

**DRAFT AGENDA**  
**255th MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE GOVERNING BOARD**  
*Conseil Central de l'Economie (CCE), Room 6, 20 Avenue d'Auderghem, 1040 Brussels,*  
*Friday, 15 January 2016, 09h30-13h00*

1. Draft Agenda (B 255/1), *For Adoption*
2. a. Draft Minutes of the 253<sup>rd</sup> Bureau meeting of 12 November 2015 (B 254/2a) *For Adoption*  
b. Draft Minutes of the 254<sup>th</sup> Bureau meeting of 11 December 2015 (B 254/2b) *For Adoption*
3. Short oral update by the Director, *For Information*
4. Programming Document 2017-2020 – final draft (B 255/4), *For Discussion*
5. Work Programme 2018 – planning schedule (B 255/5), *For Discussion*
6. ICC work programme 2016 (B 255/6), *For Information*
7. Cooperation agreements (B 255/7), *For Information*
8. AOB

Date and venue of **next Bureau meeting**:

Thursday, 10 March 2016 at 9h00

**Eurofound, Dublin**

**FINAL MINUTES**

**255TH MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE GOVERNING BOARD**

9.00-13.00, Friday, 15 January 2016

*Room 6, Conseil Central D'Économie, Avenue d'Auderghem, Brussels*

<b>Mr Fonck</b>	Chairperson of the Governing Board (Workers)
<b>Ms Bulgarelli</b>	Vice-Chairperson of the Governing Board (Governments)
<b>Ms Welter</b>	Member of the Governing Board (Governments)
<b>Ms Kauffmann</b>	Member of the Governing Board (European Commission)
<b>Mr Blomsma</b>	Coordinator, Member of the Governing Board (Governments)
<b>Ms Bober</b>	Coordinator (Employers)
<b>Mr Scherrer</b>	Coordinator (Workers)
<b>Ms Hoffmann</b>	Alternate coordinator (Workers)
<b>Mr Kokalov</b>	Member of the Governing Board (Workers)
<b>Mr Maes</b>	European Commission
<b>Mr Menéndez-Valdés</b>	Director
<b>Ms Mezger</b>	Deputy Director
<b>Mr Grimmeisen</b>	Secretary to the Governing Board
<b>Ms Gerstenberger</b>	Eurofound
<b>Ms Jacquet</b>	Eurofound

1. Adoption of agenda

**The agenda was adopted.**

2. Revised minutes of Bureau meeting, 12 November 2015 (B 255/2a)

- 2.1 The revised minutes (including Mr Scherrer's intervention at [2.6.1](#)) were adopted. An editorial change previously requested by the Governments at [2.29](#) stating that the project was 'not a priority' should be introduced.

**The revised minutes were adopted.**

- 2.2 Draft minutes of Bureau meeting, 11 December 2015 (B 255/2b)

- 2.2.1
  - [6.3.1 Ms Kauffman \(Commission\)](#) said that it should be stated that the Commission had also supported the view that Social dialogue should be included as a strategic area of intervention.
  - [6.5](#) The Chairperson commented that the minutes did not reflect the depth of discussion.

The Bureau agreed that the text should be amended as follows:

*The Director pointed out that what was required was to identify broader areas where less would be done in the future, for example 'events' or 'restructuring'. This would give him the possibility to identify a number of specific activities and propose projects that would not be pursued. He clarified, for example, that dropping the Forum would not lead to major savings as this event was not significantly more*

expensive than other comparable events. He said that there was no budgetary reason to drop any specific project in 2017 as the budget was balanced.

The Chairperson concluded that additional detailed information, including costs, should be provided in future meetings in order to be in a position to make informed decisions.

The Bureau also agreed that the following sentence be added:

On 'youth' and 'migration' it was the opinion of the Bureau that the text should demonstrate that in contrast to previous drafts of the Programming Document, these topics were now being addressed as part of several strategic areas of intervention, rather than as separate activities.

### 3. **Progress report of the Director**

#### 3.1 **The Director** updated the Bureau on activities since the last meeting in December.

An internal risk analysis workshop for the Programming Document (PD) had been held in Dublin and an invitation to participate had been extended to Board members. Mr Cullen, member for the Irish government had participated and had reported to the Board afterwards. Following the workshop, the Risk Register (Annex 8 of the PD) had been updated with a finalised version to be available shortly. He noted that an executive summary of the *ex ante* evaluation report would accompany the Programming Document when it was sent to the Institutions.

Eurofound had presented on behalf of the EU Agencies in the discharge hearings at the budget committee of the Council on 7 January, where the topic of planned and unplanned carry overs was once again of great interest.

Detailed planning of 2016 projects was underway, the 2016 programme having been adopted in November.

