

The proposed draft agenda for the meeting and the minutes of the last meeting on 26.6.09 were adopted.

1. Commission guide on SRPP – way forward from here

Sue Bird (DG EMPL) reported on the Commission's work to produce a guide on social considerations in public procurement. The preparation of the guide started two years ago with a study of the Turin training centre. There had been external consultations in which different view points had been expressed. All comments were currently taken into account with the view to finalize the guide by the end of 2009.

EFCI supported the intention to produce this guide because it would be most important to fight against making contracts with the company offered the lowest price which would be the award principle in around 90% of the cases in the European Union. However, paragraph 4.4 on page 11 would be problematic as it would give a too negative impression on the existing guides of the sectoral social partners. EFCI urged to modify this paragraph or to delete it.

UNI europa said the sectoral Guide produced by EFCI and UNI europa was very useful in practice because it could be used to show clients that the prices of cleaning work were too low to pay the right wages and social security payments. UNI europa wanted a more positive message in the reference to the existing guides of the sectoral social partners and a change to the general tone and language to be more positive with regards to promoting best value at all times instead of the lowest price.

Several employer representatives explained the damaging effects of too low prices for cleaning work, the negative effects on employees and the need for more money for training etc.

Several workers representatives explained problems of motivation of workers to keep their job, the lacking control of quality of work, certain illicit practices and the importance of the cleaning work for the society.

Sue Bird underlined the Commission's intentions to take all comments seriously into account and the importance to obey the existing legislation. She also referred to the latest commitment of the Commission's president Barroso to social issues. To further quantify service costs there would be the Commission's intention to launch a study in 2010. She could present that study to the sectoral social partners if they wish so. The reference in the Commission's guide to the social partners' guides would be reviewed. However, there may be a need to update the existing sectoral guides concerning newer legislation.

The social partners underlined that the current wording of paragraph 4.4. would be counterproductive. It should be deleted or changed into a more positive wording showing also the complementary character of the existing sectoral guides.

Follow-up: Social partners to follow the Commission's work on the guide and its follow up study.

2. UNI europa presentation on the implementation project

UNI europa explained the background of the implementation project that has been submitted by end August 2009 to DG EMPL requesting co-financing (annex 1). Aim and structure of the project proposal was discussed as well as the intention to gather information on national implementation through a questionnaire. It has been concluded that the main objective would be review the existing work of the sectoral committee and the impact at national level. A final conference will take place in November 2010 in Brussels.

Dirk Hadrich explained the currently still ongoing procedure of the Commission to assess the 188 proposals for projects that have been submitted by end August.

Follow-up: Social partners to work on the project if accepted for funding by the European Commission.

3. Decent work campaign

Mari Martens (FNO) presented the idea to fight lowest prices and to make the sector stronger through a “Decent work campaign”.

EFCI saw a problem with the definition of “decent” and “indecent” work and as well with the scope of such an initiative.

UNI europa explained that certain criteria for decent work could be happiness at work, being not sick or unable to work, getting liveable wages and being good employees. UNI europa proposed to raise awareness and to discuss this in future.

Follow-up: Social partners to internally consider such an initiative.

4. Promotion Day time work

British employers presented their new national approach for daytime cleaning (annex 2). Big national differences between the EU countries were mentioned concerning the current position of cleaning work during the morning, the day, the evening and the night. Sustainable daytime cleaning work would be located in the middle between people, planet and profit. Numerous arguments for daytime cleaning have been found in four different case studies

French employers presented their national experiences showing the daytime cleaning work is possible especially when enterprises adapt their organisation and when clients change their cultural view (annex 3).

EFCI would find the feedback of the British and French trade union representatives very essential and invited them for a presentation in the next meeting. There would be a very concise sectoral declaration but the clients could not be forced to accept more daytime cleaning work.

UNI europa found the presented information very interesting and proposed developing a more substantial joint declaration.

Follow-up: Social partners to consider a way forward.

5. Undeclared work

UNI europa proposed a revision of the joint declaration on undeclared work concerning its definition of undeclared work, the link to clients and some other details and conditions.

The Belgian trade union representative pointed to the necessity to improve existing information and to improve the efficiency of inspections of social security rules. According to the Belgian trade unions there is a lack of motivation for inspections in Belgium and there are also problems with the of current details of the tender specifications for the cleaning work of the numerous buildings of the European Commission with clear evidence that the Commission is not considering the best value principle in its procurement practices

Follow-up: Social partner to contact the office OIB of the European Commission concerning the tender specifications and to consider further work about the problem of undeclared work in the sector.

6. Vocational training

The issue has been postponed to the next meeting.

7. Any other business

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS:

15 March 2010 (WG)

25 June 2010 (WG) *to be confirmed*

15 October 2010 (PL) *to be confirmed*