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DG Emploi, affaires sociales et inclusion

Législation sociale et de l'emploi, Dialogue social
Dialogue social, Relations industrielles

Minutes

Working Group Meeting of the Social Dialogue Committee for the Agriculture Sector

23rd of May 2012

Following the preparatory meetings of the European social partners' organizations, EFFAT and Geopa-Copa, working group meeting begins with the new Chairman for this year, Mr Veli-Mathi Rekola (Geopa-Copa) welcoming the participants and reading the agenda.

1) Approval of the agenda

Agenda is approved.

2) Approval of the minutes of the SDC meeting held on 1st of February

It is decided that if there are no remarks by affiliates by the coming week, the minutes are considered to be adopted.

3) Information point by the Commission

Mrs Lesage (European Commission) reported on the last Thematic Liaison Forum dedicated to "Skills and jobs" (21 May 2012) and mentioned the Employment package (adopted on the 23 of May) and which will be presented to the social partners on the 19 and 20th of June.

She provided information on the two last thematic liaison forum regarding the new programme for social change and the white paper on pension (24th of February) and on representative study and posting on workers (28th of March) as well as the Tripartite social summit of 1st of March.

She also indicated that several sectorial agreements have been signed :

- Autonomous agreements on 1/ minimum requirements for European professional football players' contracts in professional football – signed on 19 April 2012; 2/ on the transposition of the ILO Convention on work in the fishing sector in sea fisheries signed

on 21 May in Goteborg (Sweden) 2012 with the view of EU social partners to implement it by a Council Decision at their joint request (second phase).

- Agreements to be implemented by Council Decision on 1/ certain aspects of the organisation of working time in inland waterway transport signed on 15 February 2/ on risk prevention and health protection in the hairdressing sector signed on 26 April 2012.

Regarding the communication aspects of the social dialogue she underlined that In 2012, the Commission produced a new brochure entitled "Social Dialogue" as Volume 2 of the so-called Social Europe Guide and that the Commission will also produce a DVD summarising the outcome and impact of the four sectoral agreements signed by EU social partners in 2012.

4) The agreement of MSD: presentation by Geopa-Copa of the Seminar on the ‘European agreement on the reduction of workers’ exposure to the risk of work-related musculo-skeletal disorders in agriculture’ (2005)- Maastricht (NL) from 7 June - 10 June 2012

Mr Botterman and Mr Van der Grind (GEOPA-COPA), presented the coming seminar which will take place in Maastricht and which will be also attended by the Commission (Unit B3), the ILO as well as the Agency of Bilbao. On this occasion, the answer of the questionnaires which have been sent to the social partners in the 27 members states will be also presented and analysed. The objective is to exchange on best practices in this field and to take stock after the report which has been edited by EFFAT in 2011.

Mr Spahn (EFFAT) welcomed this initiative and confirmed that he will participate to this meeting.

Mr Botterman (GEOPA-COPA) announced that a final report based on the results of the seminar will be published by the end of the year.

5) Vocational training : Agripass: presentation by EFFAT of a new “card” for an Agri CV and ESCO

Mr Spahn (EFFAT) gave a quick summary of the earliest development of the project. It was suggested to set up a simple card indicating the competences of each worker with different pictograms representing animals, plants, competencies, and colors. A presentation of the concept was done by a designer.

Mr Spahn suggested to use this card as a communication instrument for the worker as for example workers working in the areas for example of wine, strawberries, asparagus, citrus fruits which are working in different countries and seasonal workers.

Mr Fiddaman (GEOPA-COPA) indicated that for GEOPA was open to this possible solution of a simple card. He also mentioned that the on-line version should to be developed with a more detailed skills list (based on ESCO skills list).

Mr Spahn (EFFAT) underlined that Agri pass will work online when a Beta version will be available in another language. This on-line system will be based on ESCO list which

will be made available in 2014.

Mr Botterman (GEOPA-COPA) suggested to organise a meeting before the summer or at the autumn to discuss the continuity of the project. Mrs Lesage (Commission) and Mr Spahn (EFFAT) agreed with this proposal.

Regarding ESCO, Mr Fiddaman (GEOPA – COPA) indicated that a technical translation not only a simple translation in French, German and English. GEOPA-COPA would like to see the system operational already on 2014 and not 2017 (ESCO last deadline).

6) CAP and employment in agriculture

1. Presentation of the projects on the consequences on employment in agriculture of the Commission's legislative proposals.

Mr Botterman (GEOPA-COPA), indicated that the Common agriculture policy was a responsibility of COPA. Nevertheless, he indicated that the GEOPA-COPA introduced a project under the Commission call for proposal "support to social dialogue" on the impact of the CAP on employment in order to collect data on seasonal workers, permanent workers, self-employed (1) and to reflect on How to maintain employment at the highest possible level (2) and what measures have to be implemented (3). The aim of the project is to have conclusions and recommendations by the end of 2013.

Mr Spahn (EFFAT) agrees with fact that there is no overview of the situation of employment in the sector and such a project is really relevant. He also underlined the problems of big holdings which are changing a lot the structure of the sector in most of the Members states, the issue of seasonal workers and undeclared work which need to be addressed, in the framework of the CAP. He stated that there should be more coherence between DG AGRI and DG EMPL initiatives.

Mr Van der Grind (GEOPA-COPA) underlined that there might also be a need to look at food processing, because there is not only effects on the primary agriculture. Mr Spahn (EFFAT) indicated that it is important in any case to discuss this topic also with Eurostat in order to have reliable data.

Mr Botterman (GEOPA-COPA) also stated, that the project submitted by GEOPA-COPA aims to reach a common position between social partners on certain specific points regarding employment in agriculture.

Mrs Lesage (Commission) Indicated that social partners will be informed before the end of June 2012 if the submitted project has been approved or not.

7) Other activities

1. Tractors: state of play and Geopa-EFFAT common position.

Mr Botterman (COPA-GEOPA) indicated that EFFAT and GEOPA presented a common paper to DG ENTR concerning this issue (better security for tractors). Both social partners participated in a meeting on the 16th of May of the working group on tractors. A second meeting takes place this same 23rd of May. From now both EFFAT and GEOPA will be invited to the meeting of this working group on a regular basis.

2. Social Security: state of play.

EFFAT announced that in the framework of another European project, a conference will be organised on 25 and 26th of June on social security in Agriculture addressing in particular in the issue of seasonal workers, and cross border workers.

8) Any other business

Mr Todorova (COPA-GEOPA) presented the case of a young farmer who became blind and he did not get any support from any European funds. Mrs Lesage (European Commission) answered that these funds are usually managed by Members States and she suggested to send a letter to the competent authority to raise this dramatic case.