Budget utilisation in 2015 was good (99.9%) with carryovers of EUR 2.6 million (only 2% of which were unplanned).

He informed the Bureau of upcoming written procedures (Reporting officers for appraisal of the Director, carry overs) including approval of the Programming Document, the draft of which would be endorsed by the Board prior to its submission to the Commission for an inter-service consultation, prior to its final adoption by the Board before 1 July. The Bureau members were requested to ensure that their Groups understood that the document represented an agreement reached in the Bureau, in order to avoid any delays or problems during the written procedure.

#### 3.2 **Mr Maes (Commission)** said that in relation to the issue concerning the requirement of language versions for publishing of vacancy notices of the EU Agencies in EPSO the legal services of the Commission would need to work on a concrete text and he asked Eurofound to forward its policy on the working language.

### 4. **Programming Document 2017-2020 – final draft (B 255/4)**

#### 4.1 Negative Priorities

##### 4.1.1. The **Director** started with a short explanation on the meaning of negative priorities, which had been the cause of some confusion in the previous meeting and the background to the note on negative priorities.

Negative priorities were included in the PD as it was a requirement to indicate operational areas which had been de-prioritised due to budgetary restraints. They would not necessarily remain the same over a four-year period, and could be revisited. This section of the document was mainly directed at the Budgetary Control Committee of the

European Parliament, who in response to protests by Agencies against reductions in their budgets, wished to see how the reductions had had an impact on the work of the Agency i.e. where the cuts had fallen.

The Governing Board was invited to give guidance to the Director on the principles to be applied with respect to negative priorities. However, it was not necessary to refer to and identify specific projects or activities.

4.2 The **Chairperson** invited the Groups to comment on the final draft of the programming document.

4.2.1 **Ms Bulgarelli (Governments)** made the following comments on behalf of her Group.

- The Group felt that the document represented a balanced work programme and they welcomed the inclusion of older unemployed workers as a subject of research.
- However, it was felt that limiting the scope to researching how to re-integrate (older) workers who had lost their job due to collective dismissals was too limited.
- In relation to negative priorities she felt that it would be useful to have some kind of performance indicator for negative priorities e.g. to understand the impact of each activity on stakeholders. The way the negative priorities were presented currently risked giving the impression that Eurofound was not able to carry out its core tasks.

4.3.1 **Ms Rossi (Employers)** made the following comments on behalf of the Employers.  
*[Note all references are to the tracked changes version]*

Line 482, the Employers would prefer not to mention ‘capacities’ of social partners in the framework of the key dimensions of industrial relations. ...’. There was a risk that capacity could be interpreted in a more general way.

**Ms Bober** added that there were real concerns within the Group regarding interference by governments in national social dialogue practices, or an implication that there was a single model of social dialogue that should be aspired to.

4.3.2 **Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** said that it was essential that the project involved a kind of mapping exercise. The research did not relate to identifying a single model. In the ‘new start’ for social dialogue at European level, there was a lot of emphasis on capacity building for the social partners, with the social partners themselves asking for more information about the structural capacities of members to engage in social dialogue. **Mr Maes (Commission)** said that mapping the situation would contribute to improving the capacity of the social partners. It was the Commission’s opinion that there had been agreement on this point during discussions in the previous Bureau meeting.

4.3.3 **The Director** said that the Commission’s written suggestions regarding this project, had not been incorporated in the document as it was felt they did not wholly reflect the conclusions of the Bureau, but that the spirit of their text was reflected. The research would look at areas of support for capacity building.

He explained that the research comprised three elements: a mapping exercise following Eurofound’s key dimensions of industrial relations (currently ongoing); the Representativeness studies in the 2016 programme which would document the mandate of EU level social partners as outlined in their statutes, rules and procedures, by laws etc.; and this proposal which was to continue that mapping exercise on the national level.

He proposed removing the word ‘capacity’ and amending the sentence as follows:

‘At national level, Eurofound will map the situation of social dialogue in the framework of the key dimensions of industrial relations developed by the Agency. This will allow identifying areas where mutual learning or support could be of help.’

The Bureau agreed to this solution.

4.3.4 The **Employers** continued.

Line 597, *Well-functioning and inclusive labour markets* - the Group would like to make it clearer that the issue of wages in connection with inclusive labour markets goes beyond the debate of a living wage. Also, issues around wages are not only related to inclusive but also to well-functioning labour markets.

It was proposed to amend line 597-601 as follows ‘Wages are a key element of inclusive labour markets. In a further line of research, Eurofound will examine the concept of a living wage, which is different from statutory minimum wages or minimum income schemes and how this has been implemented as one of the means to provide an adequate income for maintaining a decent standard of living and allowing a full participation in society.’

