

UNI-Europa graphical and UNI-Graphical Health and Safety Committee Meeting on 19 February 2002

19th February 2002

The UNI-Europa graphical and UNI-Europa graphical Health and Safety Committee members gathered on 19 February 2002 in Brussels. Approximately 50 replies to the questionnaire on practices in graphical unions regarding health and safety aspects were analysed showing that the existence of health and safety committees and union representatives seriously improve work environment. The Committee decided to concentrate its work on all measures needed regarding information and training that employers have to supply in the language of the country. A guide of good practices is under preparation.

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UNI-Europa Postal Committee meeting

18th/19th February 2002

The UNI-Europa Postal Committee met in Luxembourg on 18 - 19 February 2002. It to put emphasis on UNI-Europa position on liberalisation of postal services in Europe. It decided to pursue its work with MEPs up to the EP plenary on 12 March 2002 and called for a Press Conference before the vote in Parliament. The Committee also prepared work programmes for the Postal Social Dialogue Committee and its working groups for upcoming meetings and activities in 2002. The Committee elected its new President, Rolf Buettner, ver.di, Germany, who will take over, when president Derek Hodgson, CWU, U.K., retires from this position in April 2002 and filled other vacant positions.

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Meeting of the working group Collective bargaining network in the finance sector

19th February 2002

The project group members of the CB-network in the finance sector finalised the first benchmarking exercise on pay, working time and employee benefits. With this aim a questionnaire will soon be sent out to a paybenchmarking panel. Martin Spanjers informed the project group that AXA was the first EWC to sign a contract with the CB-network. ING EWC will follow soon. The next training seminar will take place in Luxembourg on 21-22 May 2002.

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Finance sector - Meeting with DG Employment and Social Affairs

19th February 2002

In an informal meeting with representatives of DG Employment various EU legislative initiatives were discussed such as the take-over bids directive, the EWC directive, the insider-trading directive and the merger control review. UNI-Europa was represented by Christine Asmussen and Annette Mikkelsen. Christine Asmussen clarified the need to include a social dimension to the EU's merger regime. The Commission was alarmed by the fact that the employers had walked out of the final plenary session of the ILO meeting on employment impact of Mergers and acquisitions on employees in the finance sector.

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Meeting of the UNI-Europa Graphical New Technologies, Vocational Training and work organisation Committee

20th February 2002

Anders Skattkjaer from the Norwegian Graphical Forbund was elected Chairman of the Committee. The Committee is preparing a strategy to tackle the new challenges of the sector as regards new job profiles. The Committee decided to write a draft for a European passport in the pre-press sector.

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Proposal for a legislation on temporary work

26th February 2002

Bernadette Tesch-Segol, UNI-Europa regional secretary, followed the advance of the draft Commission's proposal on temporary work. Interventions were made with the European Parliament, the Commission and a press release published. A Commission draft should be adopted at the end of March and discussion start in the European Parliament.

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Bank social dialogue - Working group on Lifelong Learning

28th February 2002

The purpose of this 2nd working group meeting on lifelong learning in the banking sector was to discuss the replies to the pilot questionnaire and agree on the follow-up i.e. workshop/seminar.

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How to improve communication in EWC and prepare for the SE?

2nd – 5th March 2002

23 participants from 6 UNI-Europa sectors and 2 members of the UNI-Europa management committee gathered in Florence to review the operation of EWC within UNI-Europa remit and to prepare proposals for the next UNI-Europa Executive Committee. Preliminary discussions were also held on the SE and the challenges that trade unions will be confronted with when it is implemented. The seminar was organised and sponsored by the European trade union academy.

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OGB Europa Dialogue

7th March 2002

Social Dialogue was the main theme of this year's Europa Dialogue organised by the Austrian Trade Union Confederation (OGB) in Klagenfurt. Several speakers from Academia, the European Parliament, employers and trade unions explained to some 100 participants their views of the social dialogue in Europe. Gerhard Rohde addressed the issue of industrial relations in the European high-tech sector. He said that UNI's affiliates focus on organising in the IT sector and to this end develop new approaches and services for their members. He was confident that a European level social dialogue for the IT sector would become possible in a not too distant future.

