



**Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for the Hospital Sector
Working Group 2/2021
Online, 02 June 2021
NOTES**

Languages for interpretation:

Active: German, French, English

Passive: Italian, Finnish

Kirsi Sillanpää (TEHY, Trade Union, Finland) opened the meeting and chaired the first session. She stressed the importance of the Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee, which can facilitate the health system's resilience and build a sustainable future for our sector.

1. Points for information and update

Eurofound study “Social dialogue and collective bargaining in hospitals and civil aviation during the Covid-19 pandemic.”

Adam Rogalewski (EPSU Secretariat) informed the participants about the recently launched study, which explores how social dialogue and collective bargaining play a role in how both sectors adapt to the pandemic. The focus will be on three aspects:

- the **challenges** resulting from or exacerbated by the pandemic and their impact on different groups of workers in the sector
- **the role of national social dialogue and collective bargaining** in finding and implementing solutions for the sectoral challenges identified above
- **At the national level, the extent to which existing social dialogue and/or collective bargaining processes had to adapt** or change to address the challenges.

The data collection period will be between July and September 2021, and the preliminary findings will be available in December 2021. The report is due to be published in April 2022.

The Secretariats will continue to monitor the study developments and inform members once national data collection will start to ensure that national social partners' are involved and that their voices are being considered.

Eurofound report: Industrial Relations Landscape in the public services sector in Europe

Adam Rogalewski (EPSU Secretariat) informed the participants about the Eurofound report that analyses and compares the industrial relations landscape in several sectors and activities that form a public service cluster.

The report draws on Eurofound's recent representativeness studies investigating the following sectors: education, **human health**, central government administration and local and regional government sector (including social services). Eurofound presented an updated version for revision and feedback beginning of June. The final report is due to be published in November 2021.

Information on medical Sharps webinar and European Biosafety Network study on sharps injuries in the EU and how COVID-19 has impacted them

Simone Mohrs (HOSPEEM Secretariat) informed the participants about the webinar, which will take place on 15 June. The European Biosafety Network aims to discuss how to prevent sharps injuries, MDR and safety mechanisms in medical devices. Besides the intervention of HOSPEEM and EPSU, the European Commission will present the Standardisation Request for MDR/IVDR and new harmonised European standards, including sharp injury protection, and interpretation of points 11.1 and 22.2 of Annex I of the MDR¹.

The Secretariats reached out to European Commission to discuss how the MDR and Sharps Directive are interlinked and whether national social partners have been involved in the process. Affiliates are welcome to send questions to the European Commission through the Secretariats.

Members are welcome to register for the event by contacting the Secretariats. The EBN study is due to be published before the summer break.

Information on the Sectoral Social Dialogue's planned review in the context of the European Pillar of Social Rights and the Social Summit in Porto, 7 May.

Simone Mohrs (HOSPEEM Secretariat) informed the participants about the review of the EU sectoral social dialogue. It is part of the initiative to support social dialogue at the EU and national level, presented in 2022, preceded by social partners' consultation in 2021 and is part of the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan.

There are four focus areas of the review:

1. Improve the contribution of sectoral social dialogue to EU initiatives,
2. Strengthen the outcomes and impact of sectoral social dialogue,
3. Modernise and align the organisation of the sectoral social dialogue to structural trends and new economic developments and contribute to a future-proof sectoral social dialogue,
4. Improve by better focusing on the Commission's support for sectoral social dialogue to achieve the above objectives.

The initiative aims to support the EU sectoral social dialogue to better embrace challenges in work, such as digitalisation and new forms of work.

Throughout 2021, the European Commission aims to collect social partners' views and ideas on reviewing sectoral social dialogue. Input will feed into the initiative, to be launched in 2022. Its analysis and synthesis will be presented at technical seminars with social partners expected to start after the summer.

The interventions by the European Commission and the Portuguese Permanent Representation at the Dissemination workshop on 16 June will focus on these issues. Members are still welcome to register.

High-level conference on healthcare workers' mental health: Mental health and the pandemic: living, caring, acting! 10 May 2021.

Adam Rogalewski (EPSU Secretariat) informed the participants about the event during the European Mental Health Awareness Week 2021. The event highlighted the mental health impact of COVID-19 along with five themes - *understanding – living – caring – responding – acting*. Fifteen months into the COVID-19 pandemic, it is apparent that mental health is both precious and vulnerable. Yet, at the same time, much can be done to strengthen it, boost resilience, prevent illness and support those in need. He noted that there was no interpretation for the meeting.

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32017R0745>

Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive – Developments in Council and European Parliament meetings

The next meetings between the European Council and European Parliament will take place on 04 June and 24 June.

