



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG

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

SECTORAL SOCIAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE FOR FURNITURE

19 May 2015
Plenary meeting
MINUTES

Chair : Tomas LUKES

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda of the meeting was adopted.

2. Adoption of the draft minutes of the plenary meeting dd. 26 may 2014

The minutes were adopted.

3. Work Programme 2015 – operationalised and updated version

Mr GEHRING proposed to develop a draft work programme for the upcoming two-year period 2016-2017, based on the structure and degree of implementation of the current work programme. He asked whether the other social partners could agree with replacing the term "OSH" with "working conditions". The areas referred to should be directly related to EU policies, and their content should be realistic in terms of resources. It was agreed that the secretariats would start the drafting soon, in order to present a first version in the autumn meeting.

At EFBWW's suggestion for possible cooperation between the respective working groups of the "Woodworking" and "Furniture" committees, UEA replied that the two sectors are quite different : the woodworking sector consists of bigger companies, while the furniture sector includes mainly SMEs.

4. Industrial policy for the furniture sector

Ms DESSI reported on the functioning of the Expert Group for the Forest-Based Industries (F-BI), and more in particular on the creation of thematic sub-groups. She shared a document with which she proposed the creation of a specific subgroup for furniture. The establishment of a dedicated subgroup for the furniture sector was supported by EFBWW, taking into account some specific comments. For instance, the workers' side proposed to focus not only on competitiveness, but also to deal with sustainability and the importance of well-functioning social dialogue. The inclusion of the furniture product initiative in the F-BI Blueprint and in the proposal for a subgroup on furniture was welcomed by the Polish employers.

5. Report from the working party on vocational education and training (VET)

a) The "Bolster Up" project aimed at establishing European core qualifications in the EU furniture industry. The goal was to guarantee minimum training standards for cabinet-makers and upholsterers. The fulfilment of certain criteria related to core

competencies could play an important role in terms of mobility and enhance the reliability of EU qualifications. The results of the project were a handbook and a memorandum of understanding signed by the social partners involved. A follow-up project is planned in 2016, with the aim of involving additional stakeholders at national level.

b) EFBWW reported on the discussions held in the working group regarding the sector skills councils. For the furniture industry, it was agreed to make use of the VET working group meetings to discuss sector-related issues on skills. If the views of the Commission on sector skills council would change in the future, this opinion might be reviewed. EU social partners were reminded of the thematic liaison forum on the subject of skills on 1 June 2015.

c) On the European Alliance for Apprenticeships, EFBWW informed the participants on the history and objectives of the programme. Its two-year existence will be marked by an event on 22 June organised in the framework of the Latvian presidency. EFBWW asked the Commission to pay more attention to the substance and quality of the alliances, rather than to seek a higher number of alliances. Apparently, SMEs are at present underrepresented in the scheme, which DG EMPL would like to change.

6. Report from the working party on occupational safety and health (OSH)

a) Mr LJUNGAR (TMF) presented the Swedish "Möbelfakta" scheme, which aims at addressing issues related to the furniture sector, and focussing on qualitative and environmental aspects, as well as on social responsibility. The scheme - based on the Global Compact - consists of a supply chain mapping module, a risk analysis and a supplier assessment which results in a labelling system. The system is based on an auto-declaration by the employer. This led to EFBWW's remark that the claims of the trade unions were apparently not taken up. Consequently, a social label for the furniture industry should be more developed, in order to accomplish a level playing field. www.mobelfakta.se/socialt_ansvar

b) Ms O'BRIEN presented the EU-OSHA Healthy Workplaces Campaign 2014-15, which aims at managing stress and psychosocial risks at work. She announced the dates of upcoming events, and introduced the e-guide that was produced. The e-guide takes into account the national contexts - not merely from a language angle, but also from a more substantial view. In addition, the sectoral aspect is recognised, since stress touches all sectors in various degrees. The next campaign will start in 2016 and will focus on demographic changes and healthy ageing

7. AOB

- EFBWW presented a project from a Polish member, which consists in an online course on eco-design and sustainable production. The project is funded by the Lifelong learning Programme. www.eco4vet.com

- The second project presented is funded by Horizon 2020, and consists of an online database of furniture sector SMEs, and a virtual reality tool for furniture customisation : www.furnit-saver.eu

Annexes :

- List of participants
- Presentation "Möbelfakta"
- Presentation "Managing stress and psychosocial risks at work"