



**Social Dialogue Hospital Sector  
Working Group Meeting 1/2012  
Brussels, 16 February 2012  
Draft minutes**

**MORNING SESSION**

**09.30 – 10.15 EPSU–HOSPEEM Steering Committee**

**10.15 – 11.15 Separate trade unions' and employers' group meetings**

**11.15 – 13.00 Plenary**

**1. Ageing Healthcare Workforce**

- Presentation of the work done so far by the Drafting Group on to Ageing Workforce for the draft of a set of guidelines and good practice examples (Presentation by two members of the Drafting Group)
  - Discussion on best practices in managing the healthcare workforce and collection of inputs from participants
  - Organisation of the Technical Seminar on the 26 April 2012
- Bjørn Henriksen (Spekter - N) and Nina Bergman (Vårdförbundet - S) presented the work done so far by the Drafting Group on the Ageing Workforce. They underlined that the first draft of guidelines received by EPSU and HOSPEEM members constitute a document in constant evolution circulated with the aim of involving all members in the discussion and take on board the contributions.
- Gail Adams (UNISON – UK) proposed to add to the guidelines a list of some principles. This would enable a more flexible translation into different languages facilitating to avoid problems caused by a literal translation of the wording.

**Next steps:**

- During the next weeks, the members of the Drafting Group will work in sub-group to revise the first draft of Guidelines on the Ageing Workforce (circulated to all members for discussion before the meeting) and will exchange comments and amendments, with the following timeline:

| <b>TASKS</b>  | <b>DEADLINES</b> |
|---|------------------|
| Each sub-group elects a leader who coordinates their work. The leader send the new version of the part assigned to his/her sub-group to HOSPEEM and EPSU Secretariats that will put all the contributions together. | 9 March 2012     |
| HOSPEEM and EPSU Secretariats to circulate to the Drafting Group the new draft document.  | 16 March 2012    |
| Members of the Drafting Group to send comments on the new draft document.   | 23 March 2012    |

- **By the end of March** EPSU and HOSPEEM Secretariats will circulate to all members the **second draft of the Guidelines** produced by the Drafting Group.

### **Tasks for all HOSPEEM and EPSU members:**

#### **a) Technical Seminar “Ageing Workforce”**

- EPSU and HOSPEEM members are asked to **propose names for the two key note speakers (experts/researchers)** to invite to the Technical Seminar by sending an email to EPSU and HOSPEEM Secretariats ([mmaucher@epsu.org](mailto:mmaucher@epsu.org); [hospeem@hospeem.eu](mailto:hospeem@hospeem.eu)) **as early as possible**, the latest again by 10 March 2012.

- **EPSU and HOSPEEM members interested in presenting a good practice example** (to be presented in 20 minutes) in the context of the Technical Seminar **are invited to send their proposal** to EPSU and HOSPEEM Secretariats ([mmaucher@epsu.org](mailto:mmaucher@epsu.org); [hospeem@hospeem.eu](mailto:hospeem@hospeem.eu)) **by 10 March 2012**.

- EPSU and HOSPEEM colleagues who would like to inform the participants on the **actual situation of the ageing workforce and related challenges** in their countries by making a comment/presentation (10 minutes) are asked to inform us **by 10 March 2012** ([mmaucher@epsu.org](mailto:mmaucher@epsu.org); [hospeem@hospeem.eu](mailto:hospeem@hospeem.eu)) about their interest. **We encourage in particular contributions from the Mediterranean countries and from Central and Eastern Europe.**

#### **b) Joint EPSU-HOSPEEM guidelines and good practice examples “Ageing Workforce”**

- HOSPEEM and EPSU members are asked contribute to the work of the Drafting Group “Ageing Workforce” by sending to their respective secretariats good practice examples on the management of the ageing workforce to be fed into the document currently elaborated.