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UNI-Europa Graphical 2002 collective bargaining

10th March 2002

About forty participants coming from all parts of Europe took part in the Annual Conference of UNI-EG Graphical on Collective Bargaining held in Rome from 10 to 12 March 2002. Collective bargaining results in Europe were reviewed. The committee also focused on analysing the consequences of digitalisation and multimedia in the graphical sector and more specifically the important need of vocational training. At the end of the conference, the collective bargaining new guidelines were adopted for 2002-2003. Particular mention should be made for guidelines for the limitation of paid overtime and further vocational training.

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Resolution of UNI-Europa Graphical on the Blair-Berlusconi Declarations and the Future of the European Social Model

10th March 2002

For UNI-Europa graphical the proposals contained in the Blair-Berlusconi declarations run completely against the political agreement reached by European Governments at the Lisbon Summit. It will only lead to a deterioration of social conditions, greater disaffection and will ultimately endanger the whole process of European integration, which has so far been a major contributor to peace and prosperity in Europe during the last 50 years. UNI-Europa Graphical calls upon all European governments to reject such an approach, and instead to concentrate upon building a democratic, stable and successful European social model.

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Commerce: New social dialogue agreement signed in Barcelona:

11th March 2002

UNI-Europa Commerce and EuroCommerce want to help commercial workers stay longer at the job, if they want it. They advocate an 'age neutral' approach to employment relations and call for special support for older workers when needed. An agreement on voluntary guidelines was signed in Barcelona on 11 March 2002.

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Promote UNI Passport

11th March 2002

The UNI Passport for mobile P&MS should be put on each affiliates website told Gerhard Rohde participants of a UNI-Europa P&MS meeting on 11 March in Luxembourg. The meeting, chaired by Simon Petch of Connect, UK, agreed that a couple of practical steps had to be taken in order to make passport procedures more efficient. Unions will have to decide about the concrete services they want to offer to passport holder once they arrive in their countries. Also more contact person have to be appointed and trained in order to take care of P&MS going to work abroad. Lore Hostasch, former Minister for Labour in Austria and President of GPA addressed the meeting as a member of a High Level Task Force on skills and mobility.

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Germany introduces first Copyright Contract Law in the EU

12th March 2002

Creators in Germany have won a major victory in their campaign to establish rules with respect to equitable remuneration for the exploitation of their works. The new Copyright Contract Law establishes precise rules enabling writers, directors and other authors' organisation to negotiate collective agreements on minimum remuneration for the exploitation of works on behalf of their members. The new law will be entering into force on 1 July this year. UNI-Europa MEI welcomes the decision of the German Parliament. However, we regret that publishers and distributors were successful in influencing democratic decision making in last minute actions using their publishing power. UNI-Europa MEI is concerned about the misinformation and false accusations against creators which have been communicated via the publishing platforms by publishers' and distributors' organisations. UNI-Europa MEI urge the German government to keep its promise and to assess whether the publishers' and distributors' organisations will fulfill the promises and will negotiate voluntarily collective agreements with the creators' organisations.

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Social dialogue meeting in the cleaning sector

12th March 2002

During the cleaning social dialogue meeting held on 12th March 2002, UNI-Europa and EFCI decided to adopt a manual on the selection of the best value for organisations awarding contracts for cleaning services. Within the next few months the manual will be translated and disseminated through all EU Member states. EFCI and UNI-Europa already decided to develop a manual on ergonomics which will addressed to cleaners. UNI-Europa and EFCI are preparing a reference document to be used as a communication tool from the European social partners towards different bodies concerned by the cleaning industry (cleaners, cleaning companies, client companies, users, public authorities and social partners)

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Workshop: EWC for Deutsche Telekom AG

13th March 2002

40 participants from all over Europe including Hungary, Croatia, Czech Republic and Slovenia gathered in Bad Honnef, near Bonn, in Germany for a three day workshop to prepare for a European Works Council for Deutsche Telekom AG (DT). After a series of acquisition, DT has now become a global player with over 250'000 employees in 23 countries. Management supports the set up of a EWC and the German colleagues are keen to build that on the best tradition of social partnership and participation. Gerhard Rohde said in his address that UNI-Europa was prepared to advice the special negotiating body in their negotiations with central management and that transparency and public relations were important in order to have the support of the workforce as well.

