



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG

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

SECTORAL SOCIAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE FOR WOODWORKING

21 March 2014
Working Group meeting
MINUTES

Chair : Coen VAN DER VEER (EFBWW)

A) Occupational Safety and Health (OSH)

1. Opening of the meeting

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda of the meeting was adopted.

3. Adoption of draft minutes of Working Group Meeting dd. 26 September

The minutes were adopted.

4. New Community Framework on OSH 2014-2020.

Mr GEHRING informed the participants that – in view of the REFIT communication – no initiative for an OSH framework should be expected during the mandate of this Commission. A communication is expected to be presented in April, with lesser weight than a strategy. In this context, EFBWW sent the social partners' joint opinion to President BARROSO and Unit EMPL.B.3. According to the social partners, Commissioner ANDOR's reply – Ares(2014)362857 - does not sufficiently take into account the social partners' concerns. Therefore, he enquired whether a joint reply could be sent, asking for a more ambitious approach from the Commission and recognition of the social partners' status as main stakeholders. The employers' side agreed with a timely reply to Mr ANDOR's letter; however, they proposed to prepare a complete file on the outstanding OSH issues – including a historical approach – in order to brief the next Commission. This proposal will be submitted to the next plenary meeting.

5. Wood Dust brochure

The dissemination of the brochure is ongoing. In general, the project was seen as successful and practical, since it met the needs of people actually working in companies. In terms of follow-up, the social partners intend to focus on increased standardisation. In this respect, the social partners discussed the request made by Stefano BOY (ETUI) during the plenary meeting of 28 May 2013 to consider an increased involvement in CEN Technical Committee N°142. Mr LAUWAERT explained that CEN recently changed its policy regarding the liaison status. In addition to the already obligatory application request, a fee of EUR 500 + VAT per technical committee (with a maximum of EUR 3000) was recently installed. In addition, the observer status requires sufficient technical knowledge and the ability to

cope with a high workload. Since the liaison status provides at least access to working documents, it was agreed to consider an application for this status and to take a decision during the plenary meeting.

6. Revision of the European Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive

Mr GEHRING reported on his meeting with unit EMPL.B.3. From that meeting, it could be deduced that no progress can be expected during the present Commission's mandate. He also pointed at the ACSH opinion on the limit value for wood dust, which, distinct to the demand of the worker organisations, only covers hard wood but not dust from soft wood. The social partners convened to re-start their efforts as soon as the new Commission is installed.

7. AOB

- a) The social partners agreed to develop a 2014/15 Work Programme for adoption at the upcoming plenary meeting
- b) The social partners were reminded of the deadlines mentioned in the recently distributed Vademecum for Social Partners.

B) Vocational education and training (VET)

1. Welcome and opening of the meeting (N/A)

2. Adoption of the agenda. See point A2.

3. Adoption of the minutes of the Working Group meeting dd. 26/09/2013 See point A.3

4. Sector Skills Council.

EFBWW informed the employers' side of the decision of the Furniture Working Group meeting to continue their efforts in the framework of the VET Working Group meetings. CEI-bois informed the meeting that it did not consider the Creation of Sector Skills councils at European level as a priority, given the existing structures at national and regional level.

5. Bolster Up Project

Mr GEHRING informed the participants that a proposal for a drafted core profile for cabinet-makers and upholsterers was ready, based on a detailed grid completed by national partners. The results of the project will be presented during a final conference in September, including a handbook and a synthetic report. The project is also supposed to clearly show the relation between European and national Qualification Frameworks.

6. Demographic Change

Mr LAUWAERT explained that the project "Tackling Demographic Changes in the Woodworking Industry – VS/2013/0364" had started with a kick-off meeting gathering 10 participants. At present the project would need EU data on employment, divided in age groups.

In spite of the early stage of this project the following preliminary conclusions can already be drawn :

a) the situation in all countries covered by the project is similar in terms of demographic challenges;

b) until now, no valuable initiatives to tackle the issues have been taken. The efforts made were fragmented and mainly aimed at increasing the attractiveness of the sector only.

The other participants suggested focussing on secure workplaces, taking into account experiences of other sectors and possibly liaising with a Dutch project on sustainable employability in the packaging industry.

7. AOB

Mr BUISSERET announced the organisation of a "European Wood Week", which would combine national action days with activities in the European Parliament. The 3-days event would start on 25 September 2014. Apart from the well-known challenges for the sector, an important part of the event will be dedicated to the ways to tackle climate change.

Annexes :

- List of participants