



# EU SOCIAL DIALOGUE NEWSLETTER

*May 2013*

## Contents

Editorial .....	3
FEATURE The Role of social partners in tackling the demographic challenge: Local solutions to global problem .....	4
LOOKING TO THE FUTURE.....	7
Upcoming events.....	7
NEWS .....	8
DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion .....	8
Cross-industry.....	10
Sectoral agreements (According to Art. 155 TFEU) .....	11
Other news from the sectoral level .....	11
Events in the past .....	18
Call for proposals .....	21
Information from Eurofound.....	22
Information from the European Agency for Health and Safety at Work .....	23
Information from the International Labour Organisation ILO .....	24
Articles/Reports/Studies .....	25

*"Social dialogue is not a luxury, it is a precondition for ensuring all parties — companies and workers — are involved in making our economies more competitive and more sustainable. [...]"*

*In this European Year of Citizens, we need to remember that our Union is a Europe of citizens that needs to put people first, and sound industrial relations are certainly a cornerstone of our social model."*

President Barroso, Video message  
Conference on Industrial Relations in Europe  
Budapest, 15 April 2013

## **Editorial**

**Dear Social Partners, dear Readers,**

**This is the third edition of the newsletter on EU social dialogue which is published on the occasion of the Thematic Liaison Forum meeting held on 27 May 2013 and dedicated to the demographic challenge and responses by EU social partners.**

**For this occasion, we have prepared a special feature dedicated to this topic which we intend to do for each Thematic EU Liaison Forum from now on.**

**Another new element concerns information from the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and its sectoral activities.**

**We hope this new edition will be of great interest for you!**

**Jean-Paul Tricart**

**Head of Unit, Social Dialogue, Industrial Relations**

## **FEATURE** **The Role of social partners in** **tackling the demographic challenge:** **Local solutions to global problem**

*A third of Europeans said recently in a Eurobarometer survey that they would like to stay in work after they have reached statutory pension age, although not necessarily full time<sup>1</sup>. What are the consequences of longer careers for employers and employees? What are the possible levels of interventions of the European Union, governments, social partners and other labour market stakeholders? What is the role of social dialogue in adapting to longer work lives? In the aftermath of the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations 2012, this article summarises the main aspects of the European approach to active ageing and reflects on lessons learnt from the involvement of the social partners.*

### **Demographic challenge: consequences for workers and employers**

Many sectors of the economy are exposed to processes of far-reaching change, which to a great extent are driven by demographic developments. Although a net decrease in working populations is not yet a fact in many countries, the extension of working life and participation of new groups of employees to the workplace brings about important changes for companies. As the post-war generation of the 1940s and 1950s, which is still a majority of the working-age population<sup>2</sup>, starts to retire from the labour market, the low birth rates over past decades will not bring the same number of young people into the labour market. Because of lower numbers of young people entering the labour market, employers cannot rely purely on the competences of the latter. Additionally, due to a number of recent pension age reforms across Europe, some countries experience a historically new phenomenon of older female workers'. New phenomena such as allowing motivated older staff to continue with their careers beyond the traditional retirement age are increasingly popular. However, as employees remain into work longer, the issue of lifelong learning, finding new means of inter-generational work and adaptation to change also become priorities.



The issue of *employability* of older workers goes hand in hand with motivation and commitment throughout a longer professional life. At the level of company planning, hand-over from the *baby boomer* generation of workers must be ensured and coupled with retention activities involving extra flexibility and adaptation of the working environment. For instance, in high paid jobs workers might be able to afford early retirement before the statutory age, unless the job conditions motivate them to stay. The most common measure for older workers currently in use - reduced working time - cannot be the sole solution to the problem. Especially for low-paid jobs, the quality of work and minimization of the health risks in the later stage of working life need to be addressed.

<sup>1</sup> [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_MEMO-12-10\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-12-10_en.htm); see below for details.

<sup>2</sup> Eurostat data of March 2013. *Quarterly EU Employment and Social Situation Review*; see below for details.

## Actions at the EU level

Over the past years, the European Union has adopted a range of measures to strengthen the potential of older workers. Among the most recent ones, the 2010 European Council conclusions pointed out three groups of actions to be implemented at the national level<sup>3</sup>. The White Paper on sustainable pensions (European Commission, 2012) pointed out that the rise in pension eligibility age alone is insufficient and that the success of such reforms also depends on new opportunities for older men and women to stay in the labour market. The 2012 European Commission Communication 'Towards a job rich recovery' stresses the importance of introducing a number of measures such as tax-benefit incentives, access to lifelong learning through career guidance and training, flexible working arrangements and safe and healthy work places in order to ensure the employability of older workers and make quality lifelong careers possible. Additionally, 2012 has been declared as the *European Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between the Generations*, aiming at raising awareness and encouraging stakeholders at all levels to take action on active ageing<sup>4</sup>. In this context, the Active Ageing Index, a new analytical tool to track the results of policy initiatives has been developed jointly with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe<sup>5</sup>. Adopted on 6 December 2012 by Council conclusion, *Guiding Principles for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations* are a checklist for national authorities and other stakeholders on what needs to be done to promote active ageing beyond the European Year 2012<sup>6</sup>. "Innovative approaches are urgently needed if we are to leverage the growth of new industries geared towards an older demographic" said Anne Connolly of the Ireland's Ageing Well Network ahead of the major Irish Presidency EU summit on active and healthy ageing in Dublin in June 2013<sup>7</sup>. In operational terms, the 2007-2013 programming period of the European Social Fund covered nearly 60% of all European interventions, with majority of them targeting issues of employability and continuous training<sup>8</sup>. In the strategy envisaged for the next programming period, priorities such as creating incentives for hiring older workers, flexible work organization at the company level and active labour market measures will be centrally placed.