There was a short discussion on whether the research should look at the definition of a living wage, or whether there was an understanding of what this meant. There were doubts that it would be possible to measure ‘full participation in society’.

**Ms Gerstenberger** clarified that this was the purpose of the research, to see what criteria were used to define a living wage. The general definition of a living wage was not very precise (an acceptable standard of living and participation in society) so the research would attempt to find out what was meant by the term and how it was applied in practice.

4.3.5 The **Employers** continued:

- Line 789, the Group did not agree with the proposal to focus on social welfare expenditure, as they felt that it was how the money was spent in the social field that was important, for example in active labour market policies.
- The Commission agreed and it was decided to delete the end of the sentence as follows: ‘Eurofound will focus on a small number of broad indicators ~~such as social protection expenditure.~~’

2017 work programme

- *2.1.5 Monitoring Structural Change and managing restructuring* - in relation to the secondary analysis of the 6<sup>th</sup> European Working Conditions Survey (6<sup>th</sup> EWCS) the Group still felt that it was problematic to analyse the associations between restructuring and health and wellbeing of employees. Ms Bober had raised a number of questions regarding the methodology of this research, without receiving satisfactory responses.

As a compromise the Employers proposed to look instead in this project at the re-employment prospects of older workers (a project requested by the Governments) and at the same time, not to delete the project on geographical and skills mismatches in the labour market (a project favoured by the Employers).

The **Director** replied that Eurofound had already tried to address the concerns of the Employers, by removing for example references to health and work intensity. There were a number of questions in the 6<sup>th</sup> EWCS related to restructuring and it was a particular request of colleagues dealing with restructuring to see where there were correlations between restructuring and self-reported health.

**Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** welcomed this research which, she said, represented a good example of efforts to bridge the gap between different research areas, as a restructuring project was drawing on data from the 6<sup>th</sup> EWCS and was therefore welcome.

**Ms Gerstenberger** said that it was important to recall the reason for the project,

which was that the working conditions survey included a question which made it possible to distinguish the population of workers who had experienced restructuring in the previous twelve months from the population who had not, and that it was possible to compare the two groups with regard to their health, bearing in mind that it was self-reported health and wellbeing. The two groups could also be compared with regards to work intensity experienced, or job security. Colleagues felt it would be a lost opportunity not to compare the two groups. This was the background to the proposal.

The **Director** replied that the project was broader than health and wellbeing. The text at line 1772 would be revised thus: ‘to analyse the associations between restructuring and working conditions based on findings from the 6<sup>th</sup> European Working Conditions Survey’.

- In conclusion the **Employers** said that they felt that the project on digitalisation could be more ambitious.

The **Director** explained that the ILO and OECD were working extensively in this area on a larger scale. Eurofound was aiming to produce research in line with its expertise and had proposed something that would be feasible in 2017, i.e. to develop a general research approach for investigating the broad labour market implications of digitalisation in future, and to look at data from the 6<sup>th</sup> EWCS (on e-nomads).

**Mr Scherrer (Workers)** said that digitalisation was a big challenge for the changing characteristics of employment and was very important for the Workers and Employers, who needed to be more involved in the research.

**Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** asked how Eurofound would look at the impact of digitalisation on social dialogue, as this was not clear from the planned outputs. **Ms Gerstenberger** said that research on the working conditions of e-nomads would also look at what the social partners had said about the situation, though she noted that social dialogue was mainstreamed throughout the programme. It could, she agreed, be made more explicit in the deliverables for 2017.

#### 4.3.6 Following a short break, the meeting resumed with **Ms Hoffmann** delivering comments on behalf of the **Workers Group**.

- *2.1.10 Monitoring Convergence in the European Union*, it was felt that greater reference was needed to the fact that the research would also look at convergence within Member States.
- Page 20, *Europe-wide surveys*, the text seemed to infer that a decision had been taken in relation to the cycle of the surveys. Until that decision was taken it was better simply to state that the current approach was financially unsustainable in the medium term and would require consideration to adjusting the frequency or other characteristics.
- Page 22, she enquired about Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the communication approach.

The **Director** replied that a number of the KPIs (corporate level and activity level) are related to communication (e.g. downloads, contributions to events, etc.) and that a break-down by country and even by Group is possible and being done.

- Page 31, The text in relation to negative priorities was confusing and should either be more general and refer to principles, or be more detailed listing some of the examples from the discussion in the previous Bureau.

**Mr Blomsma (Governments)** agreed with this approach and referred to Ms

Bulgarelli's earlier suggestions regarding the use of indicators. He did not think that the surveys, which were considered the flagship activity of Eurofound, should be included in this section.

