

Shale gas, LNG, bio-gas, new technologies, skills and employment in European gas social dialogue

(13 September 2010) What is the *future direction of the European gas sector* and what implications does this have for skills and qualifications and employment. This was the main topic of debate of employers and unions in the gas sector 9 September.

The recent uptake and development of shale gas requires qualifications that are different from those of workers on LNG terminals, and different again from those working on pipelines (transport) and yet again workers dealing with biogas required a different education.

What transversal and what specific qualifications are needed ?

New technologies such as smart meters and related services have an impact on employment and organization of work.

The social partners decided therefore:

- ▶ To explore the future of the gas sector and its impact on companies and workers. They will seek experts to this end.
- ▶ To consider with DG energy the implications of its work programme. Several meetings will be set up to discuss this with the Commission. This also is connected with the [joint letter](#) the social partners have sent to the Commission as contribution to the consultation on: Towards a New European Energy Policy 2011-2022 (for the [EPSU contribution see here](#)).

Other issues:

- ▶ The social partners also considered the idea of [sector skill councils](#). A first step is to find out what does exist in the different Member States. A proposal is to be drafted for discussion in November. This discussion links with the previous one. A European sector skill council can have a forward looking approach, focus on gas specific jobs and their qualifications.
- ▶ The discussion on Corporate Social Responsibility continued. A draft questionnaire will be circulated to members for comments.
- ▶ The social partners also noted a report on the ongoing developments in the [South East European Energy Community](#) and the first results of the employment study which predicts a loss of jobs. The social partners support the importance of the Social Action Plans and the need for these to be detailed and with clear time frames.
- ▶ An interesting exchange took place on transnational agreements. There are several: agreements between the sectoral social partners that can result in a European directive; agreements between a company and the trade unions for a European wide company agreement and the deliberations over an optional framework for transnational company agreements. Further information will be provided to the committee.

The meeting took place on 9 September 2010, Brussels. The EPSU Deputy General Secretary participated. EPSU vice-president Didier Baur (CGT-FNME, Fr) led the EPSU delegation. Other participants came from Austria, Czech and Slovak republics and Romania. The next meeting is on 17 November 2010