



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities DG

Social Dialogue, Social Rights, Working Conditions, Adaptation to Change
Social Dialogue, Industrial Relations

SECTORAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE "RAILWAYS"

Conclusions of the Meeting of Working Party II held on 14 February 2007

The working party was chaired by Mr Preumont (employers).

(1) Work programme of the working group

The first two points of the work programme "employability"¹ have almost been completed (women's project: conference in June 2007 in Rome; Rail-Employ project: conference held in October 2006 in Brussels). The third point – joint study on the certification of training centres for drivers – had been refused by CER's management committee. The CER representative informed the meeting that for the time being, this project had to be given up. In order to avoid such a situation in the future, CER would submit the proposals for the work programme to its management committee before committing to them in the social dialogue.

ETF announced that in the recommendations to be adopted at the conference, there would probably be a proposal for a follow-up to the women's project. As far as the certification of training centres was concerned, the workers' side reiterated its strong interest in the issue. Since the railway agency would work on the issue, the social partners should contribute jointly with their own ideas. In this context, reference was made to the current RAILTRAINING study establishing an inventory on existing training capacities and access conditions. This study should be closely followed by the social partners, especially because the questions in the questionnaire had not been very relevant for the trade unions and because there might be a political agenda behind the study (externalising training centres from companies and hence establishing a commercial training market in which drivers might have to pay for their training in the future). Last but not least, ETF asked how the subject of persons with disabilities/equality of chances could be addressed together in future.

Both sides acknowledged the importance of being better involved in the RAILTRAINING study. As far as the certification of training centres was concerned,

¹http://forum.europa.eu.int/Public/irc/empl/sectoral_social_dialogue/library?l=/railways/2006/arbeitsprogrmm/2005_2006_enpdf/_EN_1.0_&a=d

CER referred to the fact that the establishment of criteria had already been subject of a political decision (see Article 17 of the railways agency regulation).

(2) Conclusions and possible follow-up of the Rail-Employ project

The quality of the recommendations presented by the study group in October was discussed, as well as their possible follow-up by the social partners. It was agreed that the two rapporteurs (Mr Mette and Ms Tamas) would rework the text and present draft recommendations of one page to the steering committee on 12 March.

The project promoter of the Rail-Employ project, SFS, presented a follow-up proposal "Rail-Ageing" which would address the demographic challenge. The scope, objective and involvement of social partners were discussed. The working group felt that there might be more burning questions to be addressed by the social partners, such as relying upon the RAILTRAINING inventory which would also take account of demographic change, not concentrating alone on elderly workers (recruitment of young people and women, employer branding), addressing questions such as the type of employment for older workers, the questions of polyvalence vs. specialisation and geographical mobility. The social partners could not support the proposal at the current stage. There was need for further internal discussions and the procedure shall follow different steps: the parties would first identify a problem (also with regard to other priorities such as the current negotiations on mobile staff), then decide upon the methodology and – in case of a decision for carrying out a project – tender for external assistance if needed. They thanked SFS for the valuable work carried out so far.

(3) Draft declaration on gender equality

The FS representative presented the draft declaration to be adopted at the conference on 12 June. Suggestions for changes would be welcome by 20 February (date of the next project meeting). ETF stressed that the text was mainly agreed, besides some problems in section 1.1. ETF's internal decision at the rail section level would be taken in May. CER announced that its management committee would meet on 15 May. Any draft text to be submitted there should be short, placing the recommendations with a short introduction at the beginning of the text and possibly joining more text (possible actions) as annex. The Commission representative invited the social partners to consult the social dialogue toolkit² which was proposing, amongst others, a typology of European social dialogue results, a drafting checklist for European social partner texts and examples of follow-up provisions. The SNCF representative defended the idea of concrete follow-up provisions, such as asking the companies to fixing a target for action at enterprise level within a given time. However, CER announced that its management committee would only look at the recommendations, not at the full text.

(4) Next meetings

12 March (steering committee), 17 April (plenary), 15 June (tbc, working group I).

² http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/social_dialogue/toolkit_en.htm

Participants 14.2.2007 :

Employers	Ms ATANASOVA (NRIC) Ms BELOTTI (FS) Ms CATALDI (FS) Mr HARA (SNCF) Mr METTE (DB) Mr PREUMONT (CER)
Workers	Mr DE CHATEAUVIEUX (CFDT) Mr JONCRET (CGT) Ms TAMAS (UDSZSZ) Ms TRIER (ETF)
European Commission	Ms DURST (DG EMPL/F.1)
Others	Mr LICHTER (SFS Dortmund)