## Social partners: the key partners to lasting solutions

The creation of socio economic conditions that will allow both employees and employers to keep pace with the changing environment represents a significant challenge for member states, the European institutions but also particularly for the social partners. As the ageing of society is increasingly affecting Southern, Central and Eastern Europe, comprehensive approaches to tackle demographic challenge need to be developed. However, also in Western and Northern Europe, where a bi-partite or tri-partite approach has proven successful, the role of social partners is crucial to put in practice at company level the central level policies. According to Eurostat, investment in lifelong learning is lowest in the countries with the lowest rate of older worker participation<sup>9</sup>. Across Europe, we observe different cultural models, which require developing different responses in order to be efficient.

In addition to thousands of new initiatives at the national and local level, multiple European sectors as well as the cross-industry organisations realised the importance

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/en/Isa/114968.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/Isa/114968.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <http://europa.eu/ey2012/ey2012.jsp?langId=en>

<sup>5</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1837&furtherNews=yes>

<sup>6</sup> <http://europa.eu/ey2012/ey2012main.jsp?langId=en&furtherNews=yes&newsId=1743&catId=970>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.ahaconference2013.ie/>

<sup>8</sup> <http://isfoloia.isfol.it/handle/123456789/576>

<sup>9</sup> [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/microdata/adult\\_education\\_survey](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/microdata/adult_education_survey)

of demographic changes and developed work on these issues through a number of joint initiatives:

- At the cross-industry level, 3 European projects of BUSINESSEUROPE, CEC European Managers and the ETUC were linked to issues of demographic change;
- The social partners of banking, construction, chemical industry, education, railways, audio-visual services and live performance also embarked on projects covering one or more aspects of the issue. Insurance, postal and education sectors have included discussion on demographic challenges in their current work programmes;
- Several committees issued joint texts related to the issue, including: policy orientations on demographical challenges of the insurance sector (2010); a joint declaration of the education committee on recruitment and retention as a matter of social dialogue (2012);
- The hospitals and healthcare social dialogue committee intends to adopt on 25 June 2013 Guidelines and good practice examples to address challenges in view of the ageing workforce.

The social partners have an important potential to turn the current demographic challenges into opportunities, as ageing populations allow also for longer and more flexible working arrangements. The 2013 Eurofound report points out that there is still too little evidence to assess the success of current company training measures and that many national employment activation policies are targeted at all vulnerable groups, not only older workers. Different levels of investment between big companies and SMEs persist. Although the level of awareness on demographic challenges is generally high among social partners, in some countries both workers and employers still question the value added of life-long learning. The added value of action of European social partners lies in raising awareness, promoting best practices and continuing dialogue on improving the working environment for older workers.

Achieving work environments that make work sustainable over a lifetime is a key pillar of the promotion of longer working lives. However, only comprehensive and coordinated action at all levels can bring about success in changing labour market practices and increasing its capacities. The need for joint investment stems not only from the principles of equal treatment and inter-generational solidarity but also from the need to maintain European economic development and increase levels of employment.

## References

- Eurofound 2013, *Role of governments and social partners in keeping older workers in the labour market*
- European Commission, *Quarterly Review of EU Employment and Social Situation of March 2013*
- European Commission 2012, *Special Eurobarometer 378 'Active Ageing'*
- Eurostat 2010, *Adult Education Survey*
- ISFOL 2013, *Actively ageing: Italian policy perspectives in light of the new programming period of ESF*, presentation by Pietro Checcucci

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE...

### Upcoming events

17-6-2013

#### **Liaison Forum Information Session – Industrial Relations Report 2012**

The session will give social partners an overview of the main messages and empirical findings from the recently published Industrial Relations in Europe 2012 report. On the one hand, it argues that countries with strong industrial relations traditions, institutions and actors are also among the most competitive ones. The social partners' involvement and some degree of consensus are vital if reforms are to succeed in the long term. On the other hand, the evidence shows that as the crisis has continued, industrial relations have become more conflictual. Often, reform measures have not gone hand in hand with social dialogue. These worrying trends are most in evidence in the public sector where in many countries, including programme countries, reforms have been deepened and accelerated with insufficient dialogue, and also in some countries in Central and Eastern Europe.

Please register under: <mailto:empl-social-dialogue@ec.europa.eu>

18-6-2013

#### **Lunchtime conference on "Daytime Cleaning"**

The social partners of the Industrial Cleaning sector, DG Employment and the Office for Infrastructure and Logistics of the Commission in Brussels (OIB) will organise a lunchtime conference on "Daytime Cleaning" on 18 June 2013. "Daytime cleaning" means that the cleaning personnel work during office hours, rather than before or after. This approach has advantages for both clients and personnel. OIB is gradually implementing this approach in the Commission premises, and has confirmed that the next framework contract for cleaning of the premises (expected for 2015) will include the concept of "daytime cleaning" and the necessary technical modalities related to it.

In order to overcome the resistance of the "clients", i.e. the officials occupying the offices, OIB suggested organising a joint lunchtime conference to introduce the subject to internal stakeholders. The conference will enable the social partners to present the efforts made in the sectoral social dialogue committee for industrial cleaning and to show some positive experiences on national level (Sweden and Belgium). Also, OIB will explain how the principle of daytime cleaning will be put in practice in the Commission premises.

For more information please contact: <mailto:danny.scheerlinck@ec.europa.eu>

19-6-2013

#### **Establishment of a new Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee on (Sea-)Ports**

The Ports Social Dialogue Committee is expected to be established on 19 June 2013. This new committee (the 43<sup>rd</sup>) will gather the following EU social partners: ETF (*European Transport Workers*) and IDC (*International Dockworkers Council*) on the worker's side, and ESPO (*European Sea Ports Organisation*) and FEPORT on the employer' side. The ports sector covers more than 3 million workers.

19-9-2013

#### **Public hearing on Advanced Manufacturing Technologies for Clean Production**

On 10 October 2012, the Commission has launched its Industrial Policy Communication update. A clear and ambitious target was set: Reversing the declining

role of Europe's industry from its current level of around 16 per cent of GDP to as much as 20 per cent by 2020. To achieve this target, the Commission will engage in a partnership with the member states and industries to step up efforts to boost the market uptake of European advanced manufacturing technologies and give Europe a competitive lead in the new industrial revolution.

