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Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG

Employment and Social Legislation, Social Dialogue
Social dialogue, Industrial Relations

Brussels, 15 July 2014

Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee on Telecommunications

Working Group Meeting on 10th June 2014

Concise draft minutes

The meeting was chaired by Mr Lindhardt (worker side).

1. Welcome and introduction to the objectives of the meeting. Adoption of the draft agenda and draft minutes of 25 March 2014;

UNI Europa informed that Mr Lindhardt (DanskMetal) will take over the chairmanship of the Committee for the next 2 years.

2. Information point on FITS project by ETNO & UNI;

Following the update at the last meeting, the social partners informed that a consultancy *Breyer Publico* was selected to conduct the analytical work and 16 interviews were scheduled with representatives of workers and employers. The secretariats outlined the main elements of the interim report, notably the news trends in the sector such as safety in the net, and announced that the main project event is to take place in end of November.

3. Presentation on teleworking by Mr Jose Varela, UGT, and exchange of views;

Mr Varela (ES) presented the collective agreement on the contractual arrangements with regard to telework. The agreement was recently concluded by UGT and Telefonica covering both branches of the company; the mobile and stationary telephony and comes within the national framework, which was based on the 2002 EU cross-industry agreement on telework. In the Spanish telecommunications sector, telework is the most popular arrangement to reconcile the family and work life, with 45% of sector's employees (out of which 67% are women) using telework in 2012. However, the 2013 saw a sharp decrease in the number of permissions for telework granted, attributed by UGT to the crisis. Mr Varela raised also the issue of employees having to provide for their own equipment for telework. In the following discussion, CFDT pointed to the telework being used by Orange in terms of delocalisation of the worker to another office, the IT trade unions raised the question of control of employees and Solidarnosc noted that in Poland the requirement of "safe connection" makes it practically impossible to use telework. DG EMPL proposed that the discussion in the SDC on use of telework can be streamlined in developing sectoral action plans or guidelines for affiliates. To this end, the issue should be added to the Committee's work programme and DG EMPL will present the cross-industry agreement at the next meeting¹.

¹ <http://www.etuc.org/framework-agreement-telework>

3. Adoption of the statement on gender equality;

The final statement will be proposed to the adoption to all the ETNO members. After their approval, the date and logos will be inserted and the signature will take place in September.

4. Adoption of the work programme 2014-15;

Following to the discussion at the last meeting, the social partners continued to debate on the inclusion of new topics (sub-contracting, use of temporary agency work) and the issue of representativeness of the Committee. On representativeness, Mr Silva (PT) recognised difficulties in bringing new employers from ETNO to the Committee and reminded that other new telecom or IT operators don't necessarily share the same views, as they start from a different background as far as industrial relations is concerned. ETNO stated that they are representative of the sector (38 members in total) but is open to welcome GSMA's members if this association is willing to take part to the social dialogue. Ms Dedden (UNI Europa) proposed that internal positions are clarified, once the mapping of the telecommunications and ICT sectors by the Commission will be finalised. It was agreed that the point on telework will be added to the 2014-2015 work programme, with the view to discussing and promoting the sector-specific approach. Upon proposal of ETNO, the mention of "agreements" was removed from the last point of the work programme. The document was adopted.

5. AOB.

Answering to ETNO's question, Ms Winiarska (European Commission) stated that the social partners will be kept informed on the developments of the on-going mapping of telecommunications and ICT sectors. In particular, the social partners will be able to provide their inputs to the draft version of the final report.