

VS/2013/0410

1st Round Table of the project “Defining approaches at national level to implement effectively the European framework agreement on occupational health and safety in the hairdressing sector”

24-25 March 2014 – Berlin, Germany

Minutes

In general, the agenda as attached to this document was followed. All presentations, made during the workshop, as well as the list of participants with contact details, are available on our web page : <http://www.uniglobalunion.org/meetings/round-table-hs-hairdressing>

Only items *not* mentioned in the presentations, and questions / experiences raised are highlighted in this report.

Monday 24 March 2013

Introduction

At the start, Francois Laurent, acting president of UNI Europa Hair & Beauty, gives an introduction highlighting key issues of the hairdressing sector. His speech is available in Dutch and French. Richard Koffijberg, president of Coiffure EU stresses the importance of cooperation and respect between the social partners.

Rainer Röhr gives a presentation on the European Framework Agreement, available in German. It will be translated into English before distribution to all the participants.

Francois Laurent gives a state of play of the contacts with politicians at national level, and coordinated by UNI Europa.

Björn Kachler gives a presentation for Germany. Questions & answers raised:

- Little material available on musco-skeletal disorders in the hairdressing sector – they are going to undertake a study on it.
- Francois Laurent suggests not to forget about the OIRA tools when using the latest technology for the development of a health and safety survey in the sector.
- In 1992, there was a peak in Germany, after that it went down. Why? Acidic perm products were the cause, and until then nothing was done. All protection measures came after.

Katinka Boekhorst gives a presentation for the Netherlands. Questions & answers raised:

- The Labour Inspection can give out warnings and fines.
- It is almost impossible to control small independent hairdressers.
- The ARBO catalogue available in Dutch and English, so this can be interesting material especially for Belgium (Flanders).

After the presentations of the Netherlands and Germany, a first brainstorm took place around the 3 guiding questions defined:

- What can we learn from the 2 countries?
- What could be the next step for implementing (part of) the EU agreement at national level?
- What is needed for success?

Rob Vos facilitates the debate:

The countries present here have already a 'decent' level of health and safety measures in the sector, but every country goes about it in a different way. Why reinventing the wheel? What can we learn from each other, maybe to get faster results and overcome a certain inefficiency?

Are there specific standards, or is there a legal framework in Germany? Yes, there is a technical regulation for hazardous work. It was actually the basis for the EU agreement.

Occupational diseases have a specific insurance system in Germany (employers contribute to this fund, it is managed by both the unions and the employers' organisations), so statistics can be clearly linked to the hairdressing sector. In the Netherlands for instance, it is part of the general health system, and hence more difficult.

In Austria, re-training is possible because in general hairdressers are still quite young.

In Germany and the Netherlands, the main focus is on prevention. We also need to focus on awareness raising, could that be a next step? Awareness raising is explaining what the consequences are if hairdressers do not protect themselves. The suggestion is made to focus on a positive message, it should be part of the professional skills. Hairdressers like what is beautiful and we should take it from there, as it is a key characteristic of the sector. That is what is needed for success.

We could talk to the big hairdressing companies, have a campaign at EU level around the same message, launched via the EU Social Dialogue

A campaign should focus on a limited number of issues for it to be successful.

How are 'sanctions' defined in the CBA in Belgium, because the employer has to bear the brunt? Austria asks whether employees can also be sanctioned if employees don't follow the rules.

Tuesday 25 March 2014

Rob Vos opens the day with a review of the programme.

Anne Bertrand gives a presentation on **Belgium** in Dutch. It will be made available to the participants. Questions and answers raised:

- In theory, all employers have the obligation to inform and train employees. In practice, there is still a long way to go, but Belgium feels they are on the right track, slowly but steadily. The sector is these days more aware of the issues. Of course it is difficult for the self-employed, which is the difficult target group to reach. Belgium tries to reach them through the schools.
- There is no example of an employer being sanctioned so far.

- The question is raised what experience Belgium has with the OIRA tool, it is felt to be too comprehensive but not very practical. However, that is the choice that was made by the social partners for training purposes, to have all the information in one place.
- Awareness on the importance of prevention should be the main focus for the coming years, because often seen as a just a cost. Belgium thinks of working through the training system.
- In Belgium, the employer calls upon an external agency for health and safety at the workplace. It is a legal obligation to pay a contribution to that agency, which does not always pay back for self-employed or small saloons.
- The many materials are especially used in schools. Sometimes it's better to start with a poster, not immediately with the brochures as that might be overwhelming. Brochures have been reviewed over time, made more attractive for specific target groups and highlighting what is important.
- Even in electronic times, students still ask for paper versions of the brochures. All the brochures and materials are available online. A study in Belgium has shown that only 32% of the hairdressers have access to internet. Also in Austria, only 50% has a computer in the saloon, paper is still valued as important.

