



EU SOCIAL DIALOGUE LIAISON FORUM

Newsletter N° 1

October 2012

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"[...] it is precisely those European countries [...] with the most developed social partnerships, that are among the most successful and competitive economies in the world."

President Barroso, State of the Union 2012 Address

"We also have social dialogue, collective bargaining and consultation as part of our DNA."

**President Barroso, The Employment Policy Conference
6 September 2012**

Editorial

Dear Social Partners, Dear Readers,

This is the first edition of a newsletter on EU social dialogue. It will be published for each Liaison Forum meeting. The main objective is to present news from the different sectors as well as cross-industry to provide you with a broader picture of developments in European social dialogue. We hope that you will find the newsletter useful and welcome any feedback from your side to improve the next edition!

Jean-Paul Tricart

Head of Unit, Social Dialogue, Industrial Relations

LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE...

Upcoming events

18-10-2012

Tripartite Summit

The Tripartite Social Summit on Growth and Employment has been jointly organised by the Council and the Commission since 2003. It is an important forum for concertation between the EU institutions and the Social Partners ahead of the European Council. The next Summit takes place ahead of a European Council which will focus on the achievement of a genuine European Monetary Union, as one of the pillars at the basis of a strong European economy.

The Summit will give the opportunity to discuss economic and social governance issues with Social partners, as well as to listen to their views on the best ways to ensure a job-rich return to growth, including through the policy reforms highlighted in the Commission 2012 Employment Package and the initiatives to address youth employment. The main issue will be promoting growth, jobs and social inclusion, with particular emphasis on the involvement of Social Partners in European governance.

3-12-2012

Thematic Liaison Forum

The next Thematic Liaison Forum will focus on EU social dialogue outcomes and policy impact. EU Social Partners will be invited to reflect on this issue and to contribute to the discussion on how EU social dialogue can further move towards concrete outcomes and their implementation at national level.

11/12-12-2012

Sports and Active Leisure

Launch of the test phase (inauguration ceremony and first plenary meeting)

On 17 June 2011, EASE and UNI Europa Sport signed a Joint Statement reaffirming the importance of having a European Social Dialogue Committee. In this statement, both sides approved the operational structure of the future Committee as a Plenary Committee, 3 Standing Committees (not-for-profit sport, professional sport and active leisure) and "Ad hoc" Committees. The statement also included a first work programme for each of the three Standing Committees. Since then, further progress has been made in order to reinforce the representativeness of the EU social partner organisations. The Commission will now launch the test phase of the European Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for Sports and Active Leisure. The inauguration ceremony and first plenary meeting is planned to be held in Brussels on 11/12 December 2012.

New call for proposals

The call for proposals VP/2012/009 on "Mutual learning in the field of skills and employment, EU Sector Skills Councils, Restructuring" is now open. The deadline for submitting proposals is 22 October 2012.

Email: EMPL-VP-2012-009@ec.europa.eu

FROM THE PAST...

Cross-industry

Adoption of the work programme of the EU social partners 2012-2014

Social Partners believe a policy mix is needed and that they can and should play a role in this policy mix. They are ready to contribute to the design of reforms if this leads to restoring growth, jobs, competitiveness and social cohesion. With this in mind, they have finalised their work programme for 2012-2014 and have launched negotiations on the working time directive.

The EU Social Partners' 2012-2014 work programme provides for a reflection in the social dialogue committee on the role of Social Partners in the economic and social governance at EU level. The work programme also foresees joint analysis on the functioning of labour markets and on mobility and economic migration (two pillars of the employment package).

The joint work programme covers 3 years and includes, among others:

- joint work on youth employment (link between education and labour market needs)
- an analysis of the functioning of the European labour markets (building upon their previous 2007 Analysis of labour market key challenges, and targeting both short-term challenges deriving from the crisis and structural issues)
- follow-up work on gender equality (building on their 2005 framework of actions)
- follow-up work on education and lifelong learning (building on their 2002 framework of actions)
- mobility and economic migration
- the consequences of European economic governance on social dialogue at EU and national level
- a joint assessment of social dialogue instruments
- capacity building projects

New Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee

23-1-2012

Food & Drink Industry

The food and drink Social Dialogue Committee has been formally constituted on 23 January. On this occasion, the Social Partners (EFFAT and FoodDrinkEurope) agreed to address the following issues in their work programme for 2012: "Ensuring competitiveness and sustainable employment in the European food and drink sector: meeting the challenges of the labour market" and "Policy developments affecting the food and drink sector in Europe".