A dedicated Task Force for Advanced Manufacturing Technologies for Clean Production has been established. The Task Force retains a large definition of advanced manufacturing encompassing all production activities applying cutting edge knowledge and/or non-technological innovation leading to improvements of existing products, processes and business models and to the production and diffusion of new ones. Advanced manufacturing includes production activities able to improve production speed, productivity, energy and materials consumption, operating precision, waste, pollution management and enabling resource-efficient and low emission production. The mission of the Task Force is to co-ordinate Union efforts to increase the competitiveness of the EU's manufacturing industry by fostering the development and speeding the uptake of advanced manufacturing technologies by European industry. Industry involvement is key to achieving a tangible impact in the real economy. Following a first public hearing on 19 March and a dedicated workshop on 27 May, industry, the member states, as well as other stakeholders, are invited to a second public hearing on 19 September 2013. To register, please visit the following website: [http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/industrial-competitiveness/amt/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/industrial-competitiveness/amt/index_en.htm)

7-10-2013

#### **Thematic Liaison Forum on psychosocial risks**

2-12-2013

#### **Thematic Liaison Forum: "15 years of EU Sectoral Social Dialogue – Quo Vadis?"**

## **NEWS**

### **DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion**

February 2013

#### **Helpdesk on apprenticeship and traineeship schemes**

As part of targeted measures to improve youth employment and school-to-work transitions, the European Commission has launched a helpdesk dedicated to policy makers, ESF managing authorities and social partners willing to set up, improve, run or evaluate apprenticeships or traineeship schemes.

Indeed, the Commission is convinced that the supply of high quality apprenticeships and traineeships can be instrumental in helping young people in their transition from school to work by equipping them with the rights skills and with valuable experience for sustainable employment. Therefore, the Commission not only provides financial support through the European Social Fund, but helps Member States to make optimal use of available funding by the new advice service.

This service can help social partners by providing tailored assistance and strategic, operational and policy advice for planning, establishing and improving the quality and performance of apprenticeship and traineeship schemes. It is delivered through a



service contract awarded to the consultancy service Ecorys and is available in 6 languages (EN, FR, DE, ES, IT and PL).

Further information can be found on the Commission's [website](#) and the helpdesk can be contacted [online](#) by email ([youthtrainingdesk@uk.ecorys.com](mailto:youthtrainingdesk@uk.ecorys.com)) or by telephone (+44 (0) 121 212 8933).

April 2013

### **ESCO – The European Classification of Occupations, Skills/Competences and Qualifications**

ESCO is a multilingual classification of Occupations, Skills/competences and Qualifications that aims at developing a labour market terminology that is relevant at European level. It will bridge the gap between the world of work and the world of education and allow occupational mobility across borders.

ESCO will provide a terminology that can be very helpful to describe learning outcomes in terms of skills/competences. This can contribute to better implementation of transparency tools based on learning outcomes, namely i) the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and national qualification frameworks and ii) the European systems for the accumulation and transfer of credits in higher education (ECTS) and vocational education and training (ECVET).

DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion and DG Education and Culture jointly coordinate the development of ESCO. Although ESCO is a European Commission initiative, the active involvement of stakeholders in its development is essential to shape ESCO into a tool which meets practical needs and is up-to-date. Stakeholders potentially concerned by ESCO include public, private and third sector employment services, social partners, national education, training and qualification authorities and institutions, sector skill councils, human resource management, recruitment and career guidance professionals, statistical and research organisations, promoters of other taxonomies and classification systems, developers of ICT HR applications (including other web-based job search tools) and international organisations such as the International Labour Organisation and the OECD.

To make this task more manageable, the ESCO Secretariat has split up the economy into 27 fields of economic activities. This division is based on NACE, the statistical classification of economic activities in the European Communities developed by Eurostat. Each of the 27 divisions will be reviewed by a sectoral reference group. Therefore, at the end of this process, 27 sectoral reference groups will be established. The ESCO Secretariat appoints experts to these groups on the basis of their expertise, but with an eye to regional balance and social partners' participation. Additionally, a cross-sectoral reference group has been established, in order to account for skills/competences that are transversal to the labour market and are increasingly recognised to be crucial to achieve occupational mobility.

So far 11 sectoral reference groups have been established:

1. Agriculture, forestry, fishery
2. Hospitality and tourism
3. Manufacturing of textile, leather, footwear, apparel and related products
4. Human health and social work activities
5. Veterinary activities
6. Wholesale, retail trade and rental and leasing
7. Manufacturing of food, beverages and tobacco
8. Mining and heavy industry

9. Arts, entertainment and recreation
10. Transportation and storage
11. ICT service activities

The remaining sectoral reference groups will be established up until 2015, so that by 2017 the whole economy will be reviewed. This will be reflected in the publication of ESCO. However, intermediate releases will be planned on a rolling basis, at the moment the Reference Groups progressively finish their work.

## Cross-industry

The **Tripartite Social Summit** took place on 18 March 2013. It discussed the economic and social situation and the policy orientations of the European Semester. It specifically also discussed whether and how to strengthen the social dimension of the EMU including social dialogue. In this context, President Barroso invited the EU social partners to meet with the **College of Commissioners** which took place on 2 May.

Social partners have negotiated a "**framework of actions**" on youth employment, which identifies possible actions by social partners at EU and national level to improve youth employment, including actions relating to apprenticeship, training, and entrepreneurship. This text is under ratification by their relevant decision-making bodies and it is expected to be formally agreed and made public by mid-June.

EU social partners have also begun negotiations on the **role of social dialogue in EU economic governance and the European Semester**. A text is expected to be agreed on 12 June, with a view to be ratified by the organisations and presented as a contribution to the European Council, which will, inter alia discuss the strengthening of the EMU, including its social dimension.

## Sectoral agreements (According to Art. 155 TFEU)

### Sea Fisheries

Since 2010, the EU social partners acting in the sea-fisheries (ETF, Europêche, Cogeca) sector have initiated a negotiation process with a view to conclude an Agreement concerning the implementation of the ILO Convention n°188 on "Work in Fishing". They have developed this process with the intention to request the EU legislative implementation of the Agreement, in accordance with Article 155 §2 TFEU, along the same procedure that was adopted for the implementation of the "Maritime Labour Convention, 2006" of the ILO (Council Directive 2009/13/EC of 6 February 2009).

