



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

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

Brussels, 2 September 2014

## **Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee on Professional Football**

### **Minutes of the Working Group Meeting "Career Funds"**

**6 May 2014**

#### **1. Adoption of the agenda and of the minutes of last meeting**

The meeting was chaired by Mr Grafström (UEFA). The agenda was adopted. The minutes of the 6 March 2014 working group meeting were adopted.

#### **2. Feedback from parties on existing career funds**

During the last meeting, ECA and EPFL had been invited to ask their membership for feedback on existing schemes.

ECA reported that they had not gathered feedback because the organisation was not of the opinion that it should.

EPFL provided detailed feedback from BE, DK, FR, NL and SE (see table). According to the leagues, education played an important role to see benefits of such systems. FIFPro added that in SE and Norway, there was a fund for all athletes. EPFL reported that in IT a scheme was in place by law. EPFL announced they would update the table after the meeting. The general feeling of the leagues was that it should be the employee's responsibility to keep provisions for a second career; however employers should contribute and were happy to educate their players as they already do through the responsibilities they assume in the training of footballers.

FIFPro informed the participants on recent developments regarding the Slovenian career fund legislative proposal: the president of the Olympic Committee was not supportive of the initiative and the Prime Minister had resigned; therefore, there was no progress for now. However, the Slovenian partners were still lobbying for the proposals and hoped that every stakeholder would eventually back it.

#### **3. Information on the Directive 2014/50/EU on the acquisition and preservation of supplementary pension rights**

Mr Zagorskis (DG EMPL, Unit Social Protection and Activation Systems) presented the Directive 2014/50/EU on the acquisition and preservation of supplementary pension rights adopted on 16 April 2014. The following questions and answers session addressed the following aspects: difference between waiting and vesting period, scope of the Directive, the question whether career funds (bridging pension) would qualify as old age pension in the sense of the Directive. FIFPro stressed that in the Netherlands, the Dutch

career fund had not been qualified as old age pension in the context of the IORP Directive<sup>1</sup>. Asked about the Commission's plan to present a new initiative about the portability of supplementary pension rights, Mr Zagorskis said that this was currently not being considered.

#### 4. Update on career funds toolkit

FIFPro presented the first draft of a career fund toolkit (see document sent on 29 April). Section 5 (building blocks) and 6 (implementation process) were the main parts of the document. EPFL said that most of those who have a fund seem to be very satisfied, even though they identified the financial and fiscal burden clubs have often to bear to contribute to those schemes as the main drawback of the system. EPFL added that they could not commit to endorse the paper as an organisation on behalf of all members. EPFL proposed to provide their perspective on the document by conveying their feedback and insights and circulate it to those members who wish to establish a fund. ECA was not able to commit for delivering a quote at the beginning of the toolkit but would ask the general secretary. EPFL also emphasised that beyond employers' statutory obligations with regards to pensions as per domestic social law, it remains clear that the primary responsibility for preparing and funding the transition between their football careers and their after-football careers should ultimately lay on the players themselves. In that context, ECA and EPFL stressed that education by trade unions as well as clubs was also relevant for a second career, not only career funds for which trade unions should be responsible.

The exchange of views showed that the issue should be addressed by the social dialogue committee's steering committee. FIFPro asked the employers to share any further sceptical points with regard to the draft paper. FIFPro would send a deadline for comments.

#### 5. Next meeting

The next working group meeting will be held on 2 September 2014 in Brussels.

#### *Participants 6/5/2014*

<p><b>Employers (2 ♂, 0 ♀)</b></p> <p><u>ECA</u> Mr Frommer</p> <p><u>EPFL</u> Mr Abatan</p>	<p><b>Workers (4 ♂, 1 ♀)</b></p> <p><u>FIFPro</u> Ms Bakker Mr Bär-Hoffmann Mr Kolster (NL) Mr Stefanovic (SI) Mr Walltin (Norway, observer)</p>
<p><b>European Commission</b></p> <p>Ms Durst (DG EMPL) Mr Zagorskis (DG EMPL)</p>	<p><b>UEFA</b></p> <p>Mr Grafström</p>

<sup>1</sup> Directive 2003/41/EC on the activities and supervision of institutions for occupational retirement provision