New sectoral agreements

15-2-2012

Inland Waterways

Signature of European agreement on working time in inland waterway transport

The agreement was negotiated at the own initiative of the sectoral Social Partners. The European Barge Union (EBU) and the European Skippers' Organisation (ESO) representing the employers' side, and the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) representing the workers' side, consider that the general working time directive is not adapted to the needs of their sector (e.g. reference period, work organisation) and negotiated, between 2008 and 2011, an agreement which takes account of the distinctive working conditions in the sector while ensuring a high level of protection for these workers' health and safety. It covers both crew members and shipboard personnel (for example hotel and catering workers on board ships). The signatory parties have asked the Commission for their agreement to be made legally binding in the EU.

19-4-2012

Professional Football

Autonomous Agreement regarding the minimum requirements for standard player contracts

This Autonomous Agreement based on Article 155 TFEU was signed by FIFPro (Trade Union); EPFL (European Professional Football Leagues), ECA (European Club Association) – and UEFA, the governing body of European football. This first agreement is a significant achievement for the sector. Its main goal is to include minimum social standards in players' contracts. EU Social Partners committed themselves to implement the agreement no later than three years after its date of signature by using the most appropriate legal instruments as determined by the relevant parties at national level in the European Member States but also in the remaining countries of the UEFA territory.

26-4-2012

Personal Services/Hairdressing

European Framework Agreement on the Protection of Occupational Health and Safety in the Hairdressing Sector

Through this comprehensive framework agreement, Coiffure EU and UNI Europa Hair & Beauty, presenting respectively the 400 000 salons and one million hairdressing workers in Europe, aim to provide clear guidance for hairdressers that enables them to work in a healthy and safe environment throughout their careers. The agreement's

provisions are designed to address specific risks in the sector, such as those linked to the use of chemicals, the working environment and musculo-skeletal disorders. For instance, it stresses the importance of wearing gloves for wet work and the need for providing sufficient space and ventilation in salons. In accordance with the Treaty provisions, the Social Partners have now asked the Commission to present the agreement to the Council with a view to implementation by European legislation.

21-5-2012

Sea Fisheries

Signature of the social dialogue agreement on implementing the ILO Convention 188 on work in fishing

The agreement was signed by Europêche and Cogeca for the employers and ETF for the workers, at the European Maritime Day conference, which took place on 21 May 2012 in Gothenburg in the presence of Commissioner Damanaki. This agreement implements parts of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention on "Work in the fishing sector"(n° 188). It confirms the EU social partner's commitment to improve the working conditions of fishermen both in Europe and globally. The EU Social Partners intend to ask the Commission to present their Agreement to the EU's Council of Ministers in order to implement it through an EU Directive, in accordance with Article 155 of the Treaty, and so make the rules legally binding in the EU and enable speedier ratification of the ILO Convention. With this in view, the signatories are revising their agreement in order to make it fully compatible with the existing "acquis communautaire" and EU law in the seafisheries sector.

Messages from the sectoral level

27-1-2012

Extractive Industries

Adoption of a joint position entitled Budapest III declaration on coal policy

The Budapest III declaration, signed by the European sectoral Social Partners (APEP, Euracoal, Euromines, IMA-Europe, UEPG and EMCEF) highlights the importance of coal as a energy source and raw material for the promotion of growth and employment in Europe. The Social Partners argued for the inclusion of coal in the EUs sustainable and diversified energy mix and for the use and further development of carbon capture and storage and (CCS) and carbon capture and recycling (CCR), which can reduce the environmental impact and secure employment. They also pointed out that health and safety of miners is a priority for Social Partners and in that respect called for the ratification of ILO Convention 176 by all EU Member States. Finally, they called for a review of the current legal framework to allow the continuation of competitive coal mining after 2018.

