



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG

Employment and Social Governance
Social dialogue

SECTORAL SOCIAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE FOR WOODWORKING

6 May 2021

Plenary meeting (videoconference)

Draft MINUTES

Chair : Teodora ILIEVA

1. Opening of the meeting, adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

2. Adoption of minutes of the joint working group meeting dd. 18 February 2021.

The minutes were adopted.

3. Work Programme 2020-2021.

The social partners had a brief discussion on their ongoing work programme, which still fits the needs of the SSDC. Rolf GEHRING referred to the current representativeness study, which identifies national social partner organisations dealing with the woodworking sector. He claimed that the study could be an occasion to focus on strengthening industrial relations and social dialogue at national level as an element for the future work programme. Also activities on the Bauhaus and other Commission initiatives should be included there.

4. Conference report – the European Bauhaus initiative

CEI-Bois, EPF, EOS and EFBWW, in collaboration with other organisations, launched the Alliance “Wood for Bauhaus”. An online conference took place on 8 April 2021; it was a huge success, since 1200 participants registered, 800 of which were present. Information can be obtained via www.woodforbauhaus.eu

Kenneth JOHANSSON pointed at the importance of wood, and the need for action by the EU in stimulating the transformation. In addition, there is a need for good access to forests and for a hierarchy that sets the conditions for proper use of wood. Silvia MELEGARI added that forest owners are important actors in providing correct information on availability of wood.

5. Renovation wave

The social partners are working on a draft position paper with different angles: environment, well-being, energy poverty, skills, green jobs, etc. The paper will also show links with Bauhaus and the Green Deal. EFBWW pointed at the importance of the Renovation wave for the construction and woodworking sectors.

6. Project application PCWIE II

The social partners intend to submit a project application for PCWIE II under the “Support for social dialogue” call. The project will propose ways to tackle changes generated by COVID, and to increase the reputation of the sector and its attractiveness

for society, more in particular for women. Also a link to an Erasmus for apprenticeships initiative is envisaged.

7. Occupational Safety and Health

a-b) Wood dust prevention and measurement.

During the “Wood Dust” conference it became clear that the interaction between machine manufacturers and users is very important in order to find ways to implement the wood dust exposure limit. It also showed that the measurement of wood dust at the workplace is difficult. The German measurement project is at a standstill due to the COVID pandemic. EFBWW now proposes a number of actions that can be implemented by social partners, based on five steps: 1) collection of aspects on difficulties encountered, 2) mapping of relevant areas of action, 3) finding agreement on focus areas, 4) finding agreement on deliverables and 5) applying for an EU project. CEI-Bois will study the proposal, and discuss it with EFBWW at secretariat level.

c) Formaldehyde project

Rolf GEHRING informed the meeting that the project is running, but encounters some COVID-related difficulties. The train-the-trainer seminar was therefore organised online, which resulted in a very high attendance (nearly 200 people). It proposed a number of simple organisational measures to deal with the formaldehyde limit. Next step is the organisation of regional seminars, which will deal with the political and technical aspects, whilst bringing together national social partners. For these reasons, the regional seminars should be organised as physical meetings.

d) Workers’ memorial day

CEI-Bois responded positively to EFBWW’s request to sign a joint declaration on the occasion of Workers’ Memorial Day (28 April). Rolf GEHRING added that this is not only important for companies, but also for society, since the society bears the main costs of occupational diseases. There is also an international dimension related to a level playing field, and to the right to personal integrity.

e) New EU OSH Strategic framework

Teodora ILIEVA informed the participants that CEI-Bois could not attend the dedicated hearing, organised by the Commission in April, but it provided its written contribution. CEI-Bois agrees with the background note, but asks not to create additional administrative burden. It also claimed for better data collection, and for legislation that is evidence-based. Rolf GEHRING added that it is planned to publish the Strategic Framework in the second quarter of 2021, which he finds ambitious. For EFBWW, no specific regulations for SMEs are needed, but assistance is necessary for micro- and small companies that have difficulties.

8. European Commission initiatives

a) Rolf GEHRING informed the meeting on the New Industrial Strategy for Europe. The update of the strategy was presented the day before the meeting. It is highly focussed on the impact of COVID. The social partners intend to study it, and identify sector-relevant areas. The Commission is also working on a Staff Working Document regarding Renewable Energy, which can be based on biomass, i.e. wood. So the impact on the sector should be discussed jointly. Silvia MELEGARI added that the focus should also be on increased competitiveness, not only on decarbonisation.

Unfortunately DG GROW could not be present to present the update.

b) Rolf GEHRING expressed EFBWW’s disappointment on DG GROW’s absence for the agenda point on the Forest-based Industries Expert Group. In their view, the social

partners should be informed about DG GROW's intentions for the functioning of the Expert Group.

9. Pact for skills

During the previous meeting, the Commission presented this initiative. CEI-Bois recognises the potential of the pact, but has not been active in the field yet. Magdalena SIKOROWSKA (EFBWW) replied that in the construction sector already several "charters for skills" were signed, based on the pledge of the pact for skills. She proposed to prepare a joint charter for the sector.

10. AOB

CEI-Bois informed the participants on the recent publication of the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Social Pillar. Social partners were invited to study the foreseen initiatives in order to identify interests for the sector.

Annex: - list of participants.

List of participants

<p><u>Employers</u></p> <p>CEI-Bois Silvia MELEGARI (EU) Teodora ILIEVA (EU) Margherita MICELI (EU) Filip DE JAEGER (BE) Anna DIJAN (HR) Heidi FINSTAD (NO) Eva GLÜCKMAN (SE) David JOHNSON (SE) Alexander SCHAUB (DE) Per WIDOLF (SE) Kris WIJNENDAELE (BE)</p> <p>11 employers representatives (3 EU, 7 MS, 1 TC)</p>	<p><u>Workers</u></p> <p>EFBWW Tom DELEU (EU) Rolf GEHRING (EU) Magdalena SIKOROWSKA (EU) Paula CRAVINA (EU) Laetitia BALDAN (BE) Juan BARRERO (ES) Francisco CUADRADO (ES) Fabio DEL CARRO (IT) Kenneth JOHANSSON (SE) Mika KÄRKÄINEN (FI) Mercedes LANDOLFI (IT) Chiara MAFFE (IT) Andrea MERLI (IT) Ole-Kristian PAULSEN (NO) Fabiola RICHTER (DE) Johan VANDYCKE (BE) John VILLADSEN (DE) Josef WINDPASSINGER (DE)</p> <p>18 workers representatives (4 EU, 13 MS, 1 TC)</p>
<p><u>Other participants</u> N/A</p>	
<p><u>European Commission</u> Danny SCHEERLINCK (DG EMPL) Jiri SIKORA (DG EMPL)</p>	