



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG

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

Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee (SSDC) on Postal Services

Plenary meeting on 15 November 2012, Brussels

Draft minutes

1) Welcome and approval of agenda

The meeting was chaired by Dominique Bailly (POSTEUROP). The modified agenda was approved.

2) The future of the postal sector. Presentations from the International Post Corporation and the Copenhagen Institute for Future Studies.



Role of Mail 2020.pdf



Focus on the future
graphs.pdf

The role of Mail 2020: The future of postal services.

Mr Goetz (International Post Corporation) held the presentation entitled "Focus on the Future. Building a new compelling position for posts". He explained that the mail volume decoupled from GDP about the year 2000 and started to decline. Even successful postal operators will make losses on mail in some years to come. E-commerce is the main hope in the current times. Big companies such as eBay or Wal-Mart stress that postal services should be simple and easy to use. If not, companies such as FedEx or UPS will displace postal operators. Studies indicate that parcels bigger than big letters but lighter than two kilograms will be the fastest growing segment of the parcel market. The return management is another field where improvement is necessary; clients need to have a possibility to give their parcels back easily if they are not satisfied. Investing heavily in higher security levels is probably not a good solution because consumers are not willing to pay more for additional security. Furthermore, tariffs should not be based on weight any more, but rather on value or distance. Mr Goetz stressed as well the importance of HR departments in the sector. To meet consumers' expectations, it requires mind shifts and the change of culture.

Mr Bailly asked if there are other ways of diversification than e-commerce. Mr Goetz responded that he did not see other options. The only way would be to overtake some specific services from other companies, e.g. in Ireland cash management is handled by the post.

Mr Beck (Copenhagen Institute for Future Studies) spoke on behalf of Mr Jeffrey Saunders and held the presentation entitled "The Role of Mail 2020: The future of postal services". At the beginning he highlighted that consumers should be also invited for meetings such as the one of the SDC because by listening to them you can learn the most. He agreed with Mr Goetz that investing in higher security standards is not a good idea.

Mr Beck noted that the general feeling is that internet does not have a carbon footprint, which is not true. This false conviction puts the postal operator in an unfavourable position as their

services are usually regarded as less environment-friendly. Mr Beck supported also the view of Mr Bailly that in the times of globalisation people still feel the strong need to belong to a community and post offices often play a similar role as a school or a church in community building. Ms Mir Roca (UNI Europa) asked about the role of regulators in the postal sector. Mr Beck responded that speaking on consumers' behalf, regulators are always late.

3) Election of the SDC President and Vice-President.

Ms Ausprung (POSTEUROP) stated that the employers are happy with having Mr Bailly as a head of the committee. Furthermore, the employers fully support the tandem of Mr Bailly and Mr Baldwin (UNI Europa) as they are doing a great job. Mr Scott (UNI Europa) on behalf of the trade unions' site expressed his support for the Mr Bailly and Mr Baldwin. The current head and the vice-head of the committee were reappointed. They thanked participants for this confidence and .

4) The functioning of the SDC.

Ms Meidinger presented a new logo of the committee. She added that the logo had been modernised and was suitable for all documents, presentations and letters.



Presentation SDC
logo.pdf

Mr Bailly announced that he will work with Mr Baldwin also on the informal bases between the meetings of the committee.

Mr Schwarz presented a schedule for 2013 and new rules aimed at more efficient and more effective social dialogue. The number of the meetings will be in general limited to four per year and horizontal topics will be discussed via the Liaison Forums and no longer at meetings of individual committees. Other rules include: the requests for interpreters and languages to be submitted two months in advance, the lists of participants to be submitted eight days in advance at latest, and travel expenses claims to be submitted not later than one month after the meeting. Mr Schwarz announced as well that the committee will obtain funding for additional meetings in 2013.

5) Presentation on active ageing.



active ageing.pdf

Ms Jurczak (European Commission) held the presentation entitled "The European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations". She dedicated her presentation to awareness-raising campaigns and other measure taken by the Commission. Studies demonstrate that people usually do not compete for the same job so older workers do not decrease the amount of job available for younger population. It is not a zero-sum game.

Ms Ausprung asked how industries prepare to face the ageing population. Ms Jurczak answered that gig companies invest in programmes for seniors. He added that he is not aware of actions taken by SMEs as they are much more difficult to analyse. Mr Bailly asked about the situation of older workers who cannot any more do the same activities, e.g. carry heavy boxes. Ms Jurczak pointed out that there are several measures which can be implemented in such situations. It is important to maintain the job but necessarily the same workplace.

Lifelong learning and trainings play important role because developing another skillsets may be necessary to switch workplaces.

Mr Scott stated that he remains sceptical about the issue because employers do not make efforts to keep older workers longer in the workplaces. Older people are often forced to accept part-time, low-paid jobs. He added that it sounded unfortunate for him to talk about "older people-friendly infrastructure" as it suggests that old age is some kind of disability. Ms Jurczak responded that she is aware that the term can be perceived as ambiguous for some, however, adjustments are often need. They can be often beneficial for younger people as well, e.g. thanks to more ergonomic equipment.

6) Postal Sector working groups' activities.

The activities conducted in 2012 were briefly discussed. Moreover, the work programme (WP) for 2013 was presented. Mr Schwarz confirmed that the Commission approved the project in the WP 2013.

a) Postal Sector Evolution working group activities



Postal Sector
Evolution.pdf

The group plans to conduct a study on HR data and a project "Developing a quality postal service in the digital age" in 2013.

b) CSR working group activities



Corporate Social
Responsibility.pdf

The group worked on the themes of environment and climate change in 2012 and now finalises its work in this areas. The closer cooperation with the accident prevention working group is envisaged.

c) Training working group activities



Training & Skills
Development.pdf

The group carries out a project on matching skills and jobs in the European postal sector. Project started in July 2012 and is planned to finish in July next year.

d) Accident prevention working group activities



Accident Prevention
presentation SDC_12

H&S standards should be perceived more often perceived as a valuable investment and the measure to save future costs, however, they are still often regarded as costs, which is a significant problem. The group is going to conclude its work on slips, trips and falls and plans to work on age management in 2013.