20-3-2012

Chemical Industry

Joint statement on the proposal for an energy efficiency directive

In their joint opinion, ECEG and EMCEF point to the pivotal role of energy in the production process in the chemical industry, which can exceed 50 per cent of total production costs. Thus they welcome the Commission's comprehensive proposal for a directive on energy efficiency, highlighting their own reduction of energy input per unit of chemical production as well as chemical products' role in enabling greenhouse emissions reduction in other sectors. However, they call for targets to further reduce the energy input per production unit rather than absolute energy saving targets.

30-3-2012

Central Administration

Response to the European Commission's Green Paper Restructuring and anticipation of change: what lessons from recent experience?

This common response welcomes the references in the Green Paper to the important role that central administrations play both as an employer and service provider for Europe's social cohesion, competitiveness and thus in tackling the effects of the crisis. Given the importance of the issue, Social Partners regret that it is not the subject of a second stage consultation, as was initially planned by the Commission. They express concerns that the nature of a Green Paper risks diluting the role of Social Partners in dealing with restructuring and delaying further improvements to the related EU and national frameworks and call upon the Commission to deliver the appropriate policy proposals as quickly as possible.

18-4-2012

Postal Services

Signature of new Joint Declaration on Postal Sector Evolution

The declaration, signed by EU sectoral Social Partners POSTEUROP and UNI Europa Post & Logistics, underlines that constructive social dialogue is necessary to better manage the social dimension of change in postal companies. The Social Partners also pledge to continue their EU-level monitoring of social developments in the sector. The declaration calls upon national Social Partners to anticipate change through dialogue, develop workers' employability to promote mobility and encourage investment in the postal sector.

24-4-2012

Commerce

Contribution of the commerce sector Social Partners on consensus social issues for the Retail action plan

In a joint contribution, the Social Partners of the commerce sector have commented on social issues related to the European Retail Action Plan, calling the Commission and the Member States to take action to address the differences in working conditions caused by differences in national labour law and collective agreements, including by supporting capacity building activities for Social Partners in new Member States and candidate countries; to reduce the negative impact of the informal economy on working conditions; and to tackle the mismatch between the skill needs of companies and those of staff in the retail sector.

16-5-2012

Local and Regional Governments

Response to the European Commission's Green Paper Restructuring and anticipation of change: what lessons from recent experience?

While Social Partners welcome that the Green Paper acknowledges the need to consider the impact of restructuring on the public sector as an employer and service provider, CEMR and EPSU state that restructuring in the public sector is not a new phenomenon. In their view it is necessary to distinguish the impact of restructuring in the private sector and the role of local and regional government (education and skills development, employment and support to unemployed and other labour market measures), with restructuring within the public sector with the aim of improving quality and efficiency.

25-5-2012

Private Security

Joint opinion on the public procurement directive

The private security sector across the EU is strongly reliant on public sector contracts, which make up around 50 per cent of all contracts. CoESS and UNI Europa have produced a joint opinion on the proposed revision of the public procurement directive. As the sector is highly labour-intensive, with personnel costs making up close to 90% of its overall costs, they express concern about a selection of service providers almost exclusively on the basis of lowest price. Instead they argue for a wider number of selection criteria, including respect of collective labour agreements, investment in training, enhancement of skills, and health and safety at work.

29-5-2012

Tanning and Leather

Adoption of two joint opinions

The Social Partners of the European Leather Industry signed a joint opinion on banning Chromium VI in leather and leather products. This opinion welcomes the Danish initiative to propose an EU-wide ban on the use of Chromium VI, and requests using EN ISO 17075 as reference test method for reasons of uniformity. Also, the Social Partners call upon EU authorities to create a mechanism for preventing non-conforming imported products from being available on the EU market.

In addition, a joint opinion on the Free Trade Agreement between the EU and Ukraine was adopted on the same date. The opinion expresses the Social Partners' concern about the market access conditions for tanners' raw materials, which would not be sufficiently open to EU operators over a period of 15 years. They invite the Commission to monitor the trade flows during this period and to report on them annually to the Social Partners. Finally, they ask the European Commission not to use this FTA agreement as a basis for future negotiations.