The negotiation process made it possible for EU social partners of the sector to conclude an Agreement, which was formally signed during the European Maritime Day Conference in Gothenburg on 21 May 2012. From that date onwards, the signatories have closely worked with the Commission to revise the text of this Agreement so as to make it fully compatible with the existing "acquis communautaire" in the sea-fisheries sector and the relevant social dialogue provisions of the Treaty.

The EU social partners of the sea-fisheries sector adopted the revised text of the Agreement on 8 May 2013. This revised text is intended to accommodate the expectations expressed by the services of the Commission and to remove legal obstacles to the EU legislative implementation. On 10 May 2013, they formally requested the Commission to present to the Council a Decision proposal with a view to make the implementation of this Agreement legally binding at EU level. The Commission will now assess the Agreement.

## Other news from the sectoral level

3-1-2013

### Personal services/hairdressing

#### **Joint contribution to the public consultation reviewing reduced VAT rates for more efficient tax systems**

In their joint input to a public consultation by the Commission's Directorate-General for Taxation and Customs Union, the European sectoral social partners Coiffure EU and UNI Europa Hair & Beauty strongly support the continuation of lower VAT rates on labour-intensive services. They contend that the lower VAT rates for these services have contributed to significant job creation over the last decade, and that any abolition of the reduced VAT rates would lead to the loss of jobs.

29-1-2013

### Civil aviation

#### **Identification of main global concerns**

In view of the ILO Global Dialogue Forum on the Effects of the Global Economic Crisis on the Civil Aviation Industry (Geneva, 20-22 February 2013), the European social partner organisations AEA, ASA Europe, CANSO, ECA and ETF have met to identify their main global concerns. Although not an official position of the organisations, the

summary of the informal meeting was forwarded to the ILO. The concerns raised by the social partners are: unfair competition at global level; social dumping and non-application of some fundamental ILO conventions; the need to set up a global framework giving benefits to employers and workers in order to limit social dumping; violence at work and other similar phenomena against ground or flight deck and cabin crew staff; the need for a Just Culture approach (encourage incident reporting). The points of consensus of the Global Dialogue Forum stated that "social dialogue is an essential element to improve sustainability, and decent and productive work in civil aviation and may contribute to greater industrial harmony and therefore to stability in the industry." The European social partners will discuss their follow-up to the forum at their next plenary meeting.

6-2-2013

### **Road Transport**

#### **Joint policy proposal on access to the road haulage market**

Following the European Commission stakeholder meeting on 17 January 2013, the European social partners of the road sector submitted a joint letter to the Vice-President Commissioner for Transport on 6 February 2013. The letter specifies joint social partners' recommendations on the proposed changes to the EU Regulation 1071/2009 on access to the profession of road transport undertaking and EU Regulation 1072/2009 on access to the road haulage market. In particular, the organisations asked to re-consider a number of problem elements related to changing the existing cabotage rules and pointed out insufficient levels of harmonisation have been reached in the social, fiscal, enforcement and road safety rules to justify an opening of the domestic market. In the proposed joint policy package, ETF and IRU called for no further opening of the market, more efficient enforcement of the present rules and more harmonisation of national legislations.

25-2-2013

### **Extractive industries**

#### **Joint opinion on ETS back-loading**

During their Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee meeting on 22 February 2013, industriALL Europe, EURACOAL, EUROMINES, UEPG, APEP and IMA Europe discussed the Commission proposal to back-load part of the carbon trading allowances in the framework of the Emissions Trading System (ETS) that was being put to a vote in the European Parliament. There was widespread agreement among the social partners that the auctioning of trading allowances should not be back-loaded towards the end of the third phase of the ETS, running from 2013 to 2020, in order to raise prices for allowances in the short term. Hence, the social partners adopted a joint opinion on 25 February, calling on the European Parliament not to adopt the proposal. Social Partners expressed their conviction that a long-term stable framework could not be achieved by way of short-term interventions in the market for trading allowances. In their view, such interference could ultimately discredit the ETS as a legitimate response to climate change.

28-2-2013

### **Sugar**

#### **10<sup>th</sup> Annual Implementation Report of the CSR Code of Conduct of the European Sugar Industry (2012)**

On 28<sup>th</sup> February 2013, the social partners of the Sugar Industry presented the 2012 annual implementation report of their CSR code of conduct. This report, prepared jointly by CEFS and EFFAT Secretariats on the basis of a membership consultation, highlights the current economic and political landscape and the management of restructuring and the economic crisis in this sector. It also presents concrete elements on the implementation of the code of conduct in 2012.

While stressing their positions as to the CAP proposal after 2013 and the on-going external trade negotiations, the social partners indicate their availability to be involved in order to manage the sector in a consistent and responsible manner, in particular on the reform of the single CMO for sugar. As to the management of restructuring and economic crisis, the social partners outline the results of their monitoring of factory closures and of the relinquishment of quotas. They also present recent concentration and activity-reorientation cases together with the consequences on employment and remaining issues following the sector's restructuring process. The report also shows that health and safety and vocational training are priorities in a number of delegations, thus giving rise to the development of new initiatives and actions (flu vaccination, driving safety training, skin cancer screening, healthy-eating campaigns, and cooperation with schools). Finally, the report highlights the implementation of the Social Dialogue Work Programme and notably the discussions organised in order to explore the EU sugar protocol programme and its social impact on ACP countries.

The executive summary in six languages (EN-FR-DE-ES-IT-PL) together with the full annual report in English will be made available online on the [social partners' website](#).

