



## ***European Social Dialogue Committee on Local and Regional Government***

### **REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2004/2005 WORK PROGRAMME**

*The present report summarises the initiatives carried out in the years 2004 and 2005 to implement the first work programme of the European Social Dialogue Committee on Local and Regional Government. It is proposed for adoption at the plenary meeting of the Committee, taking place in Brussels on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2006.*

#### **Adoption of the rules of procedure**

EPSU and CEMR adopted the ***internal rules of procedure*** of the sectoral social dialogue Committee at its inaugural meeting of 13<sup>th</sup> January 2004. These rules were supplemented by the ***internal rules of procedure for the steering group and the ad hoc working groups***, which were agreed upon at the Steering Group meeting of 18<sup>th</sup> February 2004.

#### **Description of the 2004-2005 work programme**

The first bi-annual work programme was also adopted at the inaugural meeting of the Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2004 and contained the five following agreed themes for joint action:

1. Adoption of a statement supporting the implementation of the cross-sectoral agreement on telework in the local and regional government sector;
2. Identifying and supporting the local and regional dimension of the European Employment Strategy (EES);
3. Reinforcing the development of social dialogue in the local and regional government sector in the new Member States;
4. Reflecting on the European Commission's Green Paper on public procurement and Public Private Partnerships, and,
5. Collecting and evaluating innovative initiatives on good public sector management, including the promotion of high standards of human resource management and the development of high performance working practices.

#### **Review of the action taken in implementation of the work programme**

1. *Adoption of the joint statement on the cross-sectoral agreement on telework*

On 13<sup>th</sup> January 2004, EPSU and CEMR adopted a joint statement supporting the implementation in local and regional government of the European framework agreement on telework signed by the cross-sectoral partners (UNICE-UAPME, ETUC and CEEP) on 16/7/2002.

With this statement, CEMR and EPSU also agreed to monitor and to report in 2005 on the developments towards the use of the cross-sectoral agreement. Stefan Clauwaert from the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) gave an update on the implementation at a working group meeting in September 2005, based on national implementation reports. However assessment of the situation in local and regional government proved difficult as in many countries discussions at cross-sectoral level had not yet started or were on-going. Information was also hard to collect. Work will however be pursued in this field in the first semester of 2006, notably with a view to feed into the implementation report that will be produced by the cross-sectoral European social partners by April 2006.

## *2. Reinforcing the local and regional dimension of the European Employment Strategy and the National Action Plans on employment*

An ad hoc working group on employment was set-up in March 2004 to identify and assess the different national practices in involving local and regional authorities in the National Action Plans on Employment. A joint questionnaire was prepared and sent to the respective members of CEMR and EPSU. The responses were then gathered in a **report assessing the form and scope of the involvement of social partner organisations in local and regional government in the preparation of the National Action Plans on Employment in 10 countries**. The report, which was presented at the plenary meeting of the sectoral social dialogue Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2004, also contained forward-looking suggestions to reinforce the local and regional contribution to the European Employment Strategy in the future.

Building on the results of this report, EPSU and CEMR furthermore organised a **workshop on EU employment policies** on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2005, during which they discussed the local and regional government contribution to the implementation of the Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs adopted at European level for the 2005-2008 period. The workshop resulted in the adoption of a **joint statement on the European Employment Policy**, in which CEMR and EPSU emphasised the need to allocate sufficient resources to local and regional authorities to enable them to fulfil their dual role as public employers and service providers. The social partners also asked the European Commission to facilitate the development of local partnerships involving all stakeholders concerned, as a tool to promote employment and entrepreneurship at the level closest to citizens.

## *3. Supporting the development of social dialogue in local and regional government in the new Member States and in candidate countries*

To implement this priority, a joint project was undertaken, with the financial support of the Commission. This project included in its first phase the preparation of a survey by an external consultant (ECOTEC Consulting Ltd), providing an overview of existing social dialogue structures in local and regional government in the 10 new Member States and in the three candidate countries, with a more in-depth analysis of the situation in five countries (Estonia, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Turkey). The study was then launched at a pan-European conference organised on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2005 in Budapest, which gathered over 80 delegates from national associations member of EPSU and CEMR in some 20 countries. This conference provided an opportunity to discuss the findings of the study, as well as to identify issues of common concerns and pathways for future joint activities in the follow-up of the project.

4. *Reflecting on the European Commission Green Paper on public procurement and Public Private Partnerships.*

A working group met to discuss the Green Paper on PPPs in July 2004. However, despite an interesting exchange with the Commission at the meeting, there was no agreement at the time to continue work in this area.

5. *Collecting and evaluating innovative initiatives on good public sector management, including the promotion of high standards of human resource management and the development of high performance working practices*

An ad hoc working group on human resources management (HRM) was set-up in January 2004 to work on this priority. It was mandated with the concrete task of collecting cases of good practices, which were then presented at a **seminar on strategic HRM in local and regional government**, held in Brussels on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2005. The workshop included a number of presentations by representatives of CEMR and EPSU member associations of HRM strategies aimed at improving efficiency in the provision of local and regional public services, while at the same time increasing the skills and well-being of employees in the sector. The partners agreed on the importance of HRM as a tool to increase both efficiency and work quality in LRG, and the report of the meeting contains some proposals for further work.

⇒ The members of the Social Dialogue Committee are invited to:

- Approve the present report on the implementation of the 2004-2005 work programme,
- Invite the European Commission to publish all official texts adopted jointly by EPSU and CEMR in 2004-2005 in the web-based “*social dialogue texts database*” of the Directorate General on Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The database is available in English, French and German and can be accessed from the following link: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/dsw/dspMain.do?lang=en](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/dsw/dspMain.do?lang=en)

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