



Proposal to establish a working group on promoting sector social dialogue in the countries of the Energy Community

Follow up: discuss with the European Commission and the Energy Community Secretariat at a first meeting.

Working group of the electricity sectoral social dialogue committee: Promoting the social dialogue in the countries of the Energy Community

The European social partners for the electricity sector have contributed to the development of the social dimension of the Energy Community since 2008 when the Memorandum on the Social Aspects of the Energy Community was signed in Vienna. Key policy areas that needed to be addressed by the Contracting parties were:

- Promoting social dialogue
- Addressing Management of Change
- Developing the Social Dimension
- The MoU underlines the responsibility of the Energy Community and its members (the Contracting Parties)
- To establish national working groups with the social partners and consult them on important energy and social policies concerning the sector
- To develop social action plans
- To contribute to the Social Forum which brings together employers, trade unions, government representatives and regulators.

The European social partners and their members have contributed and participated in the employment study, the research on social dialogue and collective bargaining, and made numerous contributions based on their experience as sector social partners, for example in the Toolkit on Restructuring (2008).

Most recently the social partners contributed an extensive position to the consultation on the social dimension of the Regional Energy Strategy (www.epsu.org/a/9370). Amongst many more, aspects they highlighted were the MoU as basis for continued action and considering developing a regional social dialogue (contribution of European social partners to 6th Social Forum April 2013, Belgrade).

The Energy Community Secretariat indicated to the social partners (6th Social Forum) and in writing that it did not support this proposal nor did it commit to concrete proposals to develop the MoU and the social dimension further. As European social partners we object to this. It is high time that more serious work is undertaken to establish a social dimension at national and regional level.

We want to make progress with the development of a social dimension and contribute to it and therefore establish a Working Group **Promoting the social dialogue in the countries of the Energy Community**.

The aim of this working group is:

- To develop a regional social dialogue in which representatives of the social partners (in the electricity sector) of the Energy Community meet to discuss the social dimension of the regional energy policies, regional social policies for the electricity sector and any subject we agree upon together.
- To assist the social partners of the energy community to develop the national social dialogue and contribute to the regional social dialogue.
- To establish a dialogue between the European Social Partners and the Energy Community Secretariat and DG Energy on this matter. Representatives of the Energy Community Secretariat will be invited to present energy policy and how the social dimension is taken into account.
- To discuss the outcomes of the regional social dialogue in the Social Forum with the representatives of the contracting parties and contribute to the implementation of the MoU.
- To accompany the regional energy strategy and ensure its social dimension in particular with regard to employment, industrial relations and working conditions.

For practical as well as institutional reasons, the work of the group is limited to the countries of the Western Balkans/ Former Yugoslavia and Albania given that several are already members of the EU (Slovenia, Croatia) and others candidate countries (Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia). The Social Forum remains the place where representatives of all contracting parties meet. We commit to present our work in the Social Forum (see 4th bullet).

The social partners will appoint representatives to the working group from amongst their members and contacts in the countries concerned. The secretariats of the European social partners will ensure the secretariat with support of DG employment.

After three years we will review the working group to review outcomes and progress and to consider extending membership to social partners from other contracting parties.

Adopted on 13 September 2013