



## EUROPEAN SECTORAL SOCIAL DIALOGUE IN EDUCATION

### Plenary meeting

8 November 2016

#### Draft minutes

Chair: Christine Blower (President ETUCE)

#### **1. Opening of the meeting – Approval of the draft agenda – Approval of the minutes of previous meetings**

The agenda of the meeting was adopted.

The minutes of the meeting of 30 September 2016 were approved.

#### **2. Priorities of the Work Programme 2016-2017**

Paola Cammilli (PC) provided an update on the Work Programme 2016-2017, going through each of the priorities of this programme and linking them with the activities of the social partners in 2016. In particular, PC emphasised the importance of cooperation with DG EAC and DG EMPL and asserted that this is being revitalised in light of the New Skills Agenda and the European Semester process. Additionally PC spoke about the productive discussions that took place on the Paris Declaration with the social partners on September 30<sup>th</sup> in the context of the Working Group meeting of the ESSDE. Open and innovative education and training is very important and that is why part of this plenary session has been dedicated to it. On the topic of supporting teachers, PC spoke about a project that has just been granted by the European Commission on "Education Trade Unions for the Teaching Profession. Strengthening the capacity of education trade unions to represent teachers' professional needs in social dialogue". Regarding "Making the teaching profession more attractive", PC referred to the closing conference in Amsterdam in the context of the joint capacity building project.

Vocational education and training and apprenticeship issues were touched on in the working group meetings, notably in the context of the New Skills Agenda. Women in academic careers should be the subject of the next working group meeting on Higher Education & Research. Challenges regarding public/private developments will continue being discussed.

Social partners were unhappy that they were not invited in the drafting process of New Skills Agenda for Europe. Implementation is now ongoing and will be the subject of a Council meeting in November. The trade unions expressed concerns regarding an apparent lack of coordination between the OECD's and EU's Skills Agendas.

Promotion of social dialogue remains one of the main priorities. Monitoring of the ESSDE outcomes is extremely important. Transparency of the work of the sector is doing is crucial. This links with the ESSDE communication strategy, which includes the joint newsletter.

Referring to the upcoming Brexit negotiations, David Simmonds stated that the National Employer's Organisation for School Teachers will continue to fully participate in the ESSDE, at least until the 2 years' Article 50 process has been concluded. He added that it would still be of value to his organisation to participate in social dialogue even after the UK has left the EU. Christine Blower confirmed that this also applies to the workers' side.

Discussing the policy priorities for 2017, delegates' other comments centred around the use of ICT in education and particularly on the integration of refugees in the education systems in order for them to integrate properly. Swedish representative from ETUCE pointed out at the shortage of teachers and gave the example of Sweden training refugees to become teachers in order to tackle these two issues together. Chair added that retention of teachers is also a concern. She then interjected that the integration of refugees is a shared objective of both education trade unions and employer associations in particular ensuring that children have access to education. This month there will be a conference in Sweden held by 'Education International' where there will be representatives from ETUCE particularly looking at good practices in welcoming refugees. There was also a conference in Malta on this subject looking at the requirements of classroom teachers in relation to refugees. The question of education budgets to deal with this was also mentioned.

Regarding the development of ICT provision, due attention must be paid to the necessary investments in schools and public/private developments in education in this context deserve particular attention.

It was suggested that the working conditions of teachers should be made an explicit priority of 'making the teaching profession more attractive'. The need to take the ageing population of teachers into account was also emphasised. The New Skills Agenda for Europe continues to be a high priority.

### **3. Open and innovative education and training – How to enhance education and skills development in the digital era**

Konstantin Scheller gave a presentation on "Open and innovative education and training", explaining the activities the Commission is doing in this area (see presentation in annex). Janne Elvelid gave a presentation on how to develop digital skills in general but in particular for the younger generation (see presentation in annex). He emphasised that these skills will improve the employability of young people especially as ICT jobs are on the increase.

#### **4. Plenary discussion with DG EAC and DG CONNECT representatives on how education social partners can contribute to addressing changes in demand and the provision of education in the schools and universities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

The social partners felt that the presentations did not answer several crucial questions relating to: the training of teachers in delivering ICT education; the expenditure this would entail; whether new types of schools/teachers is the way forward; the role of teachers in ICT education (didactic triangle); the gender divide in the area of ICT; the risks of technological change, and how we can help people shape technological change themselves; the problems of people already in employment who cannot get ICT accreditation of the skills they have. The point was also made that the digital era has negatively affected the ability of young people to write properly.

ETUCE highlighted the importance of investment in education in the area of ICT and that digitalisation should not be seen as a way to threaten the interaction between students and teachers. Life-long learning skills, going beyond using the internet, should be focused on.

An important question is how to strengthen the input and contribution social partners can make to this and strengthen social dialogue in this area.

Responding to delegates' comments/questions, KS expressed his agreement with the importance of investing in education, despite the high costs at least in the short term. He explained that teacher training is not an EU competence, but that the Commission is nevertheless undertaking projects in this domain, such as the "School Education Gateway", which helps schools to innovate. Regarding strengthening social dialogue, KS referred to the involvement of social partners in several (notably ET 2020) working groups.

