



## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities DG

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

**Meeting:** Sectoral social dialogue committee, **Insurance**  
Plenary session

**Time & place:** 13 January 2009, Borschette Centre, Brussels

### Participants:

Employers	Trade Unions
1. ALMBERG Gabriella (BIPAR)	1. AZZOPARDI Joanna (MT)
2. BASTIEN Isabelle (BE)	2. CASE Andrew (UK)
3. BLIJLEVENS Rene (NL)	3. CUCINELLO Bianca (IT)
4. DARAS Milan (SK)	4. FRIMAND-MEIER Henrik (DK)
5. DEMARRE Serge (BE)	5. GREIF Wolfgang (AT)
6. ELTNER Christian (AT)	6. KOUMIDOU Maria (CY)
7. GHERSO Adalgisa (IT)	7. KUBASEK Rudolf (CZ)
8. HOCK Catherine (AMICE)	8. LAMMANS Benny (BE)
9. HOPE David (UK)	9. MAES ELKE (BE)
10. HOPFNER Sebastian (DE)	10. PORTELLI William (MT)
11. MATCOV Ecaterina (CEA)	11. SODERQVIST Anna (SE)
12. MEURGUE Fabienne (FR)	12. SONDERGARD Katrine (UNI-Europa)
13. SIMEK Zdenek (CZ)	13. SPOLJARIC Sirpa (FIN)
14. STANKOVA Magda (SK)	14. ZYLBERBERG Maurice (FR)
15. UHLENDORF Anne (DE)	
16. VIDONJA William (CEA)	
17. ZAKOVA Jozefina (SK)	

#### Commission:

Jean-Paul Tricart, DG EMPL F.1

Dorota Dlouchy, DG EMPL F.1

#### Expert:

Daniele Kaisergruber (DKRC)

### MINUTES

#### **1. Opening introduction by Mr. Jean-Paul Tricart, Head of Unit in charge of social dialogue and industrial relations at the European Commission**

Mr. Tricart introduces members of the SSDC to the key debates and priorities of the Commission and in particular DG EMPL in 2009.

He mentions the number of uncertainties we are facing; such as the economic situation. He underlines that there are also going to be changes in the EU such as the new European

Parliament, the new college and in case of this DG – new director general. Also the EU will face an important test: the referendum in Ireland.

The Commission will contribute to the mobilization of efforts at the national and international level towards the recovery by consolidating the activities in the framework of Lisbon strategy in order to promote mutually reinforcing policies. Currently also, the environment concerns must be integrated into the Lisbon strategy. We need not only a growth, but green growth and fair growth. The partnership with Member States and Social Partners is of the utmost importance for the success in this field. The sustainable reforms can only be made through the consensus. To this end DG EMPL/F1 will continue to work on strengthening social dialogue both interprofessional as well as sectoral.

The Communication on sectoral social dialogue aiming at drawing the conclusions of 10 years of experience is being prepared now by the services. It will give more visibility to SD achievements, but it also should improve the functioning of SSDCs and give a new impetus to the dialogue processes.

JPT informs members about the diversity among 36 existing committees. Some of the sectors cover small number of employees some cover huge traditional sectors. There are also differences between activities, results and dynamism of all the committees.

In the process of preparing the communication, F1 launched the consultation with social partners. More than 40 responses were so far received. The results of the analysis of the consultations will be presented to Social Partners during the Liaison Forum. The communication should be published in September. It should address inter alia the questions of interaction between European and national levels of SD, functioning and resources etc. JPT thanks the Social Partners for the contribution to consultation and encourages them to provide any additional comments.

The chair discusses the question of the quality of the results, underlining its importance. He also says that the changes are needed in the functioning of the SSD but should be rather limited as the structure is quite new and needs time to mature. As far as numbers of the committees is concerned, the chair asks if there are any limits concerning the size of the sector.

He also reminds that not only EC has limited resources but also the European Social Partners have to face same constraints and in the result sometimes the reaction to the EC actions cannot be as swift as might be expected.

JPT agrees with the chair on the importance of quality of the results and underlines that the current evaluation of the outcomes of the SD is not only quantitative but also qualitative

On the limited resources, JPT says that the capacities of SP and EC were put on the test following enlargement. Not only because of the higher number of the MS but also as the diversity and complexity within EU increased. The Commission recognises this challenge and through the budget lines available supports Social Partners in their activities.