**Ms Gerstenberger** explained how some of the other agencies had dealt with the issue, for example in stating that they would reduce multilingualism, or would undertake less *ad hoc* research, or defer certain support projects. They were very concrete proposals.

**Mr Maes (Commission)** did not think it was a good idea to include principles here, but rather to have clear statements.

- The **Workers** concluded with a request for further information about the evaluation of European Restructuring Monitor (ERM) data.

4.3.7 **Mr Maes** speaking on behalf of the **Commission** commended Eurofound for their work on the Programming Document and felt that it was a good basis for the next four years.

- He was surprised to see the Representativeness Studies included in the list of negative priorities and felt that there should be further discussion on the issue.
- In relation to the ERM data the Commission was working on the EU Quality Framework for restructuring and there was a clear link with this, and a clear request from the Commission to continue that monitoring within that context.
- In light of the earlier discussions on survey data relating to working conditions and health, perhaps there was scope to consider a more structured form of cooperation between the EU Agencies.
- Communication activities at the national level would have lower priority for the Commission.

4.3.8 **Mr Blomsma (Governments)** said that the Group were happy with the document and thanked Eurofound staff for their work.

- Page 12, line 355, the Group asked for the following text to be inserted 'Issues related to demography, such as ageing societies and ageing workforces, migration ...'
- Page 13, Industrial relations the text gave the impression that Industrial relations was something different from social dialogue. It should be clarified that social dialogue is considered an element of industrial relations.
- Line 1246, 'Working conditions are shaped by industrial relations, the quality of social dialogue and its outcomes' was a pertinent sentence and it was fair to say that government policies also had a role to play
- Page 40, Well functioning and inclusive labour markets - the Group did not want an exclusive focus on collective redundancies, so asked to delete the word 'collective' in line 1637.
- The **Director** said that it would be necessary to confirm whether the budget allocated to the activity would allow expanding the scope of the research and cover other situations than collective redundancies.

4.3.9 **Ms Welter (Governments)** made the following comments:

Page 14, line 499, referring to the statement in the document on the absence of updated comparative information on industrial action in the Member States she said that it might be the case that the ILO had such data, and asked that this be checked.

In relation to older unemployed persons, she referred to the new measures in place in Luxembourg for people over 45 who are unemployed and thought it would be a pity not to map such measures, if the focus was only on those losing their job as a result of

collective redundancies.

The Group supported collaboration with the ILO on the *Future of work centenary initiative* especially regarding the planned event in 2019 as such collaboration would be useful for both the ILO and Eurofound. As stated already, the social partners should be involved in the project.

- 4.4 **The Director** thanked the members for their comments and noted that the Programming Document would be submitted for written approval of the Board and then sent to the Commission for an inter-service consultation.

Any comments received during written procedure would be forwarded along with the executive summary of the *ex ante* evaluation report by Ipsos MORI, to the Institutions.

He further clarified the following:

Noting that details formerly included in the Multiannual Staff Policy Plan were now incorporated in the Programming Document, he drew the attention of the Bureau to the statement in the document that it was proposed to shift long term administrative tasks in the agency towards contract agent posts, rather than temporary agent posts. He noted that the internal social dialogue on this point was ongoing and that there might be further comments from the staff representatives.

5. Work Programme 2018 – planning schedule (B 255/5)

The **Director** confirmed that in relation to the planning schedule he had suggested to colleagues that the Advisory Committees could be used to review planning of the work programme, but not wishing to reopen previous discussions reminded that the committees did not have a formal role in approval of the programme.

**It was decided to move the May Bureau meeting to a date in early June, in order to discuss a first draft of the 2018 programme before submitting a draft document for discussion in the Group meetings at the end of June.**

6. Internal Control Coordinator Annual Work Plan 2016 (B 255/6)

The **Deputy Director** explained and the Bureau noted that the work plan would be sent to the Commission by end of January 2016.

7. Cooperation Agreements (B 255/7)

The Bureau noted the content of the cooperation agreements.

8. The **Chairperson** thanked the members and closed the meeting. The next meeting of the Bureau would be held on **Thursday, 10 March 2016 in Dublin.**

[Signed H.Fonck]

[Signed J.Ménéndez-Valdés]

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Chairperson

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Director

**DRAFT AGENDA**  
**256th MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE GOVERNING BOARD**  
*CC2, Raymond-Pierre Bodin Conference Centre, Eurofound, Dublin*  
*Thursday, 10 March 2016, 09h30-13h00*

