



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities DG

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

Brussels, 4 August 2009

SECTORAL SOCIAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE "CHEMICAL INDUSTRY"

WORKING GROUP MEETING

held on 7 July 2009 in Brussels

DRAFT MINUTES

I) Working group "Education, Training and Lifelong Learning"

Chairpersons: Liliana Dombalova (ECEG) and Jacques Caltot (EMCEF)

1. Opening

The social partners were welcomed by Liliana Dombalova (ECEG) and Jacques Caltot (EMCEF).

2. Approval of the agenda and approval of minutes of the last meeting

The agenda and the minutes of last meeting were approved.

3. EQF/EQARF – EU expectations from Social Partners inputs in order to prepare a good qualification framework for the European Chemical Industry

Jens Bjornavold (CEDEFOP) dates, deadlines, approaches and other details of European and national qualification frameworks (annex 1).

Social partners considered to develop recommendations for qualification frameworks for the sector of the chemical industry.

4. Short time work and training during the crisis – Implementation of Social Partners' joint declaration: national examples

ECEG suggested to initiate a round table discussion on what follow up should be given to the adopted joint declaration concerning the crisis.

Social partners found it important to retain the skills and to prevent that the sector loses qualified workers. Certain programmes were mentioned to keep and to develop competencies in companies. In particular, SMEs would find it very difficult to retain the staff during the time period of short time work. Job skills and qualifications were expected to change and to become different after the crisis. In certain countries the schools for training and qualification were fully booked while the employers would receive extra funds if their workers go for training.

EMCEF suggested sending the joint declaration of the social partners also to the national governments because there would be essential need for support of training during the crisis. In addition, a multiple choice questionnaire should be developed to assess the situation.

5. Proposal for a new brochure on "Best Practices of Education, Training and Lifelong Learning in the European Chemical Industry"

ECEG proposed to prepare a new brochure "Best practices of education, training and lifelong learning in the European chemical industry" (annex 2). It could cover working with schools, professional schools, training centres, universities, etc.

Social partners agreed to collect material for such a brochure from September until November.

6. Presentation of the revised project proposal "Euro-competences"

Martine Dumont (Interfora) and Miriam de Jong (Vapro) proposed a project "Eurocompetence for operational personnel in the chemical industry" (annex 3). A detailed working method and time line has been described.

The social partners considered to launch such a project that would need co-financing of the European Commission. Dirk Hadrich pointed to the call for proposal under DG EMPL's budget line to support social dialogue. It would be essential to meet the eligibility criteria, the award criteria, the rules for subcontracting, etc.

7. Presentation of the final results of the project "Comprehensive Sectoral Analysis of Emerging Competences and Economic Activities in the European Union"

Martin Ulbrich (DG EMPL) referred to the final report of the study that had been sent to the social partners end June. There would be no major changes compared to the interim report. The Restructuring Forum on 8/9 December should deal with the reports and all 16 sectors of the project should be represented with the view to develop proposals or options for the follow up.

8. Update on the CITIES project

Catherine Beudon (ECEG) updated the social partners on the CITIES project for secondary school teachers. The final seminar in Krakow on 28/29 September should validate the outcome of the programme which would be available from a website in different languages.

II) Working group "Industrial Policy, Competitiveness and Employment"

Chairpersons: Reinhard Reibsch (EMCEF) and Ladislav Novak (ECEG)

1. Opening

The social partners were welcomed by Reinhard Reibsch (EMCEF) and Ladislav Novak (ECEG).

2. Approval of the agenda and approval of minutes of the last meeting

The agenda and the minutes of last meeting were approved.

3. EU employment policy and the crisis

Dirk Hadrich presented the Commission Communication of 3 June 2009 "A Shared Commitment for Employment" (COM(2009)257 final) to the working group. It should be seen as a basic strategy to deal with the employment impact of the crisis and to get more and stronger cooperation and commitment to the same priorities. The document describes key priorities, actions and measures.

Social partners considered to use this Communication in their work with the national governments.

4. Implementation of REACH / Functioning of ECHA – Update on situation

Sylvie Grajales (DG ENTR) presented an update concerning the current status of REACH, its implementation, SIEF, SVHC and the work of ECHA (annex 4).

Social partners complained about an insufficient implementation of REACH and pointed to the problem that many SMEs would not understand REACH. There was also a discussion on the number of CMR-substances being subject to authorisation.

5. Conclusions of the Competitiveness Council of 19 May 09 – Focus on the chemical industry

Ladislav Novak (ECEG) went through a couple of points of the conclusions of the Competitiveness Council of 19 May 09.

EMCEF found it essential to get a clear view and understanding of the direction the chemical industry is supposed to drive. Afterwards there should be discussions on the necessary initiatives to be taken.

6. Nanotechnology – Update on situation

Lena Perenius (CEFIC) talked about regulatory aspects, benefits, challenges and CEFIC's strategy concerning nanomaterials and nanotechnologies (annex 5).

ECEG suggested preparing a joint press statement and a parliamentary event with a view to broaden the understanding of nanotechnologies.

EMCEF wanted to keep the item on the agenda and to see what can be done on this issue.

7. EU ETS/List of sectors eligible for free CO₂ allocations – Update on the situation

Jesus Barreiro-Hurle (DG ENTR) presented information concerning the analysis of sectors, the assessment criteria and indicators and the results of the identification of sectors deemed to be exposed to a significant risk of carbon leakage (annex 6).

The social partners preferred a transparent science based benchmarking system and they were concerned about designs that allow for speculation.

8. Situation in the pharmaceutical sector

Stefan Führung (DG ENTR) presented information on the content, aims, strategies and key elements of the pharmaceutical package of the Commission (annex 7).

Social partners discussed the incentives for research and development on one hand and for the production of pharmaceuticals on the other hand. Around 80% of the active substances for pharmaceuticals would be produced outside EU.

9. Any other item

Ladislav Novak drew the attention to the Responsible Care conference on 21-23 October in Prague. The social partners would be invited to this conference.

Next meetings:

30 September 2009 (WG)

30 November 2009 (WG)

The annexes can be downloaded from the "library" on the website of the SSDC Chemicals Industry: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=480&langId=en&intPageId=17>