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Issue N° 4.

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**News from the Commission****European Pillar of Social Rights**

The consultation on the European Pillar of Social Rights which ran from March-December 2016, has led to around 16500 responses to the on-line questionnaire (of which more than 15.500 resulted from the trade union campaign 'Social Rights first!'), more than 200 position papers and many meetings and discussions at EU and national levels. Social partners have been consulted through dedicated meetings at EU level (2 hearings and 2 high-level political meetings) and through the national consultation meetings held in 27 Member States. European and national social partner organisations provided the Commission with around 50 position papers. On 23 January more than 600 participants from Member State authorities, EU institutions, social partners and civil society, including the President of the European

**Hearing on the working time directive**

As announced in its Work Programme 2017 the Commission plans a non-legislative initiative to strengthen the implementation of the Working Time Directive. To this end the publication of an interpretative Communication together with a report on the implementation of the Directive is foreseen for spring 2017. To feed into the preparations the Commission organised a dedicated hearing with social partners on 19 January based on a background document. European social partners were also provided with the opportunity to send written contributions.

Commission Jean-Claude Juncker, the President of the European Parliament Antonio Tajani, more than 20 national Ministers, and several Members of the College of Commissioners, discussed the results of the public consultation at a conference organised in Brussels. The discussions will help the Commission prepare its proposal on the Pillar which is foreseen for Spring 2017.



## **ESDE 2016**

In December of last year the Commission published a chapter on capacity-building for social dialogue in the 2016 edition of Employment and Social Developments in Europe. This chapter found that representativeness and consensus-building are key criteria behind effective social dialogue. However, reaching these criteria can be challenging given the evolving nature of our world of work.

Indeed, this chapter found that social partners must now attract and represent an increasingly diverse group of employees and employers. Fortunately, there is evidence that social partners are responding to these new developments. For example, in several Member States new forms of digital companies and their affiliated workers are increasingly included as members of social partner organisations.

The effectiveness of social dialogue rests primarily with the social partners themselves. However, this chapter does acknowledge that public authorities have a particular responsibility to provide direct support to bipartite and tripartite social dialogue. In several Member States social partners have been working together and making a real impact upon national policies and reforms for example in the areas of pensions, working conditions and skills development.

**more news**

## **Contributions from Social Partners**



### **Food & Drink Industry**

Two years ago, FoodDrinkEurope and EFFAT (the European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions), social partners for the EU food and drink industry, commissioned consultants to help both respective organisations work on a European Commission-funded research project entitled 'Bringing in new talents and managing an ageing workforce - two sides of the same coin'. The main aim of this project is to identify how to build up labour supply and demand in the sector, manage an ageing workforce and help to fight unemployment while at the same time improving the reputation of the food and drink manufacturing and processing sector as an employer, especially amongst young people.

A hands-on toolbox with good examples and case studies helps to share, develop and consolidate sustainable practices across the food and drink industry on: 1) Recruiting both young people and key groups experiencing an employment gap to the sector at all levels (production, administration, management, research and innovation) and improving training, apprenticeship and succession planning, 2) Retaining older workers in employment in terms of good practice in age management, better job opportunities and working conditions for older workers. Further information: <http://fooddrinkeurope-effat-toolbox.eu/>

### **Graphical Industry**

Social Partners of the graphical industry (Intergraf and UNI Europa Graphical) met in their annual plenary in September 2016 and for a steering committee

meeting in January 2017 to discuss possible next steps and plan for 2017's plenary session on skills in May. Upcoming actions will build on two completed skills projects: (1) the future of the industry and socially responsible restructuring (2010), and (2) future skills and best practices (2014).

### **Local & Regional Governments**

At the last plenary meeting on 5 December 2016 of the European Sectoral Social dialogue for local and regional authorities, CEMR and EPSU adopted an updated version of their Joint guidelines on Migration and Strengthening Anti-Discrimination in Local and Regional Governments as well as the final product of the joint project on new forms of service delivery for municipalities: a framework for well-being at work for local and regional governments.



### **Railways**

#### **New project about application of social partner agreement**

The social partners in the railway sector, the Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) and the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF), with the support of EVA Academy, have started a new project to assess the implementation and application of their 2004 social partner agreement (according to Article 155 TFUE) on 'certain aspects of the working conditions of mobile workers engaged in interoperable cross-border services in the railway sector'. The project received financing from the European Commission via the 2016 Social Dialogue Call. Project activities are starting in 2017, with a duration of 18 months. More information can be obtained from Sabine Trier ([s.trier@etf-europe.org](mailto:s.trier@etf-europe.org)) or Ester Caldana ([ester.caldana@cer.be](mailto:ester.caldana@cer.be)).

### **Hospitals & Healthcare**

#### **Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Life-Long Learning (LLL)**

The hospital social partners HOSPEEM and EPSU recently adopted a Joint Declaration on Continuing Professional Development and Life-Long Learning for all health workers in the EU, addressed to all workers in the hospital/healthcare sector in an equal manner, irrespective of age, profession and employment contract. It aims at providing inspiration and guidance to social partners and at encouraging investments in this field. This declaration will be enriched in 2017 with good practice examples in the context of an EU-funded project.

#### **10 years of European Hospital Social Dialogue**

On 2 December 2016, HOSPEEM and EPSU celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for the Hospital/Healthcare Sector. A presentation of the main outcomes for the years 2006 to 2016 framed speeches from the Directors General of DG EMPL and DG SANTE and the Secretary Generals of EPSU and HOSPEEM. The Plenary Meeting 2016 saw an all-time record turnout of 70 participants from 24 Member States. Read more on the HOSPEEM and EPSU webpages.