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Meeting of the social dialogue in the private security sector

14th March 2002

In their social dialogue meeting on 14 March 2002, the social partners of the private security sector decided to organise the follow-up to the third European conference of the private services sector on the harmonisation of legislation and of the joint declaration signed at this occasion. CoESS and UNI-Europa also established a working group on the issue of the harmonisation of legislation governing the private security industry and the Transport of values sector.

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100 000 European trade unionists rally in Barcelona

14th March 2002

100.000 European trade unionists rallied in Barcelona for a social Europe on the eve of the Summit meeting demanding growth and employment. They protested against the fact that certain governments are simply turning to market deregulation, structural reforms and more labour flexibility instead of the balanced approach which had been adopted in Lisbon in 2000. Bernadette Tesch-Ségol represented UNI-Europa in the demonstration.

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Vivendi EWC negotiation

19th March 2002

Further meetings on the Vivendi-Universal (VU) EWC negotiations were held in February and March. Broad agreement was reached at the internal trade union meeting on 12-13 March on a representation system for the election of EWC representatives to the EWC and to the Permanent Committee for Environment (VE) and Communications. The proposal will be fleshed out at the next negotiation meeting on 16-17 May. Proposals for clauses relating to the scope and rights to information and consultation of the future EWC were handed to Jean-François Colin, Executive VP of VU Human Resources. UNI-Europa was represented at the March meeting by Chantal Weiss (FTILAC-CFDT), Jackie Grant (secretariat) and Pier Verderio (FISTEL-CISL). Jean-François Colin indicated strongly in his address to the meeting on

13 March, that VU would deconsolidate its shares in VE from 63 to 50%. For the meantime, "life would go on but when things change, our work will change", he said.

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Trade union guidelines on EWCs in the finance sector

20th March 2002

The UNI-Europa Finance working group on EWCs has finalised draft guidelines to be endorsed by the UNI-Europa Finance Committee in May. In accordance with the UNI-Europa executive committee recommendations the draft includes a proposal to nominate one co-ordinator per EWC in the finance sector. In addition, a group of trade union experts will be established. The trade union experts will serve as a national contact point and will guide and assist the SNB/EWC members in the (re-)negotiation process. The guidelines are now subject to a full consultation of all UNI-Europa Finance affiliates prior to the Committee meeting in May.

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The Commission adopted a draft EU Law on temporary work

20th March 2002

The Commission adopted on 20th March 2002 a draft EU law designed to provide a minimum EU-wide level of protection to temporary agency workers and to help the agency work sector to develop as a flexible option for employers and workers. According to the Commission "the draft directive establishes the principle of non-discrimination, including for pay, between temporary agency workers and comparable workers in the user undertaking to which the temporary agency worker has been assigned". Follow up initiatives will be taken by UNI-Europa.

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EWCs update Graphical Sector

20th March 2002

Progress is being made with regard to requests for EWC negotiations in the graphical sector. Jan Strandberg of Grafiska Fackförbundet Mediafacket, Sweden and UNI-Europa Graphical EWC Coordinator, started talks with Scandinavian printing company, Bong Ljungdahl, on behalf of UNI-EG on 11 March. He insisted on the involvement of UNI-EG and its members in the SNB process, which will start on 1-2 October. Bong Ljungdahl has plants in Germany, the UK, Finland, Belgium, Ireland and Poland as well as in Scandinavia. UNI-Europa Graphical and EMCEF have also jointly written to paperboard and packaging company, Chesapeake, informing them that the GPMU has been chosen to be the lead union for forthcoming EWC negotiations. Chesapeake's HQ are in the UK with just under 3,000 employees. The company also has large workforces in France, Belgium, Germany and Ireland

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New UNI-EG publication: "Extending EWCs to Central and Eastern Europe in the Graphical Sector"

20th March 2002

This study gives an overview of graphical multinationals with operations in Central and Eastern European countries, which either have EWCs or which are eligible to set them up. Its aim is to give concrete support to UNI-EG in the implementation of its EWC negotiation guidelines and to help the sector devise an action plan for future work. The brochure gives a short overview of the key elements of the industrial relations systems in 11 CEECs and focuses on 7 EWC case studies. It also contains a list of the main graphical multinationals present in the region. The publication was produced at UNI in Nyon with European Commission funding. The author was Lionel Fulton of the Labour Research Department in the UK.

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