- o For further information on the Technical Seminar of 26 April 2012 see the document with the draft programme and further explanations on aims, organisational issues, the programme structure and demands towards EPSU affiliates and EPSU members (in EN)

**13:00 – 14:30 Lunch break**

### **AFTERNOON SESSION**

**14:30 – 16:00 Plenary**

#### **2. Revision of the Professional Qualifications Directive (Directive 2005/36/EC)**

- Discussion on the proposal of revision of the Directive adopted by the European Commission on the 19th of December and further developments.
- o Kate Ling (NHS Employers - UK) gave a presentation of the proposal of revision of the Directive 2005/36/EU issued by the European Commission on 19 December 2011 explaining the different issues at stake (i.e. mutual recognition and free movement, health and safety, language controls, professional card, alert mechanism, partial access, continuing competence) and the actions that could be undertaken (see presentation in attachment). She invited to discuss the possibility to react the EC proposal with a HOSPEEM-EPSU joint statement. HOSPEEM and EPSU will evaluate this option during the next month.
- o With regard to the proposal for the introduction into the Directive of the concept of “partial access” (point 4.4 of the Proposal), Mathias Maucher underlined that this issue still remains very critical, as it was when EPSU and HOSPEEM responded to the consultation. In the text of the Proposal of revision, a sectoral exception for the health sector is mentioned, but the wording should be clearer: the principle of partial access should need

to be declared non applicable for health sector or at least for health professions. If EPSU and HOSPEEM want the text to be changed, they should propose an amendment. With regard to language requirements, Mathias Maucher said that even if a lot of the concerns expressed in the EPSU-HOSPEEM response to the EC Green Paper (September 2011) have been taken into consideration, how things will be regulated in detail is still unclear. A clarification is needed about who should make the language test, i.e. the regulator and/or the employer. EPSU would be in favor of a language test, but not done by every employer in a different manner. With regard to nurses (section 3 of the EC Proposal), Mathias Maucher said that the EC proposal contains a provision which fix the length of schooling to access the profession of nurse responsible for general care at 12 years. This corresponds to the reply of EPSU (including a non-regression clause for countries having set this condition) to question 20 in the submission to the Green Paper of September 2011 and the position and request of most affiliates. EPSU German affiliates do not agree with this proposal for different reasons including that this does not correspond to the German system (access to professional training possible after ten years of schooling). Under the current proposal nurses having studied and obtained the certificate for nurses responsible for general care in Germany would not obtain/could be refused automatic recognition in the other Member States. EPSU has to discuss this issue internally at its Standing Committee "Health and Social Services" end of March 2012 in Luxembourg.

### **3. Feasibility Study on the Establishment of a European Sector Council on Employment and Skills for Nursing and the Care Workforce**

- Report on the kick-off meeting of 19 January
  - Next steps
- Mathias Maucher made a presentation on this issue (see slide sets in attachment).
  - HOSPEEM and EPSU are participating in the feasibility study (January 2012-December 2012) led by the European Health Management Association (EHMA) and the University of Southampton (UoS). The tasks of the feasibility study are to analyse, map, and report on the existence and the functioning of sector skill councils in the health sector at national level, and about the feasibility of a sector skill council for nursing and the care workforce at European level.
  - The first difference between a (possible) EU Sector Skills Councils and the Sectoral Social Dialogue concerns the nature of participants that in European sector councils is broader and would also comprise education and training providers, possible regulators, etc.
  - In the intentions of the European Commission the principal proposed output of an EU Sector Skills Council is to provide better information on the evolution of a given sector in terms of skills and employment (also other more political instruments like recommendations are foreseen to be possibly used). Sector Skills Councils should contribute to the work of the Sectoral Social Dialogue and feed in their "output" and results, not replace it or reduce its scope of activity. They should be seen as a complementary tool. In September 2011, EPSU and HOSPEEM decided to participate in the project, but reserving the possibility to decide later whether to sustain the establishment of the council or not and asking the project lead partners to inform about the project progress and outcomes and to take into account the recommendations of the European sectoral social partners. This is also clearly stated in the project proposal.
  - After summer 2012, HOSPEEM and EPSU will need to take a position on that to be fed in into the evaluation and recommendation phase of the project. If an agreement is possible, they will try to issue a joint recommendation.
  - Mathias Maucher underlined that other ongoing mapping exercises and feasibility studies on EU Sectoral Skills Councils in about ten other sectors have been initiated and are being run by the social partners and the scope of the councils they could constitute

corresponds to their sector. The same holds for the four sectors where a Sector Skills Council already has been set up or will be set up during 2012. On the contrary, the feasibility study led by EHMA and UoS has not been initiated by EPSU and HOSPEEM.