2. Lessons learnt from COVID-19 and resilience of European healthcare

Maryvonne Nicolle (FSS CFDT, Trade Union, France) presented the EPSU document shared with HOSPEEM Members. In her opening speech, she stressed the principle of social dialogue and the upcoming review of the Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee. The social partners have to be constructive in how to improve their work. She continued that one way of doing so is to have a binding policy instrument to address COVID-19 and the resilience of health systems for the future, such as a Framework of Actions or Framework Agreement, which require an *ex-post* evaluation. She noted that the Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee should set up a working party to explore the instrument's content.

Herbert Beck (Ver.di, Trade Union, Germany) reiterated Ms Nicolle's point and stressed that good working conditions must be established. The social partners have to create a level playing field to ensure a high patient care level. Therefore, he expressed his interest in setting up a working party.

David Huges (INMO, Trade Union, Ireland) noted that the health workforce raised to the challenge and need time to recover from what they went through. However, the impact of long-COVID should not be underestimated and need to be addressed to create a more sustainable health workforce.

Tjitte Alkema (NVZ, Employers, The Netherlands) noted that the updating process of the FoA on Recruitment and Retention already covers the instruments on OSH. Therefore, the request by EPSU for a social partners agreement on the resilience of health systems at the EU level would fall under the responsibility of Member States and national authorities, not the national or European social partners.

Kate Ling (NHS, Employers, UK) echoed Mr Alkema that many of EPSU demands would fall under the responsibility of Member States. Furthermore, they could also be included in the being updated FoA. However, she noted that the ESP must carefully assess what can be done on the EU level in the Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee autonomy.

Adam Rogalewski (EPSU Secretariat) responding to Ms Ling intervention, noting that it was already decided that the FoA should not have a significant focus on the pandemic. Due to its comprehensiveness and the importance of the pandemic in the sector, the Trade Unions see a clear need for a separate document focusing on the health sector after the pandemic.

Herbert Beck and Dietmar Erdmeier (Ver.di, Trade Union, Germany) stressed the role of social dialogue that the social partners have to work on issues together. The Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee has to formulate joint demands to the European Commission and politicians.

The participants agreed to follow up with a drafting/working group, consisting of the Steering Committee, which would meet ahead of the Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee plenary meeting in November to discuss the nature of the instrument and content.

3. Update of the Framework of Actions on Recruitment and Retention (2010)

Simone Mohrs (HOSPEEM Secretariat) presented the initial feedback received by members.

Herbert Beck (Ver.di, Trade Union, Germany) stressed the need for an additional meeting with the task force before discussing the update.

The Secretariats will set up a meeting with the FoA Update task force members before the summer break.

After the break, Marta Branca (ARAN, Employers, Italy) was expected to chair the afternoon session. However, Kiri Sillanpää (TEHY, Trade Union, Finland) had to take over due to technical issues, followed by Simone Mohrs (HOSPEEM Secretariat).

4. Presentation of the project on the multi-sectoral guidelines to tackle third-party violence by Jane Pillinger, the project consultant.

Jane Pillinger gave a short presentation about the project and called on members to send in best practices on preventing TPV.

The research's targeted countries are Spain, Czech Republic, Italy, Latvia, Ireland, Bulgaria, Denmark, Poland, Netherlands, and France. The survey will be available in ten languages Spanish, Czech, Italian, Latvian, Bulgarian, Danish, Polish, Dutch, French, and English. The survey will be open until mid-September.

The Secretariats will follow up with members from the targeted countries, sending the questionnaire and propose meetings with affiliates for interviews.

The first project webinar will take place on 15 June in the afternoon.

5. Assessment on the replies on the “EPSU-HOSPEEM guidelines and examples of good practice to address the challenges of an ageing workforce.”

Simone Mohrs (HOSPEEM Secretariat) presented the first replies from the questionnaire. Following the discussion at the Steering Committee in the morning, the Secretariats will now follow up on an individual member basis to conduct telephone chat/video call and fill in the survey for members.

6. Capacity building and strengthening sectoral social dialogue

Simone Mohrs (HOSPEEM Secretariat) presented the 3rd regional workshop report and fact sheets of the HOSPEEM-EPSU project on strengthening the social dialogue in the hospital sector (2019-2021).

The report was preliminarily approved as some targeted countries and participants were not presented at the meeting. The Secretariats will follow up with targeted countries on an individual basis.

The final dissemination workshop will take place on 16 June from 10:00 – 16:30, including interpretation into Romanian, Hungarian, Italian, Greek, Czech and Croatian. The registration is open until 14 June 2021.

7. AOB

No other business was raised. The Chair closed the meeting.

The next Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee will take place on 30 November.