



## SOCIAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE IN THE EU FOOD AND DRINK INDUSTRY 2012 Work Programme

### Topics for joint actions and activities

#### **1 – Ensuring competitiveness and sustainable employment in the European food and drink sector: meeting the challenges of the labour market**

Among the key recommendations issued by the EU Commission's High Level Forum for a Better Functioning of the Food Supply Chain involving Social Partners in the sector is Recommendation n. 17, referring to the need to increase the attractiveness of the European agro-food industry. In this context, it is important to ensure that vocational training and education systems in Member States support an EU labour market that is able to meet the current and future skill needs required for the EU food & drink industry to be competitive in the global marketplace.

As the largest single EU industrial sector, the food and drink industry can also play a major role in the social inclusion and the long-term employability of large numbers of EU workers and in managing an ageing workforce.

As a result, the social partners envisage carrying out :

- A joint action under Budget heading 04.03.03.01: Industrial relations and social dialogue. This joint action will aim to carry out a study which will analyse the age structure of the workforce in the EU food and drink industry as well as the skills, job profiles and vocational training that will be needed by it over the next 10 to 15 years and will issue recommendations on how to communicate these needs to the European Commission and the vocational training and education systems in Member States..

Based on the results of this action and the joint validation of its conclusions by the social partners, joint activities will be developed on:

#### **Employability:**

- Discussions on possible joint communications about the results of this study and action to boost the attractiveness of the EU food and drink industry to potential employees and improve co-operation with universities and vocational training centres in Member States so that the demand for human resources in the EU food and drink industry is better matched and therefore benefits EU citizens.

#### **Managing an ageing workforce:**

- Sharing examples of good practice on ways in which this important issue is being addressed by the food and drink industry in different Member States.

#### **2 – Policy developments affecting the food and drink sector in Europe:**

EFFAT and FoodDrinkEurope will explore the possibility of developing common views on important EU policy developments that affect the EU food and drink sector. This could be done by:

- Sharing each organisation's views on these issues.
- Holding exploratory discussions on these issues with the objective of trying to find points of common interest and to develop common positions and guidelines



In 2012 the following issues could be addressed:

### CAP

The CAP towards 2020 legislative proposals were presented by the EU Commission on 12 October 2011. These proposals are most relevant to the food and drink industry as it processes 70% of EU agricultural raw materials and is the largest manufacturing sector in terms of employment creating 4.2 million jobs, not to mention the vast numbers employed in up and down-stream sectors.

### FOOD TAXES

With the stated aim of improving the health of their constituents, some EU Member States are discussing and introducing laws designed to set or increase taxes targeting a specific range of products based on their nutrients content, claiming that it will discourage people from consuming certain products, and will positively impact obesity rates. Thus, direct taxes in several EU Member States have multiplied, and are either targeting a specific nutrient (sugars, saturated fatty acids), or specific food categories like ice cream, confectionery, chocolate, soft drinks.

Partners will jointly explore the effects of taxation on food and drink products in terms of competitiveness of the European industry and its consequences on employment.

### Social Dialogue Timeframe 2012

Event	Date & Venue	Expected outcome
Plenary Committee Meeting	Brussels, 23 January 2012 14.30 – 18.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Signature of ToR</li><li>- Development of the concept framework for the application for a joint action under the 01 Social Dialogue Budget line</li><li>- Approval of Work plan 2012</li></ul>
Steering Committee Meeting	Brussels, March 2012 (tbc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Advancement of Work Plan</li><li>- Establishment of working groups</li></ul>
Working group	16 April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Advancement on work programme 2012</li></ul>
Working group	7 September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Advancement on work programme 2012</li></ul>
Plenary Committee Meeting	30 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Presentation of results of 2012 work</li></ul>