



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities DG

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

Minutes of the Steel social dialogue committee Plenary meeting Brussels, 19 December 2007

The meeting was opened by Peter Scherer (EMF) who welcomed the participants. The Agenda was approved.

Steering group

EMF made a proposal on organising a workshop in close cooperation with the Commission services (DG EMPL and ENTR) and the European Parliament with a view to address future needs and challenges of the steel industry and to create a high level group dealing with sector related topics such as Industrial policies, screening the ongoing change processes.

In this respect, the Commission informs that Unit "working conditions" is on the verge to launch a wide range of studies on new skills needs for 17 industrial sectors, in Europe. These studies will be geared by an appropriate steering committee composed of the involved European social partners. EUROFER deems also necessary to tackle the issue of "climate change" and of "emissions trading". EUROFER thinks that the setting up of a common platform should be a starting point for creating a permanent high level group. At this background, M. Charbonnier presents ESTEP (European steel technology platform) which has been developed around the concept of sustainable growth.

The social partners have decided to organise a meeting for discussing this issue further in January 2008.

Future work of the Steel social dialogue

Beyond exchanges of information and presentations, Social partner agreed on the need to go further on topics such as Health and Safety or Training.

Enrico Gibellieri suggests to identifying good experiences on Training and Health and Safety and to benchmarking good practices on basis of statistics. It is proposed that other issues such as "emission trading", "Education", "climate change" should also be addressed within this framework and that a common declaration could be drafted on the emission trading.

EUROFER indicates that these proposals will be internally taken into account and examined in February , at the latest.

Working group "structural changes"

EMF presents concrete proposals on *"how the steel social dialogue committee can deal with structural changes in Europe"*, with slides, which will be circulated to the participants. The social partners agreed on the analysis with the exception that the steel producing is not leaving the EU (relocating). Instead, the companies are becoming more and more global and are increasingly investing outside the EU. EUROFER underlines also that the criteria for accessing to EU restructuring funds needs to be widened and not only regionally related. The issues of "image" and of "juridical safety" were raised on that occasion. Last, Karl Tachelet recalled that the Steel industry is now a vulnerable industry, which deserves to be backed up by a strong European sectoral policy.

The social partners agreed on the need to flesh out the proposals presented with a view to reach a common position.

Plenary meeting

- Presentation of the training handbook and of the results of the Leonardo Project *"Equality and Diversity Learning in the European Steel Industry (EDLESI)"* project by Prof. Peter Fairbrother from Cardiff University. (Presentation available)

The social partners agreed on devoting the next working group on the adaptation of the project.

- Discussion on development of joint policy statements and joint actions towards European institutions on European policy questions impacting the steel industry (identification of common grounds)

(1) Eurofer presentation on climate change and on ETS (Presentation available)

Social partners agreed on working on an common position on climate change

(2) Eurofer presentation on trade (Presentation available)

It was agreed that joint policy statements on the issue of Trade should be discussed further in the relevant working groups.

Future work

Calendar of meetings in 2008: General agreement on the dates, excepting two dates to be checked by EUROFER who will come back with the relevant information as soon as possible.