8-3-2013

#### Commerce

##### **Joint Statement on the IORP Directive revision**

On 8 March 2013 the social partners of the commerce sector adopted a joint statement opposing the implementation of a capital adequacy requirement based on Solvency II to occupational pensions. EuroCommerce and UNI Europa Commerce stressed that the proposed changes of the IORP (Institutions for Occupational Retirement provision) Directive could contradict the objective of the White Paper on Pensions, which is to strengthen occupational pensions as the second pillar of several national pension systems. In particular, the organizations brought examples of two big companies, namely Tesco and Metro, to demonstrate the negative impact that the implementation of a Solvency II-like regime for pension funds could have in the commerce sector. According to EuroCommerce and UNI Europa, the capacity of companies and sectors to invest and to innovate would be weakened, leading to reduction of employees' pension claims or even to the closure of schemes – counter to the EU's objective of encouraging citizens to save more for the future. In conclusion, social partners called for the priority of the intervention on occupational pensions to be the respect and promotion of the unique character of IORPs as part of the success story of the European Social Model. [See also the Joint Statement of the Food and Drink Industry]

13-3-2013

#### Chemical /Textile/ Metal industries

##### **Joint opinion on wage-setting at EU level**

Following the tripartite exchange of views on wage developments on 1 February 2013, the ECEG, EURATEX, CEEMET, and industriALL Europe expressed their opposition to interference in wage-setting mechanisms from the European level. In a multi-sectoral joint opinion, the four organisations asserted their view that wage-monitoring by the Commission should not be regarded as any kind of first step towards action in the area of wage-setting conducted at national level.

15-3-2013

### Electricity

#### **Competences, qualifications and anticipation of change – A Joint Framework of Actions**

Based on previous work and in reaction to a number of key challenges the sector is facing to meet Europe's energy and climate objectives for 2020 and beyond, EU social partners have signed a Framework of Actions in which they commit themselves in three priority areas in order to ensure a high quality service: 1) Anticipation of change; 2) Mainstreaming of equality and 3) Increasing the number of apprenticeship in the companies (e.g. youth guarantee) and promoting age diversity and the retraining of older workers. The text commits the members of EURELECTRIC and affiliates of EPSU/industriAll Europe to engage discussions at national, sectoral and company level and with relevant national bodies and to report back to the European Electricity Social Dialogue Committee. EU social partners will draw up an annual report on the outcomes and after three years, EU social partners will evaluate the text for a general assessment and appropriate review and follow-up.

15-3-2013

### Electricity

#### **Joint Statement on a quality framework for traineeships**

EU social partners (EPSU, industriAll, Eurelectric) reacted to the Commission consultation on a quality framework for traineeship. They expressed their concern about the persistent and high youth unemployment and expressed their commitment to ensure young workers to find jobs in the electricity sector. EU social partners also asked to be further consulted if the Commission proceeds with preparing legislation.

15-3-2013

### Electricity

#### **Joint Social Partners response to the Consultation Paper on the Outline of the Social Strategy of the Energy Community**

The Energy Community Treaty was signed in 2006 enabling the Western Balkans to participate in the single energy market. Since the Treaty did not foresee social provisions, the Contracting Parties agreed in 2007 on a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Social Issues in the context of the Energy Community, which is legally non-binding, but a political commitment to address social consequences related to their access to the energy market. On 1 February 2011, Moldova and Ukraine also signed the MoU. In order to bring new impetus to the process, and building on the discussions at the Social Fora, the 10<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Council on 18 October 2012 invited the Energy Community Secretariat to prepare, in cooperation with the social partners, an outline of a Social Strategy for discussion and eventual adoption at the Ministerial Council meeting in 2013. EU social partners of the electricity sector (EPSU, industriAll, Eurelectric) jointly replied and raised the following key points:

- Underlining the role of national social partners as drivers of the social dimension of the energy strategy in the countries of the Energy Community;
- Strengthening the binding character of the process (e.g. work with deadlines) and provide the Energy Community Secretariat with more resources to monitor the implementation;
- Ensuring that the process is subject to regional democratic control (as a counterweight to the Ministerial Council);
- Protecting users and developing an anti-poverty strategy;
- Creating socio-economic councils for energy based on the good example of Slovenia;
- Improving the regional cooperation within the area of the contracting parties, e.g. through a social dialogue for the region.

4-4-2013

### Postal services

#### Joint conclusions on environment

The social partners of the postal sector culminated their work on the environmental pillar of corporate social responsibility with the signature of joint conclusions. The social partners acknowledge that the postal sector has a particular responsibility in mitigating the environmental impact of its activities and is committed through concrete initiatives to address the environmental issue.

Based on the findings of the CSR working group in 2011 and 2012, this joint document presents the different ways in which the social partners will contribute to reduce the environmental impact of the postal activities, particularly through providing employees' with adequate green skills, knowledge, ideas as well as raising the awareness and acceptance of green change amongst the sectors' main stakeholders. It formalizes the increased engagement from postal operators and trade unions that are already active and further contributes to the overall industry effort against climate change. It also formalises the social partners' commitment to continue to follow the main developments in this area and ensure a constant dialogue between all stakeholders.

16-4-2013

### Food and Drink industry

#### Joint Statement on Food Taxes

On 16 April 2013, the EU social partners in the Food and Drink Industry agreed on a Joint Statement highlighting the negative impact of food taxes. They point out that an approach based on penalising certain food products through taxation instead of confronting the challenge of educating citizens about healthy lifestyles is both short-sighted and can hinder the competitiveness of the EU food industry. While stressing the high quality of food and drink products currently produced in the EU, the social partners acknowledge the societal challenges linked to the increased incidence of obesity and non-communicable diseases. In this regard, they highlight the actions taken by the industry to manufacture products which contribute to the health and nutrition of consumers, and to provide all the necessary information to consumers in a more comprehensive way.

The social partners consider that food taxes are not the right solution to tackle a complex societal issue and they call for holistic approach encouraging behavioural change and balanced diets. They suggest that this could be done through a number of initiatives such as: promoting better information to consumers on nutrition, supporting people with eating disorders, encouraging and providing incentives to the food chain operators to reformulate products and implement responsible marketing guidelines, and addressing the social and economic obstacles to balanced diets and health lifestyles such as low income, inequality and social exclusion among the EU population.

