



Brussels, 5 October 2017

Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee on Professional Football

Minutes of the Working Group Meeting Implementation of the Autonomous Agreement

11 September 2017

1. Adoption of the Agenda

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Zylberstein (UEFA). The agenda was adopted.

2. Minutes from previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting (6 February) were approved with the changes proposed.

3. Update and information between parties

On 20 September the UEFA congress will take place. Upon invitation by the UEFA president, Bobby Barnes as the President of FIFPro Europe will address the UEFA Member Associations ahead of the Congress, in the “TEP meeting”. Furthermore it is expected that the UEFA Congress will adopt statutory amendments which will enable the EPFL to become a full member of the UEFA executive committee.

ECA reported that its general assembly had elected Andrea Agnelli (Juventus Turin) as new ECA chairman and that the executive board has also a number of new members. The general assembly also approved the change of statutes, which foresee a stronger involvement of all member clubs in the decision-making process of ECA.

EPFL confirmed that it was important for EPFL to be part of the UEFA decision making process. It expressed concerns about the recent inflationary developments in the transfer market which was shared by the other members of the Committee.

FIFPro announced that they are about to publish a study on the situation of female players in football; similar to last year's study on the situation of male professional players. FIFPro also informed that as from their next elections they will have two women in their Board.

4. Implementation of the Autonomous Agreement

In March the Social Partners had visited Georgia. It was agreed that effective work had started.

Feedback from Kazakhstan indicated that work is ongoing, but that the situation is still difficult.

For Romania the FIFPro request to insist on labour contracts was not taken up by the new sports law, which still allows for the choice between employment contracts and civil law contracts. In fact social partners here saw no progress.

Slovakia was visited on 12 June. For the first time FIFA had joined the social partners for the visit. Thereby FIFA concentrated its efforts on the NDRC and the implementation of its Circular 1010, whereas the social partners focused on the other obligations stemming from the autonomous agreement. Progress was assessed as slow (in particular by FIFPro) but encouraging.

Social partners agreed that the involvement of FIFA is useful to make progress with the implementation of an independent NDRC. It was suggested that having FIFA invited to future visits to other countries on an ad hoc basis could be of use.

The situation in Serbia was seen as problematic as the new standard contract was set up without consultation of the stakeholders. While UEFA had received a positive message from the FA, indicating willingness to negotiate, FIFPro was very sceptic about the situation as none of the objectives specified in the report of the follow-up meeting had been achieved and there is an absence of willingness to cooperate on the side of the FA.

Equally, FIFPro indicated that in Bosnia there is limited progress made after the players' union openly criticized the FA in relation to a club licensing issue which led to deterioration in their relationship.

Responding to reflections on how much impact the link between the HatTrick-payments and the implementation of the autonomous agreement would have, Mr. Zylberstein stated that it was difficult to integrate the autonomous agreement directly into the ongoing HatTrick IV programme. Only as from the next programme, which will start in 2020, it will be possible to have an explicit budget and specific criteria.

However, already in 2018 some payments shall be linked to the implementation of the autonomous agreement. The amounts need to be identified by the UEFA HatTrick Committee. During their steering group meeting in May 2018 social partners will develop expert advice on which the UEFA HatTrick Committee will base its decision for the payments in June 2018.

The social partners agreed on the countries to be visited next, namely Russia (in October), Croatia, Gibraltar plus eventually also Turkey – still there was the feeling that in Turkey, there is more an association of clubs than a real league.

5. Any other business

ECA raised the issue of the way forward for the social dialogue committee in terms of topics as well as structure, thereby also wondering about the PFSC (Professional Football Strategy Council) and the link between social dialogue and PFSC. ECA was very much interested to avoid overlaps and redundancies. As examples of past good cooperation between the two bodies, it was recalled that a PFSC resolution actually had led to the establishment of the social dialogue committee in professional football at European level and that in 2014 a recommendation from the social dialogue committee concerning overdue payables found (via the PFSC) its way into the relevant FIFA regulations.

While the PFSC has not met since 2015, Mr. Zylberstein informed the partners that he worked on the reactivation of the PFSC and plans to have a meeting before end 2017. That was welcome, as social partners agreed that the work on intermediaries might need the backing of the PFSC.

Mr. Dewaele wondered whether the social dialogue committee could benefit from a stronger involvement of clubs and Mr. Zylberstein thought about involving national delegates in particular from problem countries early on.

In anticipating the discussions of the other working group the participants exchanged their views on the recent developments in the transfer market and the changes to the transfer window. All participants agreed that changes were needed, however, a narrowing of the transfer window was considered particularly problematic by FIFPro.

6. Next meetings:

Next steering group meeting: 5 October 2017, 11:00, EPFL premises

Working group meetings 2018: 5 February 2018 and 17 September 2018 in Brussels

Plenary meeting 2018: envisaged dates: November 22, 23 or 30.

Steering group meetings: 17 May 2018 and 11 Oct 2018.

Participants 11/09/2017

<p>Employers (5 ♂, 2 ♀)</p> <p><u>ECA</u> Mr Daan de Jong (NL) Mr Diederik Dewaele (BE) Mr David Frommer (BE)</p> <p><u>EPFL</u> Ms Ornella Bellia (IT) Mr Rohit Nair (India) Ms Laura Vilches (LaLiga – ES) Mr Mathieu Moreuil (FR)</p>	<p>Workers (2 ♂)</p> <p><u>FIFPro</u> Mr Wil Van Megen (NL) Mr Roy Vermeer (NL)</p>
<p>European Commission (1 ♀) Ms Sigried Caspar (DG EMPL) Mr Ramunas Linartas (DG EAC)</p>	<p>UEFA (1 ♂) Mr Julien Zylberstein</p>