



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG

Employment and Social Governance
Social dialogue

SECTORAL SOCIAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE CHEMICAL INDUSTRY

Working Group Meeting – virtual conference

Meeting 17 June 2020

Minutes

Chair: Dimitra Penidis (ACV-CSC - industriAll Europe)

1. Opening and welcome

The agenda of the meeting was approved.

2. COVID-19 latest developments

Social partners discussed the draft text of the Joint recommendations on safe and healthy workplaces in the Chemical, Pharmaceutical, Plastics and Rubber Industries in times of COVID-19. This initial discussion will be followed by a written consultation prior to approval and adoption.

3. Green Deal and Social Partner Project

Social Partner Project Application "On the Road to Climate Neutrality 2050"

Maïke Niggemann (industriAll Europe) informed that the European social partners will submit a project proposal on the European Green Deal in the framework of the Call for proposals VP/2020/001 Support for Social Dialogue. The project proposal is entitled "On the Road to Climate Neutrality 2050 - the role of Social Partners in the Decarbonisation of the Chemical, Pharmaceutical, Rubber and Plastics Industries".

The results of the selection procedure are expected by November.

4. Pharmaceutical Strategy for Europe

Antonios Rodiadis from DG SANTE gave an overview of the state of play of the Pharmaceutical Strategy for Europe. He highlighted that the Strategy should deal with key

elements, such as health system sustainability, better access to medicines for patients, investment and innovative value within the EU, diversification of supplies of pharmaceutical ingredients. The Strategy takes into account also the current COVID-19 pandemic and addresses increased coordination, prevention of shortages and EU dependency on non-European countries for pharmaceutical ingredients. The Strategy takes a holistic approach, coordinating a number of policies. The Roadmap was published in June and it is open for feedback until July, while the public consultation is open until September. Adoption of the Strategy is foreseen by the end of 2020. On 14-15 July, an online workshop for stakeholders will take place.

In the subsequent discussion, Maïke Niggemann (industriAll Europe) mentioned the aspect of intellectual property rights and invited the Commission to consider social partners as relevant stakeholders to be involved. Jochen Wilkens (ChemieNord - ECEG) mentioned the production of generic medicines in the EU and EU's struggle with high production costs compared with other parts of the world.

5. Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability

Elena Montani from DG ENV presented the (not yet approved and published) Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability by highlighting its main elements. The Strategy fits in the framework of European Green Deal with its intention to achieve zero emissions and a toxic free environment. It aims to protect citizens and it targets preventing and controlling. Another aim of the Strategy is to simplify and strengthen the current legal framework. The Commission suggests a "one substance one assessment" approach and wants also to address the cocktail effects of different chemicals, endocrine disruptors and PFAS. There are interlinkages between the Chemical Strategy for Sustainability, Circular Economy Action Plan and Pharmaceutical Strategy.

Elena Montani invited social partners to provide their feedback and informed that the adoption of the Strategy is foreseen for the end of September. It will be followed by the implementation and the follow-up phase (2021-2024).

Jochen Wilkens (ChemieNord - ECEG) mentioned the problematic aim of achieving zero emissions, which is misleading. Following the question of Maïke Niggemann (industriAll Europe), Ms Montani reassured that protection from hazardous chemicals and innovation support each other.

Sylvie Lemoine (CEFIC) presented the industry's point of view. The industry fully supports the Green Deal and it is determined to participate and find solutions. It is important that the chemical industry innovates and produces in Europe whereas there has been recent decrease in productivity. It is important to regain it and provide jobs. She pointed out some potentially problematic elements, for example classification of hazardous chemicals (disinfectants, vinegar, substances used for production of protective shields and gloves etc.). It is important to focus on protection and avoidance of exposure and to find a right balance to have safe and sustainable chemicals, collecting, recycling and managing a full-life cycle. The "safe & sustainable by design" approach has to be supported and promoted.

6. Any other business – concluding remarks

Future Meetings

- Jitka Hrudová from DG EMPL informed that the March meeting which was cancelled due to COVID-19 will be recovered either in September 2020 or in 2021. The Plenary meeting scheduled for 14 December will take place.

Annexes:

Agenda item 3: Pharmaceutical Strategy for Europe

Agenda item 4: Chemical Strategy for Sustainability

Participants 17/06/2020:

Delegation	Last name	First name	Representing:
ECEG	ARGUTYAN	Emma	EU
	BUDAI	Ivan	HU
	CUNEO	Paolo	IT
	DE VREEDE	Onno	NL
	DOMBALOVA	Liliana	BG
	FALAK	Ana	HR
	GÖBEL	Katharina	DE
	HENSEL	Elisa	DE
	ISOPO	Eleonora	EU
	JONQUET	Sylvain	FR
	LEMOINE	Sylvie	EU
	MARSH	Simon	UK
	SCHAUBMAYER	Klaus	AT
	SEIRUP	Niels	DK
	SELLAEG	Tore	NO
	SILTANEN	Anni	FI
	STATHOPOULOS	Theodore	GR
	SUROVA	Silvia	SK
	VAZQUEZ	Cristina	ES
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