1. Draft Agenda (B 256/1), *For Adoption*
2. Draft Minutes of the 255th Bureau Meeting of 15 January 2016 (B 256/2), *For Adoption*
3. Progress Report of the Director (B 256/3), *For Information*
4. Revision of Founding Regulation - update by the Commission (B256/4), *For Information*
5. Monitoring restructuring at Eurofound (B 256/5), *For Discussion*
6. Update on Information & Communication activities (B 256/6), *For Information*
7. EurWORK reporting, country profiles and country updates (B256/7 ), *For Discussion*
8. Annual feedback on National Correspondents' contacts with GB (B 256/8),  
*For Information*
9. Programming Document – updated planning schedule (B 256/9), *For Discussion*
10. Preparations for the Summer Group meetings (B 256/10), *For Decision*
11. AOB

Date and venue of **next Bureau meeting**:

**Friday, 3 June 2016 at 9:00 hrs**

Brussels, Conseil Central de l'Economie (Eurofound's Brussels Office)

**REVISED FINAL MINUTES**  
**256TH MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE GOVERNING BOARD**

*9.30-13.30, Thursday, 10 March 2016*

*Room CC2/3, Raymond Pierre Bodin Conference Centre, Eurofound, Dublin*

<b>Mr Fonck</b>	Chairperson of the Governing Board (Workers)
<b>Ms Bulgarelli</b>	Vice-Chairperson of the Governing Board (Governments)
<b>Ms Welter</b>	Member of the Governing Board (Governments)
<b>Mr Kokalov</b>	Member of the Governing Board (Workers)
<b>Mr Blomsma</b>	Coordinator, Member of the Governing Board (Governments)
<b>Ms Bober</b>	Coordinator (Employers)
<b>Mr Scherrer</b>	Coordinator (Workers)
<b>Ms Hoffmann</b>	Alternate coordinator (Workers)
<b>Mr Mühl</b>	Member of the Governing Board (Employers)
<b>Mr Maes</b>	European Commission
<b>Mr Menéndez-Valdés</b>	Director
<b>Ms Mezger</b>	Deputy Director
<b>Mr Grimmeisen</b>	Secretary to the Governing Board
<b>Ms Gerstenberger</b>	Eurofound
<b>Mr Storrie</b>	Eurofound (for item 5)
<b>Ms Aumayr</b>	Eurofound (for item 7)

1. Adoption of Draft Agenda (B 256/1)

Regrets were received from Ms Kauffmann (Commission). The draft agenda was **adopted**.

2. Adoption of Draft minutes of Bureau meeting 15 January 2016 (B 256/2)

The **Chairperson** said that at 2.2.1 his comments in relation to item 6.5 in the December minutes on negative priorities were not properly reflected, mainly that specific activities had been discussed (the Foundation Forum, the European Restructuring Monitor (ERM), the European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS)).

**Mr Maes (Commission)** said that it would not be correct to say that these topics had been discussed in the Bureau, but rather that the approach to identifying negative priorities had been discussed, with a conclusion that more in-depth discussion would be required.

It was agreed that the minutes of the December and January Bureau meetings would be reviewed in relation to this point, for final adoption in June.

3. Progress Report of the Director (B 256/3)

3.1 The **Director** updated the Bureau on activities since January.

- Highlights included the presentation of Eurofound's Work Programme to the European Parliament's Employment Committee (23 February) and the European Economic and Social Committee (24 February) where there had been a good

response with a number of interesting questions.

- A joint Presidency event *Promoting Decent Work on the European Labour Market: towards better compliance and enforcement* was held on 8 February in Amsterdam.
- The fourth of a series of national-level seminars, held over the period of the four-year work programme in various Member States, on themes relevant to a cluster of countries, had taken place in Warsaw on 3-4 March. The seminar theme was *Quality Jobs: from low wage to an innovation economy* and included participants from the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. He reminded the Bureau that Eurofound welcomed proposals for cluster seminars from interested Member States. The proposals were often driven by the Governments' Group, who tended to have access to venues and were in a position to share costs, although he noted that in the case of the recent event in Poland it was the Employers' Group who had promoted the event. Previous cluster seminars had looked at the European Youth Guarantee (Spain, November 2013), the Social inclusion of youth and the workplace (Romania, June 2014) and Posted Workers (Lithuania, November 2014). The seminars provided an opportunity also to present Eurofound in the participating Member States and therefore had a national outreach function.
- Eurofound had participated in a lively Social Partners' lunch debate on the *Role of social partners in the European semester* in Brussels on 16 February. He explained that these events were organised by Eurofound's Brussels Liaison Office generally twice a year, usually to coincide with the launch of a publication.
- The 2016 annual report of the *European Jobs Monitor* (EJM) was currently being edited and he alerted the members to the fact that the monitor, which looked at jobs created and jobs destroyed, was using for the first time an innovative task framework for occupational analysis.
- The draft final report *Do reduced non-wage labour costs lead to more sustainable jobs? - A review of evaluations* had been discussed in an experts meeting on 25 February, with a satisfactory response to the outcome of what was a meta-evaluation exercise. He thought that this kind of research was something that Eurofound should do more of, i.e. collecting existing evaluations and trying to draw additional conclusions that were useful for policymakers.
- A peer review had been completed on the structure and the job quality indices in the Sixth European Working Conditions Survey (6<sup>th</sup> EWCS). Work was ongoing on the global analysis report with the ILO.
- Of interest were a number of topical updates from EurWORK on *Digitalisation and working life, lessons from Uber cases around Europe*, and *Approaches towards labour market integration of refugees in the EU*, which was a shorter article that had been produced at short notice, with a further Comparative Analytical Report (CAR) on the subject in the pipeline during the year. These were available on the website.
- Of interest to the Bureau would be the report on *Working time patterns for*

