

## **RECENT & ONGOING ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

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### **Negotiations and consultations (cross-industry and sectoral)**

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#### ***Working time directive – consultations Art. 138***

In accordance with Article 138(2) of the EC Treaty, the first consultation of the social partners with a view to obtaining their views on the advisability and the scope of measures regarding the Working Time Directive is planned to be launched through a Commission Communication to European social partners. The said document is still being worked on and has yet to go through "internal Commission procedures". The communication was originally scheduled for adoption on 11 November. However, the Commission has decided to postpone this date until "possibly before the end of the year," and the issue has been removed from the executive's agenda for next week.

The EU's social partners will be asked whether they agree with the Commission's analysis; whether they see the need to add further points for consideration; and whether they see the need for action at Community level on the "key issues" identified in the draft. Based on the results of this first consultation, the Commission may decide to initiate a second consultation if it deems Community action advisable.

#### ***Hôpitaux – objets tranchants – proposition de directive de la Commission***

La Commission a adopté, le 26 octobre 2009, la proposition de directive du Conseil pour mettre en œuvre l'accord cadre sur la protection des travailleurs contre les blessures par objets tranchants dans les secteurs hospitalier et de soins de santé. Cet accord avait été conclu par les partenaires sociaux européens du secteur des hôpitaux et de la santé, HOSPEEM et EPSU.

#### ***Tripartite Social Summit for Growth & Employment***

En présence des Présidents Reinfeld et Barroso, de Commissaire Spidla et des représentants des futures présidences espagnole et belge, un Sommet Social Tripartite a été tenu le 27 octobre 2009. Le débat s'est centré sur les thèmes suivants: les réponses à la crise et en particulier à la hausse du chômage, les stratégies de sortie de la crise et comment préparer une stratégie intégrée à long-terme "EU 2020". Le Sommet Social Tripartite a montré un clair consensus sur le besoin que cette stratégie EU 2020 soit basé sur une croissance durable, une économie verte et la cohésion sociale. Président Barroso a rappelé à cette occasion que ces objectifs ne pourront pas être atteints sans la participation active des partenaires sociaux, en particulier pour développer une vision commune à l'horizon 2020".

#### ***Consultation of social partners on climate change related policies***

President Barroso sent a letter to the ETUC on 27 October 2009 in which he gives mandate to DGs EMPL, ENV, TREN, and ENTR to explore with the European social partners a reinforced consultation mechanism on the employment and social consequences of climate change policy

proposals. Whereas in particular DG ENV wants to avoid the set-up of new consultation fora in addition to its Stakeholder Forum, the letter by President Barroso clarifies in particular the need for a specific social partner consultation to be organised. EMPL F1 will explore options with the other DGs in this regard. One of the options envisaged are meetings with a social partner delegation at Director General level which could refer political issues to deliberations at the Tripartite social summit, or more technical work to the level of services.

### ***Professional football – negotiations on minimum contract standards ongoing***

EPFL (leagues), ECA (160 international-level clubs) and FIFPro (players) have made further progress on and agreed to sign an autonomous agreement on minimum requirements for European professional football players' contracts, at the beginning of February 2010. It will transpose existing UEFA recommendations on the issue. UEFA will be party to the agreement and will also commit to implement it through all its member associations in 53 European countries. The agreement will be accompanied by an action plan for implementation during 2010 and shall become binding in 2011, subject to the approval of the general assemblies of all parties. The agreement will most likely make reference to EU labour legislation. On the other hand, the Commission will not be able to give its official approval to all parts of the agreement (e.g. reference to FIFA transfer rules), and will have to stress its autonomous character.

### ***Personal services***

The European social partners continued their negotiations in September with a view to reaching an agreement on risk prevention and workers' health protection in the hairdressing sector by the end of the year. Additional negotiation meetings will be held on 9/10 November and on XX November to allow for the finalisation of the agreement still in 2009. Following the specific request of the employers' representatives in the sector the agreement is planned to also apply to self-employed/independent professionals in order to ensure effective risk prevention and avoid competitive distortions.

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## **Autres développements majeurs du dialogue social européen**

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### ***Metal industry - inaugural meeting of new social dialogue committee in January 2010***

Upon receipt of the letter by Commissioner Spidla supporting the set-up of a new sectoral social dialogue committee in the metal industry, the social partners of the sector, EMF and CEMEET, agreed to organise the inaugural meeting on 14 January 2010. This new committee is of particular importance in light of both the size of the sector (covering notably the automotive and steel sectors) and its significant economic and political exposure to the current economic and financial crisis. As highlighted by Commissioner Spidla in his letter to social partners, this social dialogue committee will be of strategic importance. He called upon social partners of the sector to make effective use of this new space for discussion, consultation and negotiation at EU-level to develop concrete responses to all relevant questions on employment, training and restructuring in the context of the current crisis.

### ***Agriculture- social partners agree on final template "Agripass"***

The social partners in agriculture agreed on two general templates concerning "plant grower" and "livestock breeder" to be integrated into the work of EURES on the new taxonomy. For the social dialogue committee, herewith the work on "Agripass" is accomplished.