



Brussels, 29 April 2016

**SECTORAL SOCIAL DIALOGUE  
COMMITTEE  
INSURANCE**

**Minutes of the working group meeting**

**29 April 2016**

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Sebastian Hopfner (Chairman of Insurance Europe's Social Dialogue Platform and Deputy General Manager-AGV).

**1. Adoption of the agenda and approval of the minutes of the ISSDC WG meeting on 5 October 2015**

The agenda and the draft minutes of the previous working group meeting (4 February 2016) were adopted, following the comments made in written procedure.

**2. Digitalisation**

The cross-industry European social partners presented the "Statement of the European Social partners on digitisation" adopted at the margin of the Tripartite Social Summit of 16 March 2016. In particular, Mr. Scherrer from ETUC highlighted that there is a common viewpoint amongst the social partners on the challenges, but also the opportunities arising from digitisation. The statement is a balanced document that recognises that the job market will change (some jobs will be lost, others will be created, others will be transformed). He underlined the generational, gender and regional aspects of digitisation as highlighted in the statement. The definition of a worker will also change. ETUC asks for a permanent forum to discuss the social aspects of digitisation with the E. Commission. Various DGs in the Commission are involved.

Mr Cerutti from Business Europe highlighted the need for dialogue between the social partners and the European institutions. Digitisation will have an impact on the prosperity of Europe. A silo approach would be wrong. EU employment policy has to contribute to a better positioning of companies to deal with digitisation. Emphasis should be put on digital skills, on improving the process of industrial production i.e. 3D printing, more productivity and better work organisation (i.e. capacities to reconcile work and family life, H& S improvements at work). There is an important coordination role for the European Commission. Practices will then be transposed to the national level.

There is common understanding between the cross-industry social partners on the need to launch a debate on the social impact of digitisation. It is an open rather than a closed debate. The cross-industry social partners are now looking at the sectoral and national federations for experience; better decisions can be taken at this level.

Mr. Alexander Riedl (European Commission, DG Connect), presented the latest developments on the side of the Commission on digitisation. There is a joint approach of the various DGs involved. For example, DG EAC is discussing with the social partners on how education and training systems can best adapt to the challenges of digitisation. DG GROW is discussing in a working group with the automotive sector. An inter-service group has been set-up within the European Commission to ensure a coordinated approach on digitisation. The consultation on the European Pillar of Social Rights is also an important orientation paper which will form the basis for further discussion.

Mr. Riedl introduced the so-called “digitisation package” adopted by the Commission this April<sup>1</sup>. It aims to provide industry with the right instruments to address digitisation. A number of EU instruments are aligned to help industry digitize better, including in the services sector (Horizon 2020, PPPs etc.). DG Cnect is organising roundtables with a strong involvement of the social partners in debating digitisation. Moreover, in June 2016 the European Commission will launch the skills agenda for Europe, a package of measures set to align the various EU instruments to address the skills issue, to make skills more visible and more comparable, and to improve skills intelligence. This will include a specific initiative on digital skills, based also on elements derived from dialogue with the social partners. A big conference on digitisation is organised by ETUC-ETUI in June.

The draft statement by the insurance committee comes at a timely moment. It is important to elucidate what social partners can concretely do to address the challenge of digitisation. There is a lot of scope for involvement on skills analysis and re-skilling, that is, on mapping skill needs and better preparing for the future (*what skills? How can negative impacts be mitigated? Which is the right education and training? How to finance the development of human capital?*). The social partners have important powers to also orientate ESF spending at the national level to better address these challenges. Digitisation is not a new phenomenon. What is new is the pervasiveness of digitisation in all sectors of the economy. A mid-term and long-term vision is necessary.

Mr. Veredas from Vlerick Business School gave a presentation on the impact of digitisation in the insurance sector. Innovation in the financial services sector is not new, but it will affect employment. The business model for insurances will certainly change. He referred to a report by the World Economic Forum on disrupters for the value chain of Insurance.

A discussion followed. The Italian trade union delegate referred to the recently adopted Directive on data protection. Services should be offered to all segments of the population, not only to those with on-line access. The impact of new technologies on climate should also be taken into account.