Andreas Keller presented a German policy paper (see annex) on the issue of training in ICT, mentioning in this context that German employers are unfortunately not represented in the European social dialogue. He picked out 3 points from the policy paper: 1) the issue of curricula and education plans – social partners agree on ICT being a supporting tool for teachers, skills teachers need to give students, and teachers must decide themselves which digital instruments to use and this is not mentioned enough by German Ministry or by Employer's papers; furthermore, digital education should not mean that new barriers are created but should promote equal opportunities and inclusion; additionally we need to think about whether the school provides the equipment or pupils bring it themselves; 2) training and further training of teachers – what teachers need to learn, need to be able to deal with technical equipment and programmes, issues of copyright and data protection, ability to plan lessons and work with experts to choose the right type of media to use, how can teachers already in the system learn these new skills; 3) the quality of digital media provided – the role of public/private partnerships in this, the importance of public funding and the need for a prominent role for social partners in this area.

Jon Richards gave a presentation on support staff in education (see presentation in annex). He emphasised that support staff are there to add value and should not be considered a replacement for teachers.

#### **5. Presentation by ETUCE and EFEE secretariats on current and future projects**

- ***European Sectoral Social Partners in Education promoting the potentials of their dialogue through knowledge transfer and training. The ESSDE capacity building project II***
- ***European Sectoral Social Partners in Education striving for sustainable influence on European education policy building through successful social dialogue. The ESSDE capacity building project III***

Daniel Wisniewski emphasised the need for social dialogue to be developed in many countries and the autonomy of social partners to be assured. He expressed the wish for this action to be continued. The social partners are awaiting the decision of the Commission regarding the submitted proposal for a follow-up project (ESSDE capacity building project III). PC emphasised the usefulness of these projects to develop the ESSDE Work Programme given the cut in funds and activities of the ESSDE. Moreover, these projects are necessary to reach a balanced representation of the social partners in the ESSDE.

Taking account of a proposed amendment by ETUCE, the Joint Statement on "Promoting the potentials of the European Sectoral Social Dialogue in Education" was adopted.

- ***Social Partners Promoting Decent Workplaces in the Education Sector for a Healthier Working Life***

Susan Flocken presented the findings of the 2-year joint project on "Preventing and Combating Psychosocial Hazards in the Education Sector". The Declaration on this is important for the implementation of the guidelines by national members of EFEE and ETUCE and also for the need for action at European level by EFEE and ETUCE in developing the OiRA tool and following-up on the implementation of the guidelines.

Taking account of a proposed amendment by EPSU, the Joint Declaration on "Preventing and Combating Psychosocial Hazards in the Education Sector" and the Joint Practical Guidelines on "How to Promote Joint Social Partner Initiatives at European, National, Regional and Local Level to Prevent and Combat Psychosocial Hazards in Education" were adopted.

ESSDE delegates and member organisations of ETUCE and EFEE are invited to use the joint ESSDE outcomes in their national contexts.

#### **6. Follow-up strategy on the implementation of joint documents**

Three items relating to the follow-up strategy were highlighted: 1) making sure the impact of what has been adopted is felt (notably in schools); 2) documents should be made accessible in as many languages as possible, and 3) the Communication Strategy – a) Joint Newsletter on social dialogue (the practicalities of which are still

to be sorted out: aim, jointly agreed content, language), b) national activities should be reported, and c) debate at national level should be encouraged.

## **7. AOB**

None.

### Annexes

- Point 3 – Presentation Open and innovative education and training;
- Point 3 – Presentation The Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition;
- Point 4 – Presentation Changes in demands, new challenges and the use of support staff in education;
- Point 4 – Strategy Paper by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany on “Education in the digital world” and related Position paper of the GEW.

List of participants 08/11/2016

<u>Employers</u>	<u>Workers</u>
<p><b>EFEE</b></p> <p>Ms Franciska AL-MANSOUR (SI)            Mr Panicos GIORGOUEDES (CY)            Ms Petra KIRKKO-JAAKKOLA (FI)            Mr Risto LERSSI (FI)            Mr Joseph MICALLEF (MT)            Ms Barbara NOVINEC (SI)            Ms Nives POCKAR (SI)            Mr David SIMMONDS (UK)            Mr Daniel WISNIEWSKI (EU)</p> <p><b>9 employer representatives</b>  <b>(4 women, 5 men)</b>  <b>(1 EU, 5 EU-13, 3 EU-15)</b></p>	<p><b>ETUCE</b></p> <p>Ms Christine BLOWER (UK)            Mr Kevin BONELLO (MT)            Ms Camilla BROWN (SE)            Mr Robert BROZD (HR)            Ms Paola CAMMILLI (EU)            Ms Valentina DIMITRIADOU-SALTET (CY)            Ms Susan FLOCKEN (EU)            Mr Claudio FRANCHI (IT)            Ms Natalja GRJAZEVA (LV)            Mr Thomas GRYCZAN (PL)            Mr Andreas KELLER (DE)            Ms Dorte LANGE (DK)            Mr Sandi MODRIJAN (SI)            Mr Pekka PANKKONEN (FI)            Ms Elis RANDMA (EE)            Mr Joaquim SANTOS (PT)            Mr Juraj STODOLOVSKY (SK)            Mr Alexis TORCHET (FR)            Ms Maria Luisa VICO (ES)            Ms Katrin WENZEL (EU)            Ms Céline YAMAGUCHI (EU)</p> <p><b>CESI</b>            Mr Claude HEISER (LU)</p> <p><b>EPSU</b>            Mr Jan BOERSMA (NL)            Mr Jon RICHARDS (UK)</p> <p><b>24 worker representatives</b>  <b>(11 women, 13 men)</b>  <b>(4 EU, 8 EU-13, 12 EU-15)</b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>European Commission</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ms Melissa THOMAS (EMPL.A.2 – Social Dialogue trainee)            Mr Konstantin SCHELLER (EAC.B.3 – Innovation in education, EIT and MSCA)            Mr Janne ELVELID (CNECT.F.4 – Digital Economy and Skills)</p>	