14-6-2012

Railways

Good Practices and Implementation Guide on Women in Rail

The Social Partners in the rail transport sector carried out a project on women in rail ("WIR"). This is a follow-up to a previous European project and a baseline study on the situation of and policies for women in the railway sector carried out by CER and ETF in 2004-2005 and subsequent policy orientations of 2007 ("Joint recommendations for a better representation and integration of women in the railway sector"). The project produced a Good Practices and Implementation Guide, a Comparative Study, which covers 25 railway companies from 17 European countries for a total of 750,000 employees and a Summary report of three thematic seminars, which have been organised within the project activities.

21-6-2012

Civil Aviation – Air Traffic Management (ATM) Working Group

Guidelines for Consultation arrangements for Functional Airspace Blocks

The Social Partners of the ATM working group adopted Guidelines for Consultation arrangements for Functional Airspace Blocks which are being set up in the framework of the Single European Sky initiative. This tool will help employers and workers to set up appropriate consultation arrangements.

6-9-2012

Extractive Industries

Adoption of a Joint statement on further improvement of working conditions and occupational health of employees

This statement is an update of the 2004 joint statement taking into account the enlargement of the European Union and the participation of new Social Partners in the Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for the Extractive Industries in Europe (SSDCEI). It addresses a wide range of topics including training and education, prevention of

occupational risk, health and safety management, medical precautions, provisions related to contract staff as well as machine design factors in human-machine interaction.

10-9-2012

Audiovisual

Joint opinion on the European Audiovisual Observatory

The European Social Partners of the audiovisual sector have adopted a joint opinion, supporting the call of the Advisory Committee of the European Audiovisual Observatory (<http://www.obs.coe.int/>), to "endeavour to add economic and employment statistics to its range of statistical data aggregation activities". The Social Partners highlight the need of the European audiovisual sector for reliable and frequently updated statistics on its contribution to the EU economy and employment, amongst others in the context of current and future European political debates affecting the sector.

They call upon the European Commission, Member States and other relevant bodies to support and facilitate requests which the Observatory could submit in order to respond satisfactorily to the call of the Advisory Committee.

3-9-2012

Hospitals and Healthcare

Report on the follow up on EPSU-HOSPEEM Code of Conduct on Ethical Cross-border Recruitment and Retention

With their joint commitment, HOSPEEM, EPSU and their respective members underlined their firm intention to address inequalities and unnecessary burdens on healthcare caused by unethical recruitment practices related to the mobility and migration of health workers. They developed 12 principles to guide health care employers and the health workers in the sector in their joint efforts to develop solutions to a range of challenges of a practical and ethical nature related to cross-border mobility and migration. Four years have passed since the Code of Conduct (CoC) was adopted. Being a process-oriented tool of the European sectoral social dialogue a provision (clause 11) had been inserted to evaluate its dissemination and use by the sectoral Social Partners across Europe. This descriptive report summarises the answers received. An outlook and possible recommendations and conclusions for the future will be drafted later.

Joint projects

Selection of currently on-going joint projects from the work programmes of sectoral social dialogue committees:

Audiovisual

Promoting Capacity Building of National Social Partners in the Audiovisual Sector

In the context of their 2012 work programme, the Social Partners of the audiovisual sector are currently running a joint project aimed at encouraging social dialogue in the sector in the new Member States and to facilitate the integration of Social Partners of these countries in the work of the European social dialogue committee. National workshops have been or will be organised in the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. A regional conference will be held in Tallinn on 22-23 October.

Audiovisual/Live Performance

Skills Council

The Social Partners of the social dialogue committees of the Live Performance and Audiovisual sectors are currently engaged in a project to assess the feasibility and value added of creating a sector skills council – or skills councils. The outcomes of the study should allow the respective committees to take decisions in this respect before the end of this year.

Commerce

Capacity building

In 2011-2012, EuroCommerce and UNI Europa Commerce, in close cooperation with the ITC-ILO, implemented capacity building projects aimed at social partner organisations in the new Member States and Candidate Countries. The projects included separate activities for trade unions and employers organisations, as well as a joint workshop (in December 2011). They wish to continue this work in the context of a joint project in 2013.

