



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities DG
Social dialogue, Social rights, Working conditions, Adaptation to Change
Social dialogue, Industrial relations

Meeting: Sectoral social dialogue committee, **Gas, Working Group**

Time: 19. 03.2010

TRADE UNIONS	EMPLOYERS
1. Mr BARRET Ian (UK)	1. Ms ADAMKOVA Jitka (CZ)
2. Mr BAUR Didier (FR)	2. Ms BASIU Simona (Eurogas)
3. Mr CINK Pacel (CZ)	3. Ms BICHLER Brigitte (AT)
4. Mr CORNELISSE Ruud (NL)	4. Mr CHVATAL Roland (AT)
5. Mr GOUDRIAAN Jan Willem (EPSU)	5. Mr GENTGES Peter (DE)
6. Mr HAKKINEN Jussi (FI)	6. Mr MEISSNER Joerg (DE)
7. Mr MOUTON Jacques (FR)	
8. Ms POPESCU RALUCA (RO)	
9. Mr POPESCU Victor (RO)	
10. Mr RIBEIRO Luis Antonio (PT)	
11. Mr SZEKELY Tamas (HU)	
12. Mr VARGA Gyula (HU)	
13. Mr VADKERTY Richard (SK)	
14. Ms VOJIKOVA Sarka (CZ)	
15. Ms ZIEROLD Corinna (EMCEF)	

Commission: DLOUCHY Dorota DG EMPL

DRAFT MINUTES

1) Opening and announcements

The chairman welcomes participants. He informs members of SSDC that point 6 had to be cancelled. DG ENER cancelled their presence at the meeting.

He also reports on the discussions with Eurogas on a previous day. The chairman underlines a good understanding between partners, but he adds the details of the common activities should still be discussed. Employers add that SSDC should focus on the most important issues for the Gas sector in Europe, not spending much of resources on the cross-cutting issues of importance for a number of sectors.

2) Approval of agenda

Agenda approved. Point 6 moved to the plenary.

3) Approval of minutes

Minutes approved without changes. EPSU reminds a point from the last plenary session: follow-up of the toolkit. He asks Eurogas to prepare a joint letter to the affiliates informing them about the study and the toolkit.

4) Project on CSR to be submitted in 2010.

Subtopics to be dealt with gradually:

- H&S
- Restructuring
- Equality and diversity
- **new proposal to focus on jobs and skills/qualifications**

French trade unions' representative expresses his disappointment as far as progress in this field is concerned. He recalls a number of meetings and discussions on CSR, which have not resulted in any concrete actions. He underlines that the CSR concept is a very complex one and the specific commitment is needed to push it forward.

Eurogas states that the work program was approved in December, the umbrella paper was drafted and some work on the sub-topics has already started, so there is commitment. Mr. Gentges underlines that the long-term approach is necessary for the success of SSDC activities on CSR. He reminds that it was agreed that CSR activities will not be a sole focus of the Committee, but SPs will try to perform the advisory role vs. European Commission. Mr. Gentges says that as far as CSR is concerned, the patience is needed; the Social Partners should not be impatient.

EPSU recalls the four themes of CSR that SPs agreed upon. Mr. Goudriaan asks for clarification, whether a draft paper prepared by Eurogas on CSR is meant to be a joint position.

Mr. Goudriaan informs members of the SSDC about the initiative of DG ENTR on CSR with a focus on the monitoring, verification of good governance standards. A number of workshops were organized on this issue with TU, industry and other stakeholders.

EPSU reminds that in any work done by this Committee on CSR, two principles must be highlighted: its voluntary character and that it means going beyond legal obligations. The questions of monitoring should be also addressed in a joint position.

Czech trade unions' representative also highlights the importance of the SSDC's advisory role to the EC. As far as toolkit on demography is concerned, Ms Vojikova would like to be able to come back to CR with some concrete results, such as a joint recommendation on it.

Eurogas points out that the issue of a joint letter on demography is not included in the agenda. They propose to come back to it after the lunch break.

EPSU proposes to work on a draft joint statement on CSR prepared by Eurogas. Trade Unions will prepare their comments to the current text and these comments/changes will be discussed at the Presidency level. Trade unions also agree on the four sub-themes of the CSR, but practical steps for the implementation should be discussed – project? Joint document?

