



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG

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

Brussels, 10 September 2013

<p>SECTORAL SOCIAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE INSURANCE</p>
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Draft Minutes of the Working Group

25th June 2013

The meeting was chaired by Ms Elke Maes (UNI Europa Finance). The agenda and the draft minutes of 21 March Plenary meeting were adopted.

1. Telework: discussion on the draft joint statement

In order to progress on the joint statement on telework, the Committee went through the second draft including the employee side remarks received the day before, to which a number of comments from the employers' delegation were submitted orally. Initially, both sides discussed the need for clarifying the text's target group, as to cover all work at the distance from office, or, alternatively, only employees working in an organized way from home. A point was also raised to be specific in proposed actions, in order to avoid duplication with cross-industry social partners' competence. The issue of the scope of the statement was addressed, as the worker side also raised a concern about additional workload arising from the expectations to be available outside of the statutory working hours. In the view of UK speaker, this is due to technological change and new communication channels, which change the meaning of remote work since 2002, when the last declaration was issued. The employer side pointed to not drafting specific provisions, but rather focusing on bringing practical considerations and good practices. Employers stressed that company autonomy needs to be respected. The CHAIR noted that the issue of responsibility for the work time limits needs to be, however, addressed. Lastly, social partners went through all the latest drafting suggestions and clarified their positions on number of points. As follow-up to the meeting, the employer side will consider further the employee side's written remarks and provide them with a new draft by the end of October, with view to discuss it further at the ISSDC meetings in November and December 2013.

2. Report back from the 27 May Liaison Forum on Demographic Challenges

Under this point, the CHAIR informed about the joint presentation of the sectoral project "Combatting the demographic challenge in the insurance sector" at the last Liaison Forum. The speaker underlined that they were the only sector presenting a joint project and the project booklet was very well received as good quality work and easy for dissemination.

3. The demographic challenge in the insurance sector: follow-up initiatives to the 2012 ISSDC project

After a brief tour de table on potential new initiatives at national level on the basis of the joint declaration, the trade union side stated once again that employer's federations at national level seemed much more reluctant to include this topic on their social dialogue and collective bargaining agendas than companies, whereas companies' managements are more open to joint initiatives on demographic change. The social partners committed themselves to investigate further when they hear of concrete cases in countries where there is a problem.

Under this agenda point, the secretariats presented a draft questionnaire, which is to be disseminated to the national affiliates together with an accompanying letter; also prepared jointly. Both sides agreed on the questionnaire, adding that any additional clarifications on the process could be done orally. The social partners intend to review the first set of responses to the questionnaire at their meeting in November 2013.

4. State of play of Women on Boards: presentation by Mr Andreas Stein, Head of Unit, Equal Treatment Legislation, DG Justice and Ms Evelyn Regner, European Parliament Rapporteur

This agenda point was opened by Mr Stein, who outlined the background of the Commission's proposal, its core legal elements and gave an update on progress of the legislative process, taking into consideration the current discussion in the Council. The Commission pointed to companies feeling "the regulatory heat" and making more progress in increasing the number of women on management boards in 2012 than in any previous year (albeit still very small in absolute terms). The speaker also stressed that despite being a binding measure, the proposal does not constitute a rigid quota and only listed companies are covered by a quantified target. The proposal addresses also the transparency of the pre-selection process and sets a *preference rule* for the under-represented sex, when there are two equally qualified candidates. In a following presentation, Ms Regner outlined the line of amendments proposed by European Parliament Committee on Legal Affairs, which include broadening the scope of the Directive to SMEs and increasing its binding nature to include sanctions. In the speaker's view, the work should be concluded still under the Lithuanian presidency. In a follow-up discussion, the IT worker representative spoke about importance of public opinion in changing the cultural assumptions, whereas the SE representative brought example of quotas in Norway, which helped to actually change the situation. The head of employers' delegation complimented the pragmatic approach of the Commission, which touches upon the issue of qualifications and called for more data collection. The Member of the Parliament stated her commitment to discuss the problems with head-hunting agencies and work more closely on setting up women's networks, and expressed her views that a change will be possible, once the regulatory measures are there. In the following discussion, participants agreed that in order to bring about a real change, a "cultural" change in society is needed, which includes a fairer division of labour at home but also a change in the mindset of head hunters as well as selection criteria for top management jobs.

5. Any other business

Under any other business, tentative possible dates for meeting in 2014 were discussed. For 2013, another Steering Group meeting was requested, to take place in the week of 18-22

November. The meeting is intended to mostly carry on the work on the joint telework statement.

6. Next meetings:

- Steering group meeting now confirmed on 18 November 2013.
- Working group on 9 December 2013.