16-4-2013

### Food and Drink industry

#### Joint Statement on Solvency II

The EU social partners in the Food and Drink Industry adopted on 16 April 2013 a Joint Statement on Solvency II. In this statement, the social partners highlight the importance of occupational pension schemes in order to provide citizens with an adequate income in retirement. Therefore, while recognising the necessity to have pension schemes protected by risk-related regulation, the social partners stress their concerns as to the revision of the IORP Directive (Institutions for Occupational

Retirement provision), which would entail an extension of the Solvency II requirements to occupational pension schemes.

They stress that this approach would have an adverse impact upon occupational pension schemes across Europe and undermine the retirement provisions of millions of European citizens. Indeed, the social partners outline that this important increase in the costs for employers could lead to a withdrawal of or a reduction in the pension provisions made but also the diversion of monies away from investment in research and development of businesses. They therefore insist on the need to distinguish occupational pension schemes from pension funds provided by the insurance industry and point out the existence of a range of safeguards already in place and which vary from country to country due to their pension arrangements and regulatory systems. [See also the Joint Statement of the Commerce Sector]•

8-5-2013

### Graphical industry

#### Creation of a new Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee



The 42<sup>nd</sup> sectoral social dialogue committee, covering the graphical industry, held its inaugural meeting on 8 May 2013 in Brussels.

The committee brings together Intergraf (the European employers' organisation) and UNI Europa Graphical (the European workers' organisation) who represent a sector which currently employs some 700.000 workers across the EU. The graphical industry is part of the manufacturing industries, producing newspapers, books, periodicals, business forms, greeting cards,

identification documents and other printed materials. In recent years, printing companies have enlarged their scope of activities to include value added services such as database management for clients and the production of e-documents or websites.

In his opening speech, Mr Koos Richelle, the Director-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, welcomed the social partners of the sector in the "common house" of the European social dialogue. He reminded them of the added value of social dialogue, in particular during the current crisis, and highlighted the considerable challenges the sector is facing. He confirmed the Commission's support in the implementation of the committee's first work programme, encouraging the social partners to establish genuine commitments for joint action and to develop tools that have real impact. He also invited the social partners to fully use their privileged position in the context of Commission consultations, both on initiatives in the social policy field and on initiatives in other policy domains that are of relevance to their industry.

ETUC Secretary General Bernadette Ségol also addressed the meeting, stating that she was particularly pleased that this committee is now formally created, after a long process of informal dialogue. She stressed the importance of sectors developing joint solutions for their specific problems and implementing policies at their level. Social dialogue can bring better understanding, more cohesion and positive results, notably when there is good coordination between the national and EU levels – which requires well-structured national social dialogue. Referring to some "– modest – positive signs" that growing attention is being given to the social dimension of the EU and the EMU, she confirmed the ETUC's readiness to participate more actively in EU economic governance, provided it is based on real social dialogue.



The main challenges for the sector are: the rise of the internet as a source of information and advertising, the drop in the number of people reading newspapers and magazines, and globalised competition – leading to job losses and structural overcapacity. The committee's work programme for the next years (2013-2015) reflects the commitment of the social partners to address these challenges jointly, covering topics such as: the technological, social and economic situation and trends of the sector, socially responsible restructuring, and the development of skills in light of the changing needs of the business.

## Events in the past

9/10-4-2013

### **Chemical industry – Plenary meeting + Conference**

In the annual work programme of their committee, the ECEG and industriALL Europe had agreed to focus on the pharmaceutical industry with a view to extend its coverage to this sub-sector. To this end, they held their annual conference in Dublin this year in co-operation with EUROFOUND, which is also set to carry out its representativeness study of the European social partners in the chemical industry this year. As eight out of ten of the biggest pharmaceutical companies have production sites in Ireland, making the country the world's leading net exporter of pharmaceutical products, the integration of Irish social partner organisations into the committee is crucial for an extension of European social dialogue into the pharmaceutical industry. To benefit from synergies, the plenary meeting and the annual social partner conference were held back-to-back at the EUROFOUND conference centre in Dublin.



Both events were attended by high-level representatives from EUROFOUND as well as from national and European-level social partner organisations. In addition to significant input from EUROFOUND experts, the high level participation allowed an in-depth discussion of the major strategic topics to be addressed by the committee in the course of the following years. A framework of action summarising these discussions is currently being elaborated.

10/11-4-2013

### **Euro-Mediterranean Conference on Skills Development and Social Dialogue for Textile and Clothing sector (Valetta, Malta)**

The meeting was organised by DG Enterprise in cooperation with TAIEX and the Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry. The conference attracted around 120 participants from the Euro-Mediterranean area and - for the first time - from the Western Balkans which was highly welcomed. Each delegation included representatives from the governments, social partners and training providers or academia. The textile and clothing sector continues to face difficulties mainly due to strong competition from Asia (e.g. China, India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh). Focusing on skills developments and skills upgrading was considered to be a key issue by all stakeholders. EU funding opportunities like skills alliances or sectoral skills councils were also on the agenda. The conference which allowed a broad exchange of views on this topic was a full success also thanks to the active role of the EU social partner organisations, EURATEX and industriAll.

15/16-4-2013

### **Conference on industrial relations in Europe (Budapest, Hungary)**

This two-day conference was organised by the Commission on the occasion of the publication of *Industrial Relations in Europe 2012*. This report is produced every two years and analyses developments in industrial relation throughout the EU. The 2012 edition focusses in particular on industrial relations in the Central and Eastern European countries and on industrial relations in the public sector in times of crisis and fiscal consolidation. The conference attracted 150 participants, including policymakers, national and EU social partners and academic experts. Among the speakers were Commissioner Andor, ministers and state secretaries from Hungary, Croatia and Belgium, former ministers from Hungary, Sweden and Portugal, leaders of national and EU employers' organisations and trade unions, and officials of the ILO. President Barroso and ILO Director General Guy Ryder participated by video addresses.

