for more effectiveness, efficiency, flexibility and mobility is therefore expected and will call for more transparency around skills (the right technician for the right job).

BEMAS made a pilot exercise and created a task-based "European skills passport" for the profile of "shut-down technician". Making a set of technical skills understood coherently across Europe would support job/people matching, increase mobility and safety. This would be beneficial for the employers, increase safety and reduce risks in the workplace.

Delegates exchanged on the passport validation process which might prove difficult in the context of different diplomas across the EU. There were also some doubts expressed on the employer side on the willingness of companies to validate such skills passport which would actually facilitate workers' job mobility. Overall reactions were however positive.

6. REACH and OSH - considerations regarding risk management options and synergies

Cross-Industry Initiative (CII) for better regulation in chemicals management

France Capon (FC) presented the CII which stands for using the most effective tool to manage risks caused by chemicals (see annex). FC presented a few proposals to enhance the effectiveness of OSH for setting OELs and proposed to set-up an informal forum with social partners to explore potential areas of cooperation.

Formacare by Cefic

Simon Terwagne (ST) presented Formacare, a sector group of CEFIC representing the formaldehyde industry (see annex). Formacare advocates for "binding OELs" and considers REACH and the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive (CMD) as complementary legislations to protect workers.

Discussion

An exchange followed among delegates following both presentations. There was a consensus among participants about the rightness to modernise OSH and search for synergies between OSH and REACH as long as social partners remain part of the process. Steven Van Den Broeck (CEFIC) explained that, in their exchanges with the Commission, it was made clear that the bi-tripartite process would not change.

7. Social Dialogue Communication strategy

Isabelle Laurent briefly presented the results of the working group on communication organised by EMPL-A2 unit in June 2017 and to which Silke Voigt (ECEG) participates. The working group defined three operational objectives and should meet again in October to identify actions to be taken.

Those objectives are:

- Informing other parts of the European Commission and the other EU institutions on EU social dialogue and on its outcomes;
- Developing further the flow of information between the national and the EU level;
- Reflecting in how far and in which way communication between sectoral and cross-industry social dialogue could be improved.

Participants were reminded of the activities implemented by the Commission following the previous working group in December 2015:

- Animation on social dialogue on the main EU Social Dialogue [webpage](#);
- [Brochure](#) in all languages with basics on EU social dialogue and 'new start';
- [E-newsletter](#) (fifth edition issued mid May 2017, next edition mid-July);
- Updated information on [sectoral social dialogue](#) committees available in EN, FR & DE;
- Dedicated hashtag for EU social dialogue: [#EUSocDia](#);
- Training and FAQ for Commission colleagues of other services (e.g. MOVE, CNECT, ...).

8. SSDC Joint Work Programme 2018-2019

Isabelle Laurent recalled some good practices on drafting a work programme for the Committee and both delegations shared their priority themes.

Emma Argutyan(ECEG) specifically mentioned the next batches of the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive, the European Pillar of Social Rights (in particular the Work Life Balance and the Access to Social Protection Initiatives) and the digital transformation.

Alfons De Potter(industriALL) cited the follow-up of the joint documents recently signed by both organisations, the continuation of the Roadmap 2015-2020 (innovation, nanotechnologies, mentoring by ageing workforce), the digitisation, Work-life Balance and Health & Safety (including the new phenomenon of “burn out”) and continue discussions on skills profiles.

Annexes:

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| <u>Employers</u> Ms Emma Argutyan-Kahlmeyer (EU) Ms Ruth Steinhoff (DE) Mr Koen Laenens (BE) Ms Liliana Dombalova (BG) Ms Katharina Göbel (DE) Mr Matthias Mentzel (DE) Mr Lutz Mühl (DE) Mr Jochen Wilkens (DE) | <u>Workers</u> Mr Alfons De Potter (BE) Ms Gertraud Lauber (DE) Ms Rita Dimech (MT) Ms Iris Wolf (DE) Mr Branislav Rugani (FR) Mr Alberto Paolo Simoes (PT) Mr Székely Tamas (HU) Ms Tomas Macarro (ES) |
| <i>External speakers</i> | |
| Ms France Capon (BE) Mr Steven Van den Broek (CEFIC) Mr Simon Terwagne (CEFIC) Mr Wim Vancauwenberghe (BEMAS) | |
| <i>European Commission</i> | |
| Ms Isabelle Laurent (DG EMPL) Mr Alexander Riedl (DG CNECT) | |