Commerce

Skills Council

EuroCommerce and UNI Europa Commerce are in the final stage of the creation of a European sector council on employment and skills for commerce. The official launching is scheduled to take place on 5 December 2012. It will be the second sector skills council to be established, after the one for Textiles, Clothing and Leather – which was launched in December 2011.

Construction

Health and Safety

Over the past two years, EFBWW and FIEC have been preparing a guide for developing a health and safety management system. The result is now available in 13 languages and all the versions will be shortly available on both EFBWW and FIEC websites.

Education

Implementing their 2012-2013 work programme, the Social Partners of the education sector are carrying out a number of joint projects, covering such issues as: recruitment and retention, third-party violence and harassment in schools and self-evaluation of schools and teachers as instruments for identifying future professional needs.

Furniture

Nano in Furniture

This project, managed by the Social Partners, intends principally to present an inventory of available nano-products, measurement results, risk assessment proposals, prevention techniques and nano-reference values. The final report is expected to be finalised by the end of October.

Local and Regional Governments

Future of the Workplace

A project on "Future of the Workplace: Providing quality jobs, modern and sustainable workplaces in Local and Regional Government" is led by EPSU and CEMR. Severe changes are currently being implemented in local and regional administrations, with reduced financial resources, demographic and societal changes, changing work patterns and the need for reconciliation of work, family and private life. The successful implementation of sustainable solutions depends on discussions and recommendations by both employers' and trade unions, which has been thoroughly supported by this project. The final conference will take place in Prague on 15 October.

Paper Industry

"No Paper without Skilled Healthy and Safe People"

The Paper industry is currently finalising its first joint CEPI-EMCEF (now industriALL) project. They have produced a Guide on good health & safety practices for the sector which was successfully presented at the Launch Conference on 11/12 September 2012 in Bad Münden (Germany).

Personal Services/Hairdressing

SafeHair 2.0

In cooperation with the University of Osnabrück, the European sectoral Social Partners have developed common health and safety recommendations and training materials for the prevention of occupational skin diseases in hairdressing. This project accompanies the Social Partners' framework agreement on the protection of occupational health and safety (see above).

Postal Services

Matching Skills and Jobs

The sectoral Social Partners have started a new joint project on training, examining the impact of the introduction of new technologies in the sector and sharing experiences on matching skills and jobs.

Railways

Insecurity and the Feeling of Insecurity in Rail Passenger Transport

With this project, the Social Partners intend to prevent, manage, mitigate and reduce insecurity and the feeling of insecurity in rail passenger transport caused by third-party violence. Previous projects in other sectors have already tackled this issue. But instructive material for the rail sector in Europe is not yet available and shall be developed within the project activities. Further objectives are the intensification of social dialogue on personal safety. The focus will be on prevention, intervention and rehabilitation measures to reduce the impact on employees' health and well-being.

Road Transport

Skills, Training And the Road Transport Sector

IRU and ETF together with partners have engaged in a joint social partner project on training in the commercial road transport sector, covering mobile and non mobile employees of road transport companies. The Social Partners recognise the indispensability of high quality training for developing an efficient, properly skilled,

safe and sustainable workforce in commercial road transport. The objective of the "STARTS" (Skills, Training And the Road Transport Sector) project is to determine the most important challenges and best solutions for improving the training of drivers and other workers performing certain non mobile, logistics related tasks.

Road Transport

Female employment in the urban public transport sector

The Social Partners in the urban public transport sector have engaged in a joint social partner project on female employment in the urban public transport sector ("WISE"). The expected outcomes of the project are recommendations regarding female employment to be signed by the Social Partners and an action guideline "Women in transport professions" for decision-makers in companies, trade unions and employers' associations, containing the results of the project and information on good practice examples.

Tanning and Leather

Social and Environmental Reporting in the European Leather Industry III

The sectoral Social Partners have set up this project in order to strengthen the implementation of the 2008 Framework Agreement on social and environmental reporting. The project aims at increasing coordination and setting a European baseline by means of a first European report on social and environmental performance in the EU tanning sector.