*sustainable work*, a secondary analysis of the 6<sup>th</sup> European Working Conditions Survey. The project on *Exploring self-employment in Europe* consisted of a Comparative Analytical Report (CAR) that would include secondary analysis of findings of 6<sup>th</sup> EWCS.

- The report on the *Role of Social Partners in the National Reform Programmes and in the European Semester* would be presented at the Council's Employment Committee on 30 March and an abridged version would be included in the ILO publication *Social dialogue after the crisis*. **Mr Scherrer (Workers)** added that the ETUC were financing a project with the ILO on strategic partnership in social dialogue, identifying newer approaches in social dialogue after the crisis. Eurofound had been invited to be part of the steering committee for the project in order to ensure complementarity between the work of Eurofound and the ILO in the area. The findings of the project would be discussed at a conference in the French senate in May 2016.
- The preparations for the *Fourth European Quality of Life Survey* were ongoing, but budgetary constraints meant that there would be a reduced sample size. Even with this reduction the cost would be EUR 3.6 million. The Italian government were topping up the sample size for Italy.  
**Ms Bulgarelli (Governments)** asked for information about the network of national partners from the 33 countries in the survey. The **Director** replied that the contractor for the whole of Europe had partners carrying out the survey in the Member States. For the first time in a Eurofound survey there would be a meeting of all these national partners, which allowed a good opportunity to consider quality assurance and avoid some of the issues in previous surveys.
- **Ms Bulgarelli (Governments)** further asked about the project on the integration of refugees in the labour market and particularly how the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) was included to deliver research on the topic in light of all the work being done at the OECD and throughout the Member States. The Director explained how it had emerged during the presentation of Eurofound's work programme at the EESC that there were areas where collaboration would be possible in relation to case studies carried out by the EESC and Eurofound's own CAR on the subject. It remained to be seen how this collaboration would work out in practice. An advantage of the EESC as a partner in this research was of course that the Committee was composed of social partners coming from the national level.
- **Mr Maes (Commission)** asked if it would be possible to include the publication dates for reports in the progress report.
- The **Director** updated the Bureau on budgetary and Human Resource matters. In relation to the external audit there had been just one preliminary observation following the audit, regarding the transitional calculations in salaries of staff before and after the 2004 amendments to the staff regulation. At present two cases had been identified, but further checks were being made. The budget discharge proceedings in the Parliament had gone well.

- Eurofound had now concluded its term as coordinator for the Network of the Agencies, handing over to the Alicante agency in February. A significant achievement of its term as coordinator was the adoption of a proactive strategic agenda for the network, establishing key priorities for the agencies including the potential for shared services. The strategic agenda would be circulated to the Bureau members.
- 3.2 **Mr Blomsma (Governments)** informed the Bureau that the Governments' Group wished to nominate Ms Bulgarelli as reporting officer for appraisal of the Director. **Ms Rossi (Employers)** said that the Employers too would shortly have a new nomination for reporting officer for the appraisal of the Director, replacing Ms Drbalová.
- A written procedure would be launched as soon possible as it was necessary to carry out the appraisal at the earliest convenience.
- 3.3.1 The **Director** then presented the results of a Staff Engagement Survey carried out in Eurofound in 2015.
- This was the second staff engagement survey in Eurofound, the first carried out as part of a framework contract with a number of other EU agencies in 2013. It should be noted he said that of the over 40 Agencies, some 20 signed the framework contract, 16 agencies carried out the first survey, and only six had repeated the exercise. The results of this survey remained 'satisfactory' and within the average of the Agencies, but there was a general decrease in staff engagement in the agency of 6 points, with the contractor indicating that the results were 'barely satisfactory'.
- Concerns emerging from the online part of the process (the survey) related to leadership (referring namely to vision) and accountability in the organisation amongst other issues. An on-site part of the survey would take place in March, consisting of focus groups and interviews, following which an action plan would be developed and implemented in the coming months. Actions would be introduced in conjunction with 'fit for purpose' measures already anticipated in relation to the Programming Document and the new four-year programme.
- Factors that may have influenced the results were: delays in the appraisal and evaluation of staff and subsequent promotions; the development of the Programming Document which had been a heavy new process, with staff disappointed where a proposal had not been taken into account for example; and problems linked to the difficult implementation of the new website, amongst other issues.
- 3.3.2 The Bureau members thanked the Director for presenting these results in such a transparent manner. There was agreement that it was not the role of the Bureau to intervene in areas that were the responsibility of the Director. Without commenting directly on matters they cautioned to avoid further reorganisations where previous ones had failed, as this was known to be a source of great frustration for staff. It was noted that researchers often had a particular approach to autonomy and legitimacy in the workplace that it would be good to consider in matters of human resource management. Eurofound depended on staff that were motivated and committed.
- They shared the Director's concerns and were supportive of his plans to address the situation in the future.
4. Update from the Commission on revision of the founding regulation (B 256/4)