There are also a number of questions from the floor.

On the question on the number of the answers received to the consultation and whether they will be public, JPT informs Social Partners that around 40 replies were received representing higher number of organisations. As far as publication of replies is concern there is a question of the agreement of organizations that replied.

On the question concerning the desired scope of the SSD, JPT states that SSD should address working conditions and anything which is related to working conditions such as H&S,

contractual arrangements, training, demography, but also other issues such as mobility, qualifications.

As far as appropriate size of the sector is concerned, JPT underlines that in some cases the size is less important than the level of EU regulation concerning sector – which is indeed a case in football.

Social partners also asked for the upgrade of website on social dialogue, which is according to the Partners not easy to navigate.

JPT says that unit works now on the change of the website.

## **2. Enlargement project**

In depth discussion on the subject took place a day before at the final conference. CEA would like to pursue this project but only in winter 2009. There is a short discussion on the countries to be included in the future. CEA proposes BG and RO. Activities with CS, HU and SK will be continued. UNI- Europa underlines importance of making project that includes Poland. PL remains a priority for trade unions, but the choice of the countries is still to be discussed.

It is decided however that secretariats will discuss the details and application for EU funding will be sent in autumn.

## **3. Sectoral analysis of emerging competences and economic activities in the EU**

Presentation is available here:

[http://circa.europa.eu/Public/irc/empl/sectoral\\_social\\_dialogue/library?l=/insurance/2009/20090113\\_kaisergruberpdf/ EN 1.0 &a=d](http://circa.europa.eu/Public/irc/empl/sectoral_social_dialogue/library?l=/insurance/2009/20090113_kaisergruberpdf/ EN 1.0 &a=d)

Mrs Kaisergruber explains the process behind the study and the first results. She also makes a short presentation on possible scenarios for the future. She also informed participants on the meeting on the draft final report that was to take place in the last week of Feb.

Danish Trade Unions inform Mrs Kaisergruber that functions of the back and front office are merging currently and there is no clear cut in functions between them. Additionally, they mention that people in their 50s are becoming more open to the mobility.

Also participants observe that proposed scenarios are not mutually exclusive and that elements of different scenarios can be seen.

Answering the questions, speaker explains that the study was made on the basis of three sources: survey done for CEDEFOP, articles and books published in various MS, national studies and work done by national observatories and finally a limited number of interviews.

## **4. Demography**

Discussion on the content of a joint statement (introduction) and on a project for a booklet on 'good' practices and experiences.

CEA presents a draft of the joint statement. Also, CEA has received a draft document from UNI-Europa, but only a day before the plenary session. According to the chairman document by CEA is much longer and much more detailed.

CEA presents the document they prepared. A draft focuses on two main issues: attractiveness of the sector and employability. As far as attractiveness is concerned, CEA believes that the sector suffers from the bad image and this should be addressed. Another issue here is the reconciliation of the professional and private life. On employability, CEA proposes to address the LLL and health and safety in the work place.

UNI Europa believes that both CEA introduction as well as the follow-up are well written and can become a basis for the future discussion. However UNI Europa reminds that at the last WG the decision was made to limit the focus as far as attractiveness and employability is concerned to: life work balance, stress and health and LLL.

UNI Europa believes that as far as health is concerned, yes it is the responsibility of employee, but in case of work related stress it must be addressed here as it also contributes to the question of the bad image of the sector. The document is a good point of departure, but it must still be discussed in the working group.

CEA proposes to pursue the subject in the WG in April.

The chair believes that the part on stress must be carefully worded. CEA also believes that the question of stress should be addressed in the working conditions not the attractiveness of the sector.

Commission representative reminds that the autonomous agreement on stress at the interprofessional level exists and can be taken here as a basis or point of departure.

The relevance of this document will be checked by the WG.

There is also a proposal that Secretariats will work on the text and common draft will be presented to the WG. There is agreement on it.

Commission representative asks to remove from the "next steps part" the statement that the Commission will translate this document.

## **5. Work programme 2009**

Work programme will be sent to the EC by the Secretariats.