Temporary Agency Work

Transitions in the labour market

The sectoral Social Partners, Eurociett and UNI Europa, are carrying out this project which aims at assessing their possible role in facilitating transitions in the labour market (from education to work, from unemployment to work, from different types of labour contracts). It will look at the profile of temporary agency workers (skills level, age, gender, main sectors in which they work) and at their experiences (situation before and after temping, average length of assignment, types of labour contracts offered to them, quality of transitions and applicable working conditions). Last but not least, the project tries to find out how far some agency workers might be in a precarious situation, focusing in particular on women, migrants, low-skilled and older workers.

Woodworking

Jointly Preventing Wood Dust

The Social Partners of this sector launched a project which aims to provide additional translations and further dissemination of the "Less Dust" brochure, especially in new member states and candidate countries.

Central Government Administrations

Improving the Image of Central Government Administrations in Europe

This is the first common project led by TUNED and EUPAE since the creation of the sector in December 2010. It aims to enhance the attractiveness and image of the sector, facing austerity measures, restructuring and demographic changes. The final conference will take place in Prague on 4 October 2012

Events in the past

20-4-2012

Social workshop of the Energy community in Vienna

This workshop, co-organised by DG EMPL and the Energy Community Secretariat, brought together Social Partners from Energy Community Contracting Parties, European Social Partners as well as regulators and international institutions such as the ILO. The main aim was to discuss a study commissioned by DG EMPL in 2009 on the state of social dialogue in the Western Balkan countries in general and the energy sector in particular. It was noted that there are still a number of challenges hampering the effective functioning of social dialogue, e.g. insufficient legal framework or the lack of capacity of Social Partners and government officials. The workshop also encouraged mutual learning and sharing of experience between local and European Social Partners. [Download the study](#) or visit the [Energy community website](#).

16-5-2012

Founding Congress of industriALL European Trade Union

On 16 May 2012, three trade union organisations – the European Metalworker' Federation (EMF), the European Trade Union Federation Textiles, Clothing and Leather (ETUF:TCL) and the European Mine, Chemical and Energy Workers' Federation (EMCEF) decided to join their forces and become the new industriALL European Trade Union. The new organisation covers 11 sectoral social dialogue committees and represents 7 million unionised workers throughout Europe.

11/12-9-2012

5th Social Forum of the Energy Community

The annual Social Forum took place in Bečići in Montenegro on 11/12th of September. The main aim of the Forum was to review the Social Action Plans (SAPs), which are the tool for the management of social consequences arising from the implementation of the Treaty establishing the Energy community. The EnC Secretariat and the European Commission pointed out the somewhat slow and uneven progress in the implementation of the SAPs; more progress needs to be done in the area of social dialogue as well as management of change. Energy poverty and energy affordability were also discussed together with the new Energy Strategy of the Energy Community. It was concluded that a Social Strategy complementing the Energy Strategy should be outlined by mid 2013 and a workshop with the participation of all SAP workings groups from all Contracting Parties should be organized before the next Forum to improve the implementation of the SAPs. The next Forum will take place in Serbia in 2013.

Brochures

14-2-2012

Social Europe guide – Volume 2 – Social Dialogue

August 2011

Consulting European Social Partners: Understanding how it works

Articles/Reports/Studies

2010 Annual Report of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work

January 2011

Final Report European Social Dialogue: State of Play and Prospects; European Social Observatory, European Trade Union Confederation

Information from Eurofound

Upcoming events

22-23-10-2012

- Focus on youth unemployment (Nicosia, Cyprus)

29-11-2012

- Launch of the 3rd European Quality of Life Survey (Brussels)

Publications

- Living longer, working better: active ageing in Europe
- Trends in job quality in Europe, and executive summary in all languages
- Foundation Focus - Youth in Europe: best days of their lives?
- Social dialogue in times of crisis, and executive summary in all languages
- YEARBOOK 2011 - Living and working in Europe
- Employment trends and policies for older workers in the recession
- Fifth European Working Conditions Survey - Overview report, and executive summary in all languages
- Foundation Findings - Working time in the EU
- Impact of the recession on age management policies (résumé), and related Country reports and cases studies

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