Mr. Veledas mentioned that some very international brokers and agents are at the forefront of technology. Mr. Vidonja from Insurance Europe inquired why google and Facebook are not already big competitors of insurance companies. Some argue it is because of the clients’ behaviour, for reasons of reputation, but also regulation. Mr. Veredas was asked about his views on the findings of a recent McKinsey report on the future of the insurance and financial sector that claimed that 30-40% of jobs may be lost. He argued the future is rather uncertain.

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<sup>1</sup> Inter alia, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on “Digitising European Industry: Reaping the full benefits of a Digital Single Market. SWD 92016)110 OF 19.04.2016

The chair, Mr. Hopfner thanked all the presenters for the debate. He hoped that the insurance social partners would soon be able to deliver and sign their own joint statement on digitisation.

He then went on to introduce the draft joint declaration of the insurance social partners on digitisation. He discussed the proposed changes by UniEuropa. The employers would like to have short orientation paper in order to quickly reach consensus. The statement should include positive wording. Conflicting issues should be omitted. It should focus on social issues in the sector. Information and consultation of workers should be addressed via reference to the EU directive.

The agenda point was continued after the lunch break.

Mrs. Maes presented the aim of the changes proposed by UniEuropa, namely, to showcase the broader responsibility of the sector, to refer to the importance of consultation (companies should inform their employees), the need to highlight the importance of collective bargaining, further training whereas the cost linked to up-skilling because of system changes or up-skilling to help employees carry out their jobs should be borne by the employers. Of course employees also have a responsibility for their personal development. On data protection, referring to the new Directive should suffice.

It was concluded that the two sides would work together to revise the text. The text could be further discussed during the conference in Bucharest (10-11 May), with a view to its adoption by the summer if possible.

### **3. The demographic challenge in the insurance sector**

A presentation took place by the Spanish CCOO and the Spanish branch of Allianz of their partial retirement plan. The plan has been in operation for 5 years and is judged a success. It has allowed the hiring of young talent and improved Allianz's branding. It was mentioned that AXA operates a similar scheme but without the positive policy of hiring new skills. The Allianz example is therefore a good practice.

No other developments were reported.

Ms. Saller gave an update on the dissemination conference planned for 10-12 May in Bucharest. 11 best practice examples have been selected for inclusion in the good practice booklet, covering all thematic fields discussed (LLL, work and life balance, H&S, working longer and telework). The booklet will be translated into 8 languages.

The conference shall draw conclusions on how to move forward, notably on how to better integrate new members in social partner dialogue.

### **4. Telework**

Mr. Hopfner updated on the German market. A proposal for a joint declaration on telework has been drafted. Hopefully this will soon result in the transposition of the EU statement into the national German level.

No other developments were reported.

Ms. Saller mentioned the practical support for the dissemination and follow-up of the telework joint statement at national level. In particular, the statement has already been translated into many languages, and some national members have translated it on their own initiative (namely CZ, NL, DE, FR).

## **6. Any other business**

Mr. Hopfner confirmed the planning of the next ISSDC meeting for 2016 on 12 October. During this meeting there will be a bipartite presentation by SCORE on mobile working. He thanked the interpreters for their good work.

<b>List of participants – 29.04.2016</b>	
<b><u>Employers (6♂, 10♀)</u></b>	<b><u>Workers (♂, ♀)</u></b>
Mr. Hopfner (DE)	Ms. Maes
Mr. Cerutti (Business Europe)	Ms. Saller
Mr. Pissoort (Bipar)	Mr. Scherrer (ETUC)
Ms. Yasharova (AMICE)	Mr. Veredas (Vlerick Business School)
Mr. Lestanguet (Bipar)	Ms. Martel (ES)
Ms. Middelboe (DK)	Ms. Puente (ES)
Ms. Boonekamp (NL)	Mr. Sanz (ES)
Ms. Castaner (ES)	
Mr. Vidonja (Insurance Europe)	
Ms. Blijlevens (NL)	
Ms. Basti (IT)	
Ms. Bauby (FR)	
Mr. Demarree (BE)	
Ms. Römelt (DE)	
Ms. Gyftokosta (Insurance Europe)	
Ms. Schikora (DE)	
<u>European Commission</u>	
Mrs. Hadjiantoni (DG EMPL)	
Mr. Riedl (DG CNECT)	