5) Joint position paper on the Commission project “Investing in the future of jobs and skills”/letter to DG EMPL

DG EMPL representative presents a concept of the Skill Councils. She informs participants that the Commission commissioned a feasibility study on this topic. The results of the study were presented at the Restructuring Forum together with the results of the Sectoral studies on the future skills needs. The Commission now works on putting the idea of councils into work. The social partners will be in a driving seat of this exercise as the Councils are to be a complementary tool to the social dialogue; they are not to compete with SSDC. Moreover, the Councils are not to be a compulsory solution for all the sectors.

The Councils at the beginning should focus on the exchange of national experiences, later on it is proposed that the Councils will move to an advisory function.

The set up: SPs from both sides, from all MS; representatives of national skill councils, training and research institutes.

The Councils will be established on the request coming from SPs. SPs should identify by themselves other stakeholders that are to be involved in the exercise (it can be financed under 01 budget line). The Commission will provide same logistical support for Skill Councils as it does for SSDCs.

Employers say that they are aware of the existence of Councils in a number of MS, but the picture they have is not broad enough to assess the European-wide situation.

Trade unions confirm their support and interest in the idea of the Councils. EPSU also believes that SPs should decide upon the WP of the Council, timetable and working tools. It is also mentioned that SPs would like SSDCs to 'validate' results of the works undertaken by Councils.

EPSU asks whether EMCEF and Eurogas are ready to start identification of the partners in order to start the process.

The Commission representative proposes to invite SSDC Textile to report at the next WG on their experiences in the process of establishing the Council.

Eurogas also proposes to gather preliminary information on the national experiences and discuss them during the next meeting. Trade Unions agree with the proposal. Both sides will prepare information and submit for a discussion to the WG. A small survey will be sent out to members.

EPSU also proposes to discuss the working relation between SSDC and SC.

Trade unions propose to prepare a joint letter to the Commission on the EC study on future skills and the proposal to set up Skill Council.

Eurogas mentions that not all conclusions of the study can be accepted, but some of them are valuable. Eurogas cannot support fully the proposal from trade unions. Trade unions agree to withdraw the annex. New proposal will be drafted.

6) Interpretative notes on Third Energy Package (Representative European Commission, DG Energy) TBC

– Questions on unbundling/short reports to be prepared by participants:

- How was unbundling processed in your country?
- Impacts on employment in your country?
- Impacts on consumers? Development of prices? What kind of problems occurred?

DG EMPL representative explains that DG ENER could not come to this meeting. She forwarded the presentation of DG ENER to the participants. DG EMPL also proposes to organize a meeting between the presidency and Gas and Electricity Unit DG ENER. The details will be discussed with the Secretariats.

EPSU has a question concerning the interpretative note on the mobility of workers between companies. In the opinion of EPSU, the note goes beyond the limits of the directive, broadening the group of people prohibited from the free movement to middle management.

Both sides underline the importance of being consulted as SSDC by DG ENER in the preparation of their proposals.

EPSU proposes to discuss a common message to ENSO-G on skills. Eurogas says that the issue was not previewed in the agenda and requires internal discussion.

7) EU energy policy/changes in energy supply – letter to new Commissioner for Energy Günther Oettinger

The reply from the new Commissioner has not yet arrived.

8) Commission Communication on European Sectoral Social Dialogue

DG EMPL informs that this document is again delayed, due to the changes introduced in the view of new 2020 strategy. The date of publication is not yet known.

9) Planning of drafting position paper on Equality and Diversity

Eurogas comes back to CSR question. They ask about the concrete objectives and added value of the activities on CSR. Best practice guides on each subheading would be useful. As far as

toolkit is concerned, Eurogas finds it less useful; as there are number of toolkits, guidelines available worldwide. Therefore, a project could be drafted on best practice guides.

Trade unions believe that a toolkit could also be useful together with best practices.

Trade unions made also a proposal on a framework of the Equality and Diversity, but first, the umbrella paper is to be finished.

Eurogas underlines that a new definition of CSR should NOT be created, but an umbrella document should make a reference to the existing, international documents. TU agree with this opinion.

On equality - Eurogas proposes to identify best practices and then to find incentives for the companies to use them. Not to start with creating common definitions. Eurogas refers here to the proposal from trade unions on equality.

EPSU believes that the work on this issue must start with definition of the objectives etc. in order to approach the companies with concrete questions.

The Presidency will prepare draft framework documents on CSR and subthemes.

10) AOB

Trade unions propose to deal in WP with DG ENER road maps on energy and also with the social consequences of the smart meters.

Eurogas mentions skills and competencies as an additional point.

Work programme will be submitted to the EC.

There is also a proposal coming from trade unions to discuss transnational agreements and the social partners agreements implemented in the form of the directive. To be discussed at the Presidency level.