



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG

Employment and Social Governance
Social dialogue

SECTORAL SOCIAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE CHEMICAL INDUSTRY

Plenary Meeting
18 November 2019

Minutes

Chairs: Dimitra Penidis (ACV-CSC - industriAll Europe) & Simon Marsh (CIA - European Chemical Employers Group)

1. Opening and welcome

The agenda of the meeting was approved.

2. Social Partners' Project – Our Future Workplace: Digital transformation in the chemical industry

Feedback on the Final Conference, The Hague 07-08 November 2019

Dissemination of Joint Recommendations on Digital Transformation in the Workplace

Lessons learnt and Future Activities

Dimitra Penidis (ACV-CSC - industriAll Europe) highlighted several main points related to the project, namely:

The digital transformation is a very important topic, it provides good opportunities to increase the number of women and of disabled persons in the sector.

It is important also from the perspective of climate change and health and safety at work.

The Joint Recommendations on Digital Transformation in the Workplace will be translated in different languages and disseminated among industriAll Europe's and ECEG's membership.

During the discussion, it was stated by the representatives of employees that a common approach towards digitalisation and climatic change and energy transformation is necessary. It is also important to take into account the needs of micro companies and SME's.

Simon Marsh (CIA - European Chemical Employers Group) suggested that individual countries could regularly report on their implementation of the Joint Recommendations. This was supported by Dimitra Penidis (ACV-CSC - industriAll Europe).

Maike Niggemann (industriAll Europe) mentioned that a part of the Work Programme 2020-2022 relates to digitalisation(e.g. "Digitalisation and Equality") .

3. High Level Conference EU Chemicals Policy 2030: building on the past, moving to the future

Report on the content and outcomes of the Conference

Elena Montani from DG ENVIRONMENT gave an overview over the High Level Conference on "EU Chemicals Policy 2030" which took place in June 2019. She pointed out that EU chemicals' policy and legislation is very complex. It relates also to biodiversity and presence of hazardous chemical substances in the environment. Coherence of legislation is a big issue. The European Commission promotes circular economy and sustainable chemistry. Furthermore, she elaborated on risk assessment and management, knowledge of emerging risks, single market and smart communication, standards of goods, consistent approach to products and global challenges.

The presentation was followed by a discussion among participants. Based on that discussion, Elena Montani specified the intention of the Commission to capture data sets and develop a database and possibly a set of indicators - to develop a one substance one policy approach. She also mentioned the connection with the Circular Economy Action Plan. Investigation of other regulatory regimes and international agreements are important to establish a level playing field.

4. Masterplan for climate neutrality by 2050

Presentation on the Chapter 5 of the Employment and Social Developments in Europe Report "Towards a greener future: employment and social impacts of climate change policies"

Endré Gyorgy from DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion summarised the main elements of the Chapter 5 of the ESDE report. Transition challenges vary across regions. Social dialogue has been recognised as a mitigating factor. The Von der Leyen Commission aims for a just transition.

Presentation on the "Masterplan for a competitive transformation of EU Energy Intensive Industries enabling a climate neutral, circular economy"; a report from the High Level Group on Energy Intensive Industries

Jean-Louis Sangare from DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (GROW) presented the (yet to be approved and published) Masterplan, highlighting the technological and economic challenges of the transition and its social dimension. The cross-sectoral, integrated and comprehensive approach alongside investments and support towards industry is key. Climate policy is indispensably related to the circular economy.

Those two presentations were followed by opinion standpoints *“What does that mean for (employment in) our industries?”* by both industriAll and ECEG representatives.

Participants agreed that training and LLL activities, as well as social dialogue are crucial factors to enable a fair a transition which will not leave anyone behind. Guido Nelissen (industriAll Europe) stressed the issue of job cuts. Moreover, he advocated for a consistent industrial policy, sufficient budget for climate policies, developments of markets for low-carbon products including subsidies for companies and incentives for consumers; companies need to have sufficient cash-flow. Protection against unfair competition is also important. Jochen Wilkens (ChemieNord – ECEG) stressed that the chemical industry is part of the solution. Sound policy framework and better availability of new processes is needed. Europe also needs tax free renewable energy in large amounts having in mind the competition from China or Saudi Arabia.

5. Social-affairs agenda of the new Commission’s president Ursula von der Leyen

Jitka Hrudová from DG EMPL briefly informed participants about the social-affairs agenda of the new Commission of Ursula von der Leyen.

6. Work Programme 2020-2022

Maike Niggemann (industriAll Europe) presented the Work Programme 2020-2022 which will be approved in the written procedure.

7. Update on the cooperation between Vinylplus and European Chemical Social Partners

Maria Estela Izquierdo (EuPC) informed participants about the chemical social partners’ visit of the PVC Recycler (13 December 2019). She stressed VinylPlus’ support of the digitalisation project.

8. Any other business – concluding remarks

ECEG and industriAll informed the participants about the upcoming parliamentary breakfast hosted by MEP Dennis Radtke which will take place on 3 December 2019.

Annexes:

Agenda item 3: High Level Conference EU Chemicals Policy 2030

Agenda item 4: Chapter 5 of ESDE; Masterplan for a competitive transformation of EU Energy Intensive Industries enabling a climate neutral, circular economy

Participants 16/11/2019:

Delegation	Last name	First name	Representing:
ECEG	ARGUTYAN	Emma	EU
	DOMBALOVA	Liliana	BG
	GASPAR	Magdolna	HU
	GÖBEL	Katharina	DE
	HENSEL	Elisa	DE
	ISOPO	Eleonora	EU
	IZQUIERDO	Maria Estela	BE
	JUVONEN	Riitta	FI
	MARSH	Simon	EU
	SILTANEN	Anni	FI
	SZIKSZAY	Gabor	HU
	WILKENS	Jochen	DE
industriAll	GUILLEMOT	Solène	EU
	LE DINAHET	Georges	FR
	NELISSEN	Guido	EU
	NIGGEMANN	Maike	EU
	PENIDIS	Dimitra	BE
	REINIKAINEN	Taru	FI
	RUIZ PALACIOS	José Carlos	ES
	SIMOES	Alberto	PT
	STUERMER	Franz	AT
	SZÉKELY	Tamás	HU
	TOMAS MACARRO	María Isabel	ES
ULJAS	Jenni	FI	
European Commission	GYORGY	Endré	EC
	HRUDOVA	Jitka	EC
	MONTANI	Elena	EC
	SANGARE	Jean-Louis	EC