Against the background of a general perception that social dialogue is under strain and even sometimes undermined by the reforms under way, President Barroso highlighted that social dialogue is not a luxury but an indispensable tool for exiting the crisis. President Barroso and Commissioner Andor both underscored the commitment of the Commission to social dialogue and ensuring that social dialogue processes were 'part of the solution, and not part of the problem' in response to the crisis. ILO Director-General Ryder argued that it was necessary to have policy consistency in order to address all dimensions of the crisis while tackling the deficit of confidence throughout the Union, including the Central and Eastern European (CEE) and the programme countries. He noted that regrettably, the ILO supervisory bodies had found shortcomings with regard to the respect of fundamental ILO conventions in the implementation of the reform process in the programme countries.

Among the conclusions of the conference, it was noted that in the CEE countries, the challenges of the transition had meant that industrial relations institutions and actors had been somewhat neglected and that social dialogue was even weakened by some reforms. Similarly, in the programme countries, economic and financial measures had been generally taken with only limited involvement or consultation of social partners and the tendency to bypass collective bargaining structures. As a result, social dialogue had become more marginalised, and partly replaced by protest and demonstrations. The challenge of restoring confidence and finding an exit to the crisis exposed various views about finding the right policy mix, the right mechanisms for EMU and improving the functioning of the labour market to promote employment. The representatives of the EU social partners emphasised the importance of autonomous, bipartite social dialogue in responding to the crisis, which could be seen as a 'stress test' for social dialogue in the EU. They also stressed the need to improve the involvement of the social partners in the European Semester, building on the model of the Social Agreement which led to the current Articles 154 and 155 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU.

The second day of the conference was devoted to a discussion of the impact of the crisis on industrial relations in the public sector. The report highlights that the public sector has been targeted as a key sector for adjustment further to the crisis, and that structural reforms in this sector have been dramatically accelerated and have led to increasingly conflictual industrial relations. It was noted that hard choices had to be made under financial constraints, and that traditional social dialogue methods could not always be used. Trade Unions argued in favour of socially responsible management of change, including the use of socially responsible public procurement.

Website: [Industrial Relations in Europe 2012](#)

23/24-4-2013

### **6th Social Forum of the Energy Community (Belgrade, Serbia)**

The Energy Community Secretariat organised the 6<sup>th</sup> Social Forum of the Energy Community (EU + 9 Contracting parties from the Western Balkans + Ukraine, Moldova) in Belgrade (Serbia). Ambassador Vincent Degert (Head of the EU Delegation to the Republic of Serbia) gave the opening speech – together with the Serbian Minister of Energy, Ms Zorana Mihaljovic – and highlighted the importance of the Memorandum of Understanding on Social Issues (2007) and the social dimension of the Energy Community despite the difficulties of the on-going financial and economic crisis. The Social Forum mainly addresses two topics: (1) The issue of energy poverty and consumer protection was discussed intensively, in particular the obligation to ensure adequate safeguards to protect "vulnerable customers" and the obligation for each Contracting party to define the term by 2015 as stipulated in the Third Energy Package. (2) The role of social dialogue was the topic of the second day.

In order to bring new impetus to the process, the 10<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Council on 18 October 2012 invited the Energy Community Secretariat to prepare, in cooperation with the social partners, an outline of a Social Strategy for discussion. Hence, the Energy Community Secretariat organised a public consultation to which EU social partners (EPSU, industriAll, Eurelectric) jointly replied (See: Electricity sector -Joint Social Partners response to the Consultation Paper on the Outline of the Social Strategy of the Energy Community, 15 March 2013). The Forum acknowledged the slow and uneven progress across the contracting parties. It concluded that further improvements were needed, particularly in relation to the social action plans, but also in establishing bipartite structures. The Energy Community Secretariat intends to forward the outline of the social strategy to the Ministerial Council meeting for eventual adoption.

## Call for proposals

The following two calls have been published:

### **Call for Proposals VP/2013/001 – Industrial relations and social dialogue**

- The deadline for the submission of applications is **20 June 2013** for actions commencing no earlier than 20 October 2013 and no later than 31 December 2013.
- Queries: [empl-04-03-03-01@ec.europa.eu](mailto:empl-04-03-03-01@ec.europa.eu)
- Website:  
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langid=en&catid=630&callid=373&furthercalls=yes>

### **Call for Proposals VP/2013/002 – Information and training measures for workers' organisations**

- The deadline for the submission of applications is **23 May 2013** for actions commencing no earlier than 23 July 2013 and no later than 31 December 2013.
- Queries: [empl-04-03-03-02@ec.europa.eu](mailto:empl-04-03-03-02@ec.europa.eu)
- Website:  
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langid=en&catid=630&callid=374&furthercalls=yes>

Due to exceptional circumstances, the call for proposals VP/2013/001 has been redesigned this year to have only one period to submit applications (a single application deadline).

In addition, in order to comply fully with the Financial Regulation, "multi-beneficiary grants" for projects will now be awarded where more than one organisation claims costs in the project budget (staff or other costs). You will find further details in the calls and notably the Annex I (Financial guidelines for applicants). If you have further queries, please use the contact e-mails mentioned above.

## Information from Eurofound

### **The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions**

#### **Events**

20 June 2013, Amsterdam, the Netherlands  
10th ILERA European conference - Imagining new employment relations and new solidarities

26 August 2013, Helsinki, Finland  
Work, Wellbeing and Wealth: Active ageing at work

#### **Publications**

- Role of governments and social partners in keeping older workers in the labour market and executive summary
- ERM Quarterly - Issue 1, April 2013
- Employment polarisation and job quality in the crisis: European Jobs Monitor 2013 and executive summary.
- Representativeness of European sectoral social partner organisations (info sheet)
- Working time and work–life balance in a life course perspective and executive summary
- Foundation Focus: Job creation, job preservation or job loss? The future of Europe's labour market
- Social and employment policies for a fair and competitive Europe - Background paper
- Wages: A working conditions and industrial relations perspective - Background paper
- Greening of industries in the EU: Anticipating and managing the effects on quantity and quality of jobs, an executive summary and a searchable database of case studies
- Born global: The potential of job creation in new international businesses and executive summary.
- Building intercultural bridges in European cities: Lessons for local migrant integration policy
- Restructuring in SMEs in Europe - Overview report and Executive summary
- National reports on restructuring in SMEs for the 27 EU Member States
- Database of 85 company case studies on restructuring in SMEs
- Public policy and support for restructuring in SMEs - Comparative analytical report

