



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG

Employment and Social Governance
Social dialogue

**SECTORAL SOCIAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEES FOR FURNITURE
and WOODWORKING**

**26 October 2017
Joint working group meeting
MINUTES**

FURNITURE SPECIFIC TOPICS

Chair : Mr Kees HOOGENDIJK (CBM-EFIC)

1. Opening of the meeting – Adoption of the agenda – Adoption of minutes

The agenda of the meeting was adopted. The minutes of the meeting dd. 13 June 2017 were adopted, taking into account a correction under point 6.

2. Flame retardants

EFIC informed the participants of their joint efforts with EFBWW to form an alliance dealing with flame retardants; unfortunately, the launch of the dedicated website was delayed due to technical problems. The Grenfield Tower fire increased the awareness of the problem. The European Commission is working on a Fire Information Exchange Platform focussing on fire safety in buildings, though not on inside furniture. Therefore, it was proposed to develop a joint position on the subject of flame retardants in furniture, and the toxicity thereof.

3. Work Programme 2018-2019

The social partners discussed a draft version and agreed to produce a final draft by mid-November. Following a discussion at secretariat level, the work programme will be adopted in the first SSDC meeting of 2018.

4. AOB

The dates of the meetings for the Woodworking SSDC were announced (see minutes of joint meeting):

JOINT MEETING WOODWORKING – FURNITURE

Chair : Mr Kees HOOGENDIJK (CBM-EFIC)

1. Opening of the meeting - Adoption of the agenda – Adoption of minutes.

The agenda and the minutes were adopted.

2. Industry policy

a) Expert group for the Forest-based Industries (F-BI)

During the discussion on an e-mail sent by Mr WALL (DG GROW), the social partners discussed the reference made to industrial policy in President Juncker's State of the Union, and the importance thereof for the F-BI expert group. EFBWW

wanted to evaluate a recently drafted policy paper developed by EFIC and CEI-Bois before reacting to it. Following a request to propose agenda points, EFBWW suggested proposing a mid-term review of the F-BI Expert Group to DG GROW.

b) The CCMI (Commission Consultative pour les Mutations Industrielles) in the EESC (European Economic and Social Committee)

Rolf Gehring informed the participants that EFBWW agrees to present a draft proposal with a broader approach than "wood in construction". He invited the employers to react to their proposal with a view to present a draft opinion to the CCMI.

3. Wood Dust Conference

EFBWW, EFIC, CEI-Bois and EOS presented a draft letter to Commissioner THYSSEN, to ask the EU to support a European Wood Dust Conference. As EFBWW explained, such a conference is necessary to take stock, summarise existing evidence and have an exchange of views on changed limit values, with a view to create alliances between stakeholders. Mr ANTONICOLI (CEI-Bois), however, wondered whether a letter to the Commissioner was not too high a political level. Also there was a discussion on the ownership of the agenda of such a conference : the social partners or the Commission. In order to solve these issues, and to define the exact scope of the conference, the social partners agreed to set up a preparatory committee. The mandate of the committee would be to propose input for the conference to the European Commission.

4. "Bolster Up" project

Following an explanation of the background for this project and the outcome of the first "Bolster Up", EFBWW informed the meeting of the acceptance by the European Commission of the project "Bolster Up II) for funding.

5. Aging workforce

EFBWW proposed to think about a new name for a joint project, and to consider a more holistic approach, which could give a new impetus to the file. The interest of Danish social partners for participation in a joint project was mentioned. Social partners of both sectors would re-consider their participation.

6. COM(2017)12 final

The social partners agreed to take into account the observations made during the meeting, and to discuss an updated text at secretariat level.

7. Occupational Safety and Health (OSH)

The Commission launched a first consultation on a possible revision of six EU-OSH directives. The social partners are particularly concerned about the revision of the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive 2004/37/EC (CMD), and more in particular on the possible inclusion of formaldehyde in a third list with exposure limit values. Reference was made to a letter of EU social partners (incl. ETUC) on the subject. On CMD, a consultation of social partners was launched on 10 November 2017.

8. Project "DIGIT-FUR"

CENFIM gave a presentation of the state of play of the project (attached). Mr JOHANSSON asked to include the question of competences in the work programme, and to take into account the mixture of physical and e-commerce.

9. AOB

1) The dates for the 2018 meetings are :

Wed 21/03 : joint working group

Wed 23/05 : plenary woodworking

Thu 24/05 : plenary furniture

Wed 26/09 : joint working group

2) The Commission initiative to boost Apprenticeships in Europe was adopted on 3 October 2017. More information can be found on

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2873&furtherNews=yes>

3) The social partners discussed the possibility to invite external experts to the upcoming SSDC meetings.

WOODWORKING SPECIFIC TOPICS

Chair : Mr Patrizio ANTONICOLI (CEI-Bois)

1. Opening of the meeting - Adoption of the agenda – Adoption of minutes dd. 20 March 2017

The agenda was adopted; the minutes were adopted taking into account the changes requested by Ms MELEGARI and Mr ASTIER.

2. Project : Perspectives and Challenges of Woodworking Industries in Europe

The social partners discussed the organisation of the project seminar in Porto on 6 and 7 December 2017. Mr WIJNENDAELE (EPF) proposed the discussion of an action guide, based on German experience with protection by division in zones according to the level of exposure to formaldehyde. Mr GEHRING replied that the Board of EFBWW would discuss the possibility to negotiate on the guide.

3. Conference : "Building with Wood"

The conference will be held on 21st November 2017 in the EESC premises. The keynote speaker will be Professor MIYAKE from the Sapporo Fuji Women's University. The objective of the meeting is to come to an opinion of social partners on the subject.

4. Work Programme 2018-2019

The social partners discussed a draft version and agreed to produce a final draft by mid-November. Following a discussion at secretariat level, the work programme will be adopted in the first SSDC meeting of 2018.

5. AOB

N/A

Annexes :

- List of participants
- Presentation "Digit-Fur Implementation Status"