- 4.1 **Mr Maes (Commission)** first conveyed regrets from Ms Kauffmann who had been forced to cancel her travel plans at the last minute due to other commitments.

The Commission had circulated to the Bureau a note that had been shared with the European Social Partner organisations to advise them on the main provisions of the proposed founding regulations during consultations. The note therefore reflected the state of play on 24 February when the consultation had taken place. The text was evolving and had evolved in the meantime.

He would go through the main provisions of the document, and indicate where they might change. The feedback of members of the Bureau was welcome but he underlined that the Bureau meeting was not a forum for negotiation.

- It had been decided to keep the founding regulations for the three tripartite agencies (Eurofound, EU-OSHA and Cedefop) together as a package. The legal basis for Eurofound's regulation was confirmed as Article 153(2)a of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) which concerned measures that could be adopted to encourage cooperation between Member States in order to achieve the objectives set out in Articles 151 to 153 of the TFEU. The same legal basis would be used for EU-OSHA. The legal basis for Cedefop's regulation was Article 149 of the Treaty.

Because of its basis in Article 153 there was a legal requirement to consult the social partners, which formed the background to the consultation meeting on 24 February where the proposal had been discussed. The document contained a number of main provisions indicating the directions of the founding regulations. The social partners had been invited to submit written comments.

- The document set out the tasks and objectives of the agencies and included an annex which was more detailed. This was still a work in progress, with the section on communication likely to change. Eurofound's regulation would be changed to bring it more into line with other agencies, with communication as one of its core tasks.
- In relation to pending issues, the composition of the Governing Board had been the subject of frequent exchanges with the Bureau and the Social Partners. Commissioner Thyssen's recent letter to the Chairperson of the Board had expressed her clear intention to maintain the current composition.
- Regarding the role of the Bureau and the division of competencies between the Bureau and the Governing Board, the regulation followed the common approach. Some issues had still to be addressed with regard to the internal structures, for example in relation to those between the Bureau and the Director.
- An important change was that to procedures for appointment of the Director, whereby the Commission would publish the vacancy notice, preselect candidates and then present a list to the Governing Board. Discussions were ongoing on the possibility to have a designated observer of the Governing Board during the preselection interviews.
- The Advisory Committees would be included in the founding regulations and, reflecting the current situation, their members would be drawn from the Governing Board with some designated by the Groups from outside the Board.
- It was not foreseen that the role of Deputy Director would be included in the recast founding regulation.
- The Commission was reviewing the delegation by the Governing Board to the

Director of the role of the Appointing Authority, but he noted that there were examples in a number of agencies where implementing rules clearly set out the exceptions when this role could be taken back by the Board.

- The programming and reporting in the agency would be brought in line with the guidelines issued by the Commission services (in close cooperation with the network of agencies) and the new framework financial regulation. The Commission would carry out wide-ranging reviews every five years, assessing the impact, effectiveness and efficiency of the agency, looking at its working practices but also its mandate, in order to examine whether there was a need to continue with the agency under the circumstances. It was the intention to align the evaluation of the tripartite agencies in order to have more evidence on the synergies and potential overlaps to be avoided between the three agencies.
- It was intended to adopt a text within the Commission in May, in order to start discussions during the Dutch Presidency.