- At national level, networks of regional and local level sectoral councils already exists in some Member States, but do not necessarily include yet social partners (for example in the Czech Republic where as sector skills Council for the health care and social services was set up end of 2011). Mathias Maucher asked EPSU and HOSPEEM members what their experience with such sector councils in their home country is, if they are involved, what benefits they see, which problems they have encountered.
- The fundamental questions HOSPEEM and EPSU have to examine are the membership, the scope, on-going activities and the outputs and outcomes of the already existing councils across the EU (do they involve social partners?). On the basis of an assessment of the existing situation, HOSPEEM and EPSU will need to evaluate their interest in promoting this kind of initiative at European level. The question of sustainable funding of a possible EU-level Sector Skills Council in the health sector will be a key element of their assessment.
- François Ziegler (DG Employment) summarised the different aspects to be taken into consideration as follows: the added value of an EU Skill Council, the potential benefits, the impact on the Sectoral Social Dialogue (risk of dilution of the role of social partners and of confusion with the role of other stakeholders, possible weakening of the Sectoral Social Dialogue in relation to its work on the topic of skills and qualifications), the technical feasibility (expertise and staff) and the financial sustainability (taking into consideration that several stakeholder would be involved and could and would need to contribute).
- The above questions are made even more important by the fact that the European Commission would finance the EU Skills Councils only temporary and decreasingly (the EC provides one year of financial support for the feasibility study and other three years of decreasing contribution for the start-up of the Council, after this period the Council is assumed to become financially self-sufficient). The EC estimates the resources necessary to run an EU skill council to be up to 300,000€ per year.
- During the next months, HOSPEEM and EPSU will discuss internally their position on the above issues and the role they want to play in the panorama of the different EU initiatives on skill development. A new one, Sector Skills Alliances, pushed by DG EAC, is not yet included in the slides giving an overview on the different initiatives.
- A representative of EHMA or the UoS will be invited to participate in the EPSU-HOSPEEM Working Group meeting of 4 June 2012 to report back to Social Partners on the development of the project.

#### **4. Prevention of Sharp Injuries**

- Elaboration of a joint EPSU-HOSPEEM project proposal
- Godfrey Perera informed the participants that EPSU and HOSPEEM Secretariats are going to submit a project proposal to be financed by DG Employment with the aim of facilitating the implementation of the Directive on Sharp Injuries. He underlined that it will most probably take still quite some time before the European Commission is able to take measures against States not implementing this EU directive. EPSU and HOSPEEM, as social partners and in particular their national members have to make sure and, have a formal co-responsibility (given the fact that an autonomous social partner agreement was transposed into European legislation) that the Directive is being properly implemented. They will also look into the involvement of their national members in this process
- EPSU and HOSPEEM Secretariats are going to finalise the project proposal by the end of March/beginning of April (this depends on the date in which the call for proposals will be

published by DG Employment). The project will envisage the organisation of three regional seminars to be held in Vienna, Dublin and Rome and to be hosted by HOSPEEM members.

- The project will end in October/November 2013 with a final conference.

**5. Questionnaire on the implementation of the EPSU-HOSPEEM Code of Conduct on Ethical Cross-border Recruitment and Retention (2008)**

- Deadline to return the questionnaires to EPSU and HOSPEEM Secretariats:  
28 February 2012
- Godfrey Perera underlined the importance to respond to the Questionnaire by the deadline of 28 February 2012.
- HOSPEEM and EPSU, as the Social Partners who negotiated the Code of Conduct, have to demonstrate to the Commission that the agreement made is being properly implemented.
- EPSU and HOSPEEM affiliates are referred to the minutes of the Plenary Meeting 2/2012 of 2 December 2011, item 3. EPSU-HOSPEEM Code of Conduct on Ethical Cross-border Recruitment and Retention (2008) for further details

**6. Any other business**

No other issues were raised.