



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG

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

Brussels, 25 March 2014

**SECTORAL SOCIAL DIALOGUE
COMMITTEE
CONSTRUCTION**

**Minutes of the Working Group Meeting
Vocational Education and Training
25 February 2014 (14:00-17:00)**

Chairman: Mr Jacques LAIR (FIEC)

1. Welcome and introduction

The chairman, Mr Jacques Lair (FIEC), welcomed the participants. Mr Tim Van Rie (European Commission) briefly introduced himself as DG EMPL's new policy officer for the committee.

With regard to the Commission's budget lines on social dialogue, Mr Van Rie announced a number of changes in the 2014 call for proposals. These include a clear distinction between social dialogue and industrial relations projects, the possibility for longer project duration and higher co-financing rates.

2. Approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 21/2/2013

No minutes were produced for the meeting of 21 February 2013.

3. EU Sector Skills Council Construction - Discussion and exchange of views on possible follow-up

FIEC (Mr Domenico Campogrande) reported on the latest developments regarding the EU Sector Skills Councils. The feasibility study for the construction sector (published March 2013) had concluded that there was a strong demand among social partners and stakeholders at national level for a coordinated structure at the European level.

With regard to the Commission's latest call for proposals (VP/2013/010), EFBWW and FIEC had come to the conclusion that the proposed framework would not allow them to address the skills gap issue in a manner that their affiliates and the concerned stakeholders would consider adequate.

The social partners agreed to continue monitoring the Commission's future initiatives on European Sector Skills Councils. Meanwhile, FIEC and EFBWW agreed to

develop a joint proposal to be submitted to the social dialogue budget line in August 2014.

4. Possible future project: Follow up SQF CON and Bricklayer (presentation by L. Clarke and Ch. Winch)

Ms Linda Clarke (University of Westminster) presented a project outline “*Knowledge, skills and competences for low energy construction qualifications*”. The aim of this project would be to develop an indicative curriculum for thermal literacy at European level. EFBWW invited FIEC to jointly support this project for funding under the Erasmus+ programme.

Several employers’ representatives raised questions regarding the project’s added value, amongst others vis-à-vis the “*Build Up Skills Pillar 2*” programmes. Moreover, there were concerns among the employers’ delegation that the project could interfere with ongoing developments at national level. FIEC concluded that it was not in a position to support the project in the current context.

5. Joint project on “Initiatives for young people” - Discussion and exchange of views

FIEC (Mr Campogrande) provided an update on the ongoing joint FIEC-EFBWW project “*Initiatives for youth employment in the construction industry*”. Building on the 2003 social partners’ joint brochure on tutorship, the project will develop a website providing information on best practices at national level, with a focus on the construction sector.

EFBWW and FIEC agreed that the target audience should include not only young people, but also national social partner organisations, actors involved in training and career counsellors. The workers’ delegation emphasised the importance of promoting a realistic image of the construction sector. It was announced that the final seminar of the project will take place on 25 November 2014 in Brussels.

6. EU Quality framework for Traineeships - Information and exchange of views

In reply to the Commission’s proposal for a Council Recommendation on a Quality Framework for Traineeships, FIEC (Mr Campogrande) invited EFBWW to consider possible joint contributions in the construction sector. Options under discussion could include a quality charter for companies or a model written agreement for members at the national level.

EFBWW (Mr Rolf Gehring) welcomed these proposals, emphasising the major challenge of youth employment. The workers’ representative expressed concerns not only for unemployment but also for quality of training and the formal framework for traineeships.

The Commission (Mr Van Rie) agreed to liaise with the secretariats to provide an overview of the existing initiatives at European level, making a clear distinction between traineeships and apprenticeships.

7. Youth Guarantee - Information and exchange of views

EFBWW (Mr Gehring) reported on the EU’s Youth Guarantee, which aims to ensure that all young people under 25 – whether registered with employment services or not – receive a good-quality, concrete offer within 4 months of them leaving formal

education or becoming unemployed. The EU will top-up national spending on these schemes through the European Social Fund and the €6bn Youth Employment Initiative.

EFBWW (Mr Gehring) expressed concerns for the quality of the offers made to young people. The workers' delegation called for an active role of European social partners in this regard. FIEC (Mr Campogrande) considered that the dissemination of best practices through the joint project on initiatives for youth employment would make an important contribution.

8. WorldSkills Europe 2014 (Lille) - Discussion and exchange of views

FIEC informed the committee about the World Skills Europe Competition to be held on 2-4 October 2014 in Lille, France. FIEC will take part in the event as an associate member. The employers invited the EFBWW to join them at this occasion. An exchange of view followed regarding a possible joint initiative.

9. Any Other Business

No further topics were added to the agenda.

10. Next meetings schedule

The plenary meeting is planned on 5 June 2014.

The social partners' secretariats will liaise with the Commission to fix the meeting calendar for 2015.