#### **New representativeness studies**

##### Audiovisual (April 2013)

##### Food and Drink (May 2013)

See also an updated version (5 March 2013) of the Info Sheet on the Representativeness of European sectoral social partner organisations

## Information from the European Agency for Health and Safety at Work

Best examples of cooperation between managers and employees in risk prevention  
<https://osha.europa.eu/en/teaser/good-practice-awards-2012-2013-winners-announced>

Worker participation practices: a review of EU-OSHA case studies - available in English  
[https://osha.europa.eu/en/publications/literature\\_reviews/worker-participation-practices-a-review-of-eu-osha-case-studies/view](https://osha.europa.eu/en/publications/literature_reviews/worker-participation-practices-a-review-of-eu-osha-case-studies/view)

Working together campaign resources - worker participation:

<https://osha.europa.eu/en/topics/worker-participation>

Working together campaign resources - leadership:

<https://osha.europa.eu/en/topics/management-leadership>

More about the campaign: <http://www.healthy-workplaces.eu/en/hw2012>

European opinion poll on occupational safety and health

EU report and EU PPT (English) + country PPTs

Implications in green jobs for workers' health and safety

<https://osha.europa.eu/en/teaser/green-jobs> -

EU-OSHA launches a 'Smoke-Free Workplaces' campaign–

Leaflets for smokers, non-smokers and employers available in all languages

Danger: chemicals! New online toolkit alerts workers and employers to hazard pictograms –

Napo video + poster and leaflet available in all languages

Napo brings knowledge of safety and health to primary classrooms –

Toolkit already available in 7 languages – 11 additional languages coming soon.

### **OiRA (Online interactive Risk Assessment tool)**

The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work has developed OiRA (Online interactive Risk Assessment tool) with the aim to support micro and small companies in their task of assessing their occupational risks. The software enables social partners as well as national authorities to develop sector targeted risk assessment tools with their own content. The EU social partners from the leather & tanning sector developed the first EU OiRA tool, which is now in the process of being adapted at national level in some Member States. Currently the EU social partners from the live performance and the private security are developing their OiRA tools and very soon the EU social partners from the cleaning sector will follow. All these initiatives are taking place in the framework of the EU sectoral social dialogue.

EU-OSHA is providing access to the OiRA software (which enables the development of sectoral tools) to the EU and national social partners for free and is providing training and help desk support. If interested in developing an OiRA tool for your sector, please contact Lorenzo Munar ([munar@osha.europa.eu](mailto:munar@osha.europa.eu)). More information about OiRA available at: [www.oiraproject.eu](http://www.oiraproject.eu)

## Information from the International Labour Organisation ILO

### **Sectoral meetings:**

<http://www.ilo.org/sector/activities/sectoral-meetings/lang--en/index.htm>

Several times per year, representatives of governments, employers' and workers' organizations from different countries and regions meet at the ILO Headquarters in Geneva, to participate in tripartite sectoral international meetings and global dialogue fora. Consensus reached during such sectoral meetings results in recommendations for policy and action in the sectors. These recommendations, adopted at the end of the meetings, serve as a basis for the development of national policies and programmes, and provide guidance to constituents at international as well as country level.

### **Ongoing and upcoming events**

- 15-17 May 2013, Geneva  
Global Dialogue Forum for the Promotion of the Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No.188)
- 23-27 September 2013, Geneva  
Meeting of Experts to Adopt Guidelines on the Training of Ships' Cooks
- 12-15 November 2013, Geneva  
Meeting of Experts on Policy Guidelines on the Promotion of Decent Work for Early Childhood Education Personnel
- 26-28 November 2013, Geneva  
Global Dialogue Forum on Initiatives to Promote Decent Work in the Chemical Industry

### **Outcomes of recent sectoral meetings:**

- [Final report of the Global Dialogue Forum on Future Needs for Skills and Training in the Oil and Gas Industry, Geneva, 12–13 December 2012](#)

### **Most recent publications**

- [International perspectives on women and work in hotels, catering and tourism](#)
- [The global impact of e-waste: Addressing the challenge](#)

### **Sectoral Data: Laborsta Short Term Indicators of the Labour Market**

- [http://laborsta.ilo.org/sti/sti\\_E.html](http://laborsta.ilo.org/sti/sti_E.html)

### **Other sectoral work carried out in the second half of 2012**

- [Short overview of selected highlights of sectoral work carried out in the second half of 2012](#)  
This document provides a short overview of selected highlights of sectoral work carried out between August 2012 and December 2012.



## Articles/Reports/Studies

2013

[Manual for trade union education on social dialogue in new EU Member States and Candidate Countries](#)

The Manual has been produced under the EC-ILO Cooperation on Social Dialogue and Industrial Relations, with the financial assistance of the European Union. It is designed for trade union trainers responsible for organizing courses at the sectoral or national level. A particular focus is put on the Central and Eastern European Countries, both EU New Member States and Candidate Countries. The Manual was first edited in English and has now been translated into Romanian, Croatian, Polish, Hungarian, Slovenian, Czech, Lithuanian and Bulgarian.

March 2013

[EU Employment and Social Situation Quarterly Review](#)

April 2013

[Industrial Relations in Europe 2012](#)

Benchmarking Working Europe 2013

[www.etui.org/fr/Publications2/Livres/Benchmarking-Working-Europe-2013](http://www.etui.org/fr/Publications2/Livres/Benchmarking-Working-Europe-2013)

**More information on EU social dialogue.**

**Contact | [Subscribe to our publications](#) | [Modify your subscription](#) | [Unsubscribe](#) | [Send us your feed-back to our functional mailbox:](#)  
[EMPL-SD-NEWSLETTER@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EMPL-SD-NEWSLETTER@ec.europa.eu)**

**Legal notice**

This newsletter provides a selection of information which is not intended to be comprehensive or complete.

Neither the European Commission nor any person acting on behalf of the Commission may be held responsible for the use that may be made of the information contained in this publication.

**Publisher:**

European Commission, Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion  
© European Union, 2013