### **Metal Industry**

#### **Joint position on the impact of digitalisation**

On 8 December 2016, at their Sectoral Social Dialogue Plenary meeting, industriAll and CEEMET adopted a joint position on the impact of digitalisation on the world of work in the metal, engineering and technology based industries. Digitalisation will lead to a major transformation of the MET sector. It will change occupations and organisation of work in the MET industries leading, thus, to changes in business models and management. This is, therefore, an important area for social dialogue and an opportunity to contribute to shaping the ongoing technological change, so as to maximize the benefit for the MET industry in terms of growth and jobs. The ability to successfully manage this change will be central to whether the MET industry can keep its (cost and non-cost) competitiveness and capitalise on the digital transformation for the

better. CEEMET and industriAll consider that the consequences of digitalisation on the world of work in the MET sector deserve being discussed jointly within their social dialogue meetings, in order to better meet the interests of both employees and employers.

### **Postal services**

#### **Signature of a Joint Declaration on Social Dialogue**

The Social Dialogue Committee Post has signed on 1 December 2016 a joint Declaration on the role of social dialogue in the postal transformation. It underlines that effective social dialogue, at all levels, is essential to support a socially responsible transformation of national postal activities, to avoid a "race to the bottom" in terms of employment levels, wages and working conditions. Social dialogue and the conclusion of collective labour agreements enable social partners to derive trade-offs between competitiveness and increased flexibility imperatives. The declaration also highlights that social partners should be well informed of postal operators' strategic evolutions and enhance their skills on the development of e-commerce, digital and proximity services in the sector.

#### **Central Governments**

The Committee held meetings with EC representatives to support the transposition of the Agreement on Information and Consultation Rights signed in December 2015 into a Directive. As a follow up to the Framework Agreement for a Quality Service in Central Administrations, the Committee circulated a questionnaire to national social partners on how the agreement is being promoted and implemented. In September and November, the Committee hosted the seminars within its project "Tackling psychosocial risks at work" in Vilnius and Madrid, on topics of technostress and external violence against employees in central government administrations and services.



### **Chemical Industry**

#### **Joint position on digitalisation**

The Europeans Social Partners in the chemical, pharmaceutical, rubber and plastics industry, i.e. the European Chemical Employers Group and industriAll Europe, signed their Joint position on social and employment-related aspects of digitalisation on 22 November 2016 during their annual plenary meeting hosted by the European Commission. The joint position sets out three main priorities regarding the social and employment-related aspects of digitalisation in Europe.



#### **CESI**

CESI together with civil society organisations (Social Platform, Eurodiaconia) launched a joint initiative to nourish and structure emerging debates regarding a feasible and effective EU roadmap towards more public investments to counter social divergences in the EU Member States. A launch event was held with MEP Rodrigues on January 12. Contact CESI for further information about the initiative, whose objective is also to reach out to interested third parties.

## **Information from EU agencies**

### **EUROFOUND**

#### **Eurofound latest publications (October 2016 – January 2017)**

##### ***New representativeness studies***

The latest studies on Representativeness of the European social partner organisations, carried out to help identify the relevant EU social partner organisations to be consulted under the provision of the TFEU, are the following: Personal services-hair and beauty, Extractive industries, Maritime transport and Sugar manufacturing

## **New sectoral information sheets**

Based on the Third European Company Survey (ECS), an overview of the structural characteristics, work organisation practices, human resource management, employee participation and social dialogue is presented for the following sectors: Business, administration and other services sector, Commerce and hospitality sector, Construction sector, Financial services sector, Industry sector, Transport sector, Education, Health sector, Public administration and defence sector.

## **New EurWORK Topical updates**

Based on reporting from Eurofound's network of European correspondents. 'EurWORK Topical updates', summarise and update developments on selected topics, of relevance across a number of Member States at the same time: National capacity-building initiatives for social partners: Experiences in five EU Member States, Social dialogue developments in the education sector in Europe, Employee involvement and participation at work: Recent research and policy developments revisited, Developments in collective wage bargaining in the European Union 2015;

## **A selection of recent reports:**

Changing places: Mid-career review and internal mobility + Executive summary, 17/01/2017

National contributions to Foundation Seminar Series 2016: The impact of digitalisation on work

The concept of representativeness at national, international and European level + Executive summary 19/12/2016

Mapping key dimensions of industrial relations in Europe + Executive summary 30/09/2016

Approaches to the labour market integration of refugees and asylum seekers + Executive summary 14/12/2016

New forms of employment: Developing the potential of strategic employee sharing + Executive summary 21/11/2016

Exploring the fraudulent contracting of work in the European Union + Executive summary 21/11/2016

Sixth European Working Conditions Survey – Overview report + Executive summary 17/11/2016

The gender employment gap: Challenges and solutions + Executive summary, 11/10/2016

Work-life balance: Creating solutions for everyone, 23/12/2016

**A complete overview of Eurofound's recent work can be found [here](#).**

## **Calls for proposals**

### **VP/2017/001 – VP/2017/002 – VP/2017/004**

The calls for proposals on "Support for social dialogue", "Information and training measures for workers' organisations" and "Improving expertise in the field on industrial relations" are in preparation and will be published in March.

## **Send us your contribution**

You have a contribution for the next edition of the newsletter? Please contact the [editor](#).

Contributions to be sent **by 28 April 2017**.

Next edition: mid May 2017.

We also look forward to your comments and suggestions.

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