



## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities DG

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

### **Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee on Postal Services**

#### **Plenary meeting on 1 December 2009, Brussels**

#### **Minutes**

The plenary meeting was chaired by Dominique Bailly (POSTEUROP), president of the sectoral social dialogue committee. He opened the meeting by presenting the agenda and giving a brief overview of the activity of the committee.

#### **1. Presentation by Jean-Paul Tricart (European Commission)**

Mr Tricart congratulated the social dialogue committee for its successful work in 2009 and in particular for the final conference of the social observatory project that took place in October and for the signature of the joint declaration on accident prevention that took place in June. He encouraged the committee to continue its ongoing work in the same spirit.

Mr Tricart gave an update on the process of designation and confirmation of the new College of Commissioners. The Commissioner-designate for Employment and Social Affairs is Mr László Andor (Hungary), who would take office in February if the European Parliament confirms the entire College according to the present timetable.

Meanwhile, the Commission has opened a public consultation on the EU 2020 strategy, following on to the Lisbon Strategy.<sup>1</sup> The document focuses on the exit from the current crisis and assuring the long-term future, the state of public finances, and the challenge of finding a mutually reinforcing policy mix that takes account of growth, economic performance, social policy, employment and the environment.

With respect to the Commission communication on European social dialogue, its adoption has been delayed until March. It will report that sectoral social dialogue has been a success story during the past 10 years, but that periods of dynamic work and phases of less activity alternate within most committees. Concerns include a certain lack of structure for social dialogue in the new Member States, and the administrative capacity of social partners.

A negative aspect of this success is the human resource and budgetary constraints that are faced by the Commission, and UNI europa questioned how this cut in resources and

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<sup>1</sup> The consultation is open until 15 January 2010 and can be accessed at this link:  
<http://ec.europa.eu/eu2020/>

the reduction in the number of meetings could be compatible with the purported support for European social dialogue. Mr Tricart stressed that there was not a reduction, but that the number of committees is increasing while the resources are not.

UNI europa inquired about communication between different Commission services, where awareness about the existence of social dialogue committees seems to be lacking and contradictory messages about policies are given to social partners. Mr Tricart emphasized the unified nature of the European Commission, but that nuances in approach by different services could be traced even to the Lisbon Strategy and the challenge of finding a mutually reinforcing, positive-sum policy mix that considers social concerns and economic efficiency. In this respect, contributions by social partners are always welcome, and in fact, the Lisbon Treaty now specifically mentions that the EU is a social market economy.

UNI europa asked about the Commission reports on the postal sector and its evolution, to which Mr Tricart replied that the next market monitoring report will indeed be a test for cooperation between the Employment and Internal Market DGs. However, it is always easier for the Employment DG to proactively contact other Commission services with specific social partner proposals and positions, rather than simply requesting from others to initiate a consultation of the social dialogue committee. The Commission's postal market monitoring is separate from impact assessments and the consultation of social dialogue committees, as impact assessments are only undertaken for new Commission proposals. However, in addition to the Commission's postal market monitoring, the committee or the social partners are always welcome to propose a project for EU funding.

POSTEUROP asked about a possible reflection on the functioning of the European Union as a result of the crisis, to which Mr Tricart replied that the debate on the causes of the crisis and the consequences had only just begun. As this is a very difficult political issue, no conclusions could yet be reported.

## **2. Postal sector evolution working group activities**

Mr Bailly, Ms Meidinger (POSTEUROP) and Mr Baldwin (UNI europa) gave an overview of the working group's activities in 2009, including the social observatory project, and presented the 2010 working programme. This working programme includes continuing the monitoring of social evolutions and of their implementation, working on quality of employment by following the progress of the Commission's initiative on Skills and Jobs Councils, studying the ways national postal operators (NPOs) can use the EU Social Funds, establishing a typology of new entrants, continuing to monitor the provision of the universal postal service and a follow-up of the communication action plan.



Postal Sector  
Evolution Activities 01

### **3. Presentation by external experts on climate change and its social consequences**

Mr Meyermans (European Commission) gave a presentation on climate change and labour market outcomes.



Meyermans  
presentation,Climate

Ms Aumayr (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, Eurofound) gave a presentation on the work of Eurofound on the greening of the European economy.



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Presentation SD Com

### **4. Exchange with other sectors working group activities**

Mr Wortmann (POSTEUROP) gave a presentation on the discussions that have taken place and on the next steps. The 2010 working programme includes using cross references in order to prioritize sectors to get in contact with and developing a concept on how to get in contact with these prioritized sectors.



2009 11 23 SDC  
Exchange with other

UNI europa (Mr Arches) pointed out that the working group had been dormant and that in the current times of crisis there is an interest in having more in-depth exchanges with other sectors. UNI europa's interest is to focus on other sectors that are in crisis, so as to learn from them and to get help on how to deal with it.

### **5. CSR working group activities**

POSTEUROP (Mr Wortmann) and UNI europa (Ms Mir) presented the activities of the working group and the work programme for 2010. This working programme includes a follow-up on diversity activities for the first semester and a follow-up on the environment pillar of CSR for the second one.



SDC CSR\_Plenary  
meeting\_BX\_2009-12

In the context, UNI europa mentioned a few activities and events that are linked to the working group: (1) its presence on the UPU committee on sustainability; (2) the CSR conference organised by the Swedish presidency in November 2009 in Stockholm, an activity that will continue during the following presidencies; (3) its campaign against

violence against women, which is embedded into the wider European and global campaign.

## **6. Accident prevention working group activities**

Mr Potykiewicz and Mr Spada (POSTEUROP) gave an overview of the activities of the working group and the work programme for 2010. This working programme includes a study on slips, trips and falls and their consequences for the health of employees, and a benchmark on occupational health organisations at the national postal companies. This working programme includes the possible participation of the SDC as a pilot sector to the sectoral Skills Councils (if created in 2010), a funded project on the questionnaire's outcomes with the topic to be defined, and cooperation with the CSR working group on possible aspects of training and skills related to sustainable development and "green jobs" in the postal sector.



AP presentation,  
SDC plenary meeting

## **7. Training working group activities**

Mr Scott (UNI europa) presented the working group's activities during 2009, especially the results from the questionnaire, and outlined the working programme for 2010.



Training Plenary1  
December 2009.ppt

## **8. Any other business**

The dates of the meetings for 2010 were confirmed:

- 14.01. Postal sector evolution (no interpretation)
- 17.02. Training and CSR
- 06.05. Postal sector evolution (no interpretation)
- 10.06. Accident prevention and exchange with other sectors
- 28.09. Plenary meeting
- 04.11. Training and CSR
- 16.11. Postal sector evolution (no interpretation)
- 01.12. Accident prevention and exchange with other sectors

The Chair requested each side to nominate a backup for the chairperson and speaker of each committee, in order to cover possible absences.

As Mr Wortmann (POSTEUROP) is leaving the European social dialogue committee, the vice-president (Mr Baldwin, UNI europa) thanked him for his work during the last few years.

The Chair closed the plenary meeting by thanking the participants for their attendance and the interpreters for their work.