



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities DG

Social Dialogue, Social Rights, Working Conditions, Adaptation to Change
Social Dialogue, Industrial Relations

Brussels, 28 November 2007

SECTORAL SOCIAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE "CHEMICAL INDUSTRY"

PLENARY MEETING

held on 8 November 2007 in Lisbon

DRAFT MINUTES

Chairpersons: Simon MARCH (ECEG) and Reinhard REIBSCH (EMCEF)

Commission representatives: Dirk HADRICH, Johannes KESTER, William KEAG (DG EMPL)

1. Welcome by the chairpersons and the European Commission. Approval of the agenda.

The social partners were welcomed by the chairpersons and the Commission. The agenda was approved.

2. Flexicurity

The Commission Communication "Towards Common Principles of Flexicurity: More and better jobs through flexibility and flexicurity" was presented and explained by Johannes Kester (DG EMPL) (annex 1). Different pathways have been described on

Commission européenne, B-1049 Bruxelles / Europese Commissie, B-1049 Brussel - Belgium. Telephone: (32-2) 299 11 11. Office: J54 0/30. Telephone: direct line (32-2) 29+3222993120.

<http://www.ec.europa.eu/socialdialogue>

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/social_dialogue/sectorial37_en.htm

E-mail: dirk.hadrich@ec.europa.eu

which responses could be found to address future challenges and modernisation of the labour market. An opinion of the Council is expected for 5 December 2007.

During the following debate references were made to Danish experiences with many collective agreements, to geographical differences, to the influence of taxes and to the training passport.

Further information and a Commission brochure can be found on:

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/employment_strategy/flex_meaning_en.htm

3. Working group on education, training and lifelong learning

Catherine Beudon reported on the activities of the working group on education, training and lifelong learning since May 2007 (annex 2). In two meetings the CITIES project, the EQF, the ECVET, the Bologna and Copenhagen processes and the brochure on skills have been treated.

During the debate it was discussed how further concrete engagements could be taken.

4. Working group on responsible care, health and safety

Stefano Ruvolo reported on the activities of the working group on responsible care, health and safety since May 2007 (annex 3). A project on the improvement of health and safety at the workplace is running and shows that the issue is geographically very diverse and that social dialogue is a prerequisite for change.

Jochen Wilkens explained the interest to achieve a zero accident situation and to work with the downstream users. The image of the sector would be essential and would need to improve.

During the following discussion a need for better training was seen, a joint initiative was wished for, the problems with temporary workers were mentioned and certificates of capacity were seen as necessary. It was decided to discuss these issues in the working group.

5. Key challenges facing European labour markets: A joint analysis of European social partners

Jørgen Rønne reported about paper adopted by the inter-professional social partners. He explained the context of the joint analysis and the wide scope covering the whole labour market. The breakthrough was that elements of discussion had been defined. The text is available on the websites of BusinessEurope and ETUC.

6. Working group on industrial policy, competitiveness and employment

Ladislav Novak reported about the activities of the working group that focussed on industrial policy, education, training, lifelong learning and on responsible care (annex 4). Importance was also given to the restructuring project discussing good practice and considering a joint statement on lessons learnt.

Erik Macak reported on findings of the trade union working group in Prague. He underlined that trade unions want decent life, secure jobs, human dignity and sustainable development. Restructuring would often have an impact on family life, health, bank loans, etc.. The social dialogue was seen as a tool that could create mutual recognition, respect and understanding what would be an essential precondition.

During the debate it was asked for key outcomes of this working group which obviously would be highlighted and appreciated in future.

7. Report on the high level group chemical industry

Reinhard Reibsch explained the intentions of the working group that should assist the Commission in questions on competitiveness and that should analyse the situation. He criticised that in the first subgroup focus was on innovation and not so much on human resources. Social partners should consider initiatives on human resources problems in the sector.

Jean-Claude Lahaut was not satisfied with the high level groups programme because many different issues were under consideration but society expectation and regulation would be of most interest.

It was decided to follow the developments of the high level group in the sectoral social dialogue committee.

8. Any other business

Next meetings:

5 December 2007 (WG)

29 February 2008 (WG)

21 May 2008 (PL)

7 July 2008 (WG)

29 September 2008 (WG)

5 December 2008 (WG)

The annexes can be downloaded from the "archive" on the website of the SSDC Chemicals Industry: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/social_dialogue/sectorial37_en.htm