Astrid Antes gives a presentation on Austria in German. Questions and answers raised:

- Skin diseases are very prevalent in the first year's work of the young hairdresser. Recently it has improved because the dying products are more skin-friendly.
- Should young people who have sensitive skin since childhood start a hairdressing training? Should we not test them beforehand? In Austria, they did tests and are sure that it is the protection that counts. In Belgium, they do not want to exclude anybody, the focus is on prevention and awareness.
- The campaign with the starter's kit has only started recently, so it is too early to evaluate whether it has any positive effects.
- The scissors in the starter's kit are more of a present for the young hairdressers starting their training. 4000 apprentices get one at the start in 14 vocational training centres.

Rob Vos asks the participants to leave their countries for what it is now, and asks to define the main factors for success to reduce the MSD and skin diseases amongst hairdressers.

This is a list of what participants came up with:

1. Digital check lists
2. Short to the point messages
3. Link the available data with the reality in the sector
4. Prevention is the first building stone
5. Raise awareness amongst young people on the choice of their professional career as a hairdresser and what it implies (not only flashy and sexy, but also hard work with certain risks at low wages and not a 9 to 5 job)? Or rather focus on how beautiful the profession is, and how you can get energy out of the job.
6. Raise awareness amongst employers on the costs of not implementing health and safety measures (sick leave, insurance costs, ...)
7. Jointly find solutions for capacity building, with the support of the EU, and not individually in each of the 28 countries.
8. Lead by example, young people look up to certain idols, so if these idols always wear gloves at all the shows, with an explanation why they wear them, the young people will follow. Maybe stars are not even necessary, if the professional hairdresser sets the example to the trainee, the trainee will follow.
9. The way it is communicated is often more important and to whom (the smart hairdressers at the top).

10. Maybe we need to call also upon the consumers, some stars, preferably at EU level. Maybe in a next campaign in the saloons, focus on the consumers who select the saloon.
11. The industry should be involved because they organise the workshops and the shows, they reach the big crowds.

We can identify two groups:

1. Those starting and still to be trained.
2. The professional already trained hairdressers

How should we divide our resources to change attitude, if we want 90% of the hairdressers to respect the H & S measures? It's about setting priorities.

- 100% to training, although we can never spend all the 100% on H & S issues, they also need to learn how to do a proper haircut. But everybody starts in a vocational school, even if they will only stay in the sector for about 10 years.
- The pressure for legislative measures is important for Austria.

In conclusion, 80% should be spent on education?

As an external partner, we should not forget the industry, they have a lot of resources and reach out to a lot of people.

The Netherlands:

- Start from the 20/80 principle
- Develop EU tools from the different but best national existing ones
- Call upon the industry – ask them to create a video for the target audience

Belgium:

- Develop 'Train the trainer' concept with the employer's organisation
- Hand out a starter's kit from the very first step in the education programme
- The employer's side stresses the importance of a positive approach
- Take into account that the different educational systems have different dynamics & levels B & C might need to be integrated.
- Media campaigns are needed to raise awareness
- Is convinced all of us will be confronted soon with an EU qualification framework to facilitate mobility on the EU labour market. The levels of vocational training are very different in every country and it will be a challenge to come to an integrated system.

Austria:

- Stresses the importance of distinguishing between what has to be done at national level, and what has to be done at EU level.
- Agrees with the Netherlands to make 1 good attractive EU video
- Cannot put figures on how much to spend on education, as based on different pillars.
- Had different expectations of this workshop in Berlin.
- Expects politicians to be present at the Brussels final round table where we should be able to present a vision for the sector and as highly professionalised hairdressers at EU level.

Germany:

- Expected more a political perspective on the EU agreement. We achieved a great deal in the meantime. All countries agree now to the content of the agreement (for instance, Italy didn't at the beginning).
- Wonders whether an EU video is a good idea, because all countries have different readings, needs, messages it wants to stress.
- Short, to the point messages remain important

Conclusions:

- We need to have a clear, comprehensive image of what a professional hairdresser is.

- We all agreed on the importance of vocational training, and putting as much resources as possible in it, with the necessary attention to health and safety issues.
- Implementation of the EU agreement will be different from country to country.

Theo gives some final words for UNI Europa Hair & Beauty and appreciates the concrete ideas that came out of this round table.

Richard from EU Coiffure thanks the organisers and interpreters for this smoothly run round table.