

DRAFT DESCRIPTION

Conference for the social dialogue in the performing arts sector of the Southern Europe

The European social partners EAEA and Pearle have addressed the issue of developing social dialogue in enlarged EU countries through three projects that were carried out between 2003 and 2007 both at national and sub-regional levels.

However, none of them specifically addressed the Mediterranean countries, including Malta and Cyprus, the two enlarged EU countries from the Mediterranean area. The main reason is basically that, until now, the social dialogue committee of the live performance sector has primarily focused on countries from central and eastern Europe, whose characteristics and backgrounds are very different from those of Malta and Cyprus.

Malta and Cyprus share the characteristic of being "isolated" islands, with poor social dialogue in the live performance sector. Rather than focusing only on those two countries, the social dialogue committee believes it would be more relevant to broaden its approach by including all Southern EU countries, as well as potential EU acceding members such as Croatia, Serbia or Turkey, in the form of a regional conference. The main reasons for this choice are the following:

- careful attention should be paid to the state of social dialogue in some Southern EU countries where the legal systems as well as the economy of the live performance sector may be slightly different from those of Northern and Western parts of EU;
- in the long run, this conference could help fostering regional synergies and co-operation, to the benefit of these countries' live performance.

The purpose of this Conference is to build or consolidate effective partnerships between workers' and employers' organisations from old and new Member States, in order to exchange best practices and thus respond, in some of these countries, to the need for information and experience on how to set up and organise associations and how to further develop bilateral autonomous social dialogue.

It could consist of:

- ⇒ (1) Providing for concrete tools for the establishment of social dialogue structures and the integration into the European social dialogue committee of the live performance sector;
- ⇒ (2) Exploring national social dialogue structures, informing and exchanging experiences on developing and functioning of workers' and employers' associations;
- ⇒ (3) Strengthening the status of existing structures and supporting the setting up of workers and employers associations where such structures are missing or insufficiently developed;

- ⇒ (4) Supporting the official recognition of these structures and of autonomous social dialogue structures, based on genuine bi-partite and tri-partite dialogue.
- ⇒ (5) Raising awareness of local authorities about the European social dialogue in the live performance sector, and on its works and achievements
- ⇒ (6) Sharing information and best practices on negotiation processes, content of collective agreements, comparisons of labour and social structures in EU Member States;
- ⇒ (7) Developing partnerships between the workers', respectively the employers' organizations, in the Mediterranean EU countries, based on mutual help and information sharing.

The format and methodology could be similar to what has been successfully experienced by the same committee in the past, in particular at the Conference held in Tallinn in 2004.

The 3-day conference to be held in 2009 in one of the countries involved would bring together representatives of the live performance sector from the following countries: Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Slovenia, Croatia (?), Serbia (?), Albania (?), Macedonia (?), Greece, Malta, Cyprus, Bulgaria, and Turkey.

Social partners may need to organise pre-meetings. The conference would start with joint sessions with a general introduction to the European social dialogue and present a few examples taken from countries represented. The second day would be entirely dedicated to specific working groups for respectively trade unions and employers' delegates.

The last day would be dedicated to joint sessions with a view to address the issue of social dialogue and further elaborate on specific questions/concerns raised within the working groups.