4.2 **Ms Bulgarelli (Governments)** thanked the Commission for this information and made the following comments about the document:

- The clear legal foundation for the regulation was a positive development, and it was to be welcomed that Eurofound was now included in the social policy chapter of the Treaty.
- A major issue however was the fact that in the current draft the objectives set up for Eurofound (to assist the Commission in shaping and implementing policies aimed at improvement of living and working conditions ...') conflicted heavily with those in the Treaty 'to encourage cooperation between Member States through initiatives aimed at improving knowledge, developing exchanges of information and best practices, promoting innovative approaches and evaluating experiences.'
- There was a shift in the role of the Bureau and the Governing Board from strategic governance into management, which would have serious legal implications.
- There was an important overlap in the stated objectives of Eurofound (to research on labour market developments) and Cedefop (to research on labour market trends) which should be avoided.
- There were also overlaps between the roles of the Bureau and the Advisory Committees that should be considered.
- The issue of the Appointing Authority and the delegation to the Director was particularly delicate.
- She would like further information on the detail of the procedure for adopting the regulation and timings.

4.3 **Ms Welter (Governments)** reiterated concerns regarding the shift in the role of the Bureau, and the details regarding the Appointing Authority.

The role of the Member States and social partners were not mentioned in the objectives of Eurofound, which was of some concern.

4.4 **Mr Scherrer (Workers)** echoed comments that the day-to-day management of Eurofound was not the responsibility of the Bureau.

The Group would insist that the tripartite nature of Eurofound be reflected in the governance structures and also in relation to the role of the Deputy Director.

The stated objective to 'assist the Commission' indicated a diminution in the role of

the social partners that was not acceptable. It was the opposite of what was required, which was more involvement of the stakeholders and the social partners.

- 4.5 **Ms Rossi (Employers)** supported the comments of the other Groups. The objectives were formulated in a manner more suited to an executive agency of the Commission than a decentralised EU Agency.

Major legal difficulties could be foreseen in relation to the sections on the Appointing Authority. The members of the Governing Board were not employed by Eurofound, but were legally bound to their own organisations. A situation that might be feasible within the Commission could not be applied to Eurofound.

- 4.6 **Mr Maes (Commission)** thanked the Bureau members for their comments and said that the issues they had raised would be taken into the further considerations.

- In relation to the Bureau's responsibility for day-to-day management this was a case of an unfortunate selection of words, and should reflect in fact the current situation whereby the Bureau followed matters more closely than the Governing Board. He said that the areas on which the Bureau would take decisions were in relation to supervision and monitoring, but the text would be reviewed to avoid giving the impression that the Bureau was micromanaging.
- The overlap in the roles of Eurofound and Cedefop, and the Bureau and Advisory Committees would be reviewed.
- It had been generally recognised that the Advisory Committees should be anchored in the founding regulation. The article would be a short one, as provisions would most likely be dealt with in the implementing rules.
- The absence of reference to the Member States and social partners would be considered, but he noted that there was a clear indication that the Commission was the main user of the products of Eurofound and was a key institution with regards to the agency, something that should be appropriately reflected in the regulation. Again, this might be phrased in a better way.
- In relation to the role of the Deputy Director, the comments were noted but he had already highlighted the difficulties in that argument. The proposal would be presented in May for adoption by ordinary legislative procedure, i.e. with the Council and the Parliament on an equal basis. It would most likely be dealt with in the Employment Committee of the Parliament, and taken during the Dutch Presidency (ending in June 2016). It was likely that there would be trilogue meetings between the Institutions in order to finalise the text. The Commission's proposal would be forwarded to the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, who would also have an opportunity, if they wished, to issue an opinion.
- It was likely that the regulation would be discussed in the EPSCO working party of the council rather than ECOFIN.
- In response to requests to distribute the document further within their Groups, he said that as it had been distributed in a limited way to the Bureau, any further dissemination should clearly state that comments had been made in the Bureau and that further comments were not appropriate.

- 4.7 The **Chairperson** thanked the Commission for this update on progress.

5. Monitoring and Restructuring at Eurofound (B 256/5)

- 5.1 **Mr Storrie**, Head of the Employment and Change unit in Eurofound made a short

presentation of Eurofound's research on monitoring and restructuring.

He outlined the origins of the European Monitoring Centre on Change (EMCC) in the joint opinion of the social partners of November 2000 which stated that Eurofound should monitor drivers of change in the European economy with special attention to employment and labour markets.

The *European Restructuring Monitor* (ERM) was part of Eurofound's restructuring monitoring but the larger picture of structural change was presented in the *European Jobs Monitor* (EJM). Additionally there were databases on regulation and support instruments and restructuring studies. The research retained an important future orientation.

The ERM database measured job loss for economic reasons, e.g. technological development, reorganisation, lack of work. This was broader than collective redundancies which was a specific legal term.

He outlined the ERM workflow. It only looked at job losses over a certain threshold. (either 100 jobs or establishments of less than 250 people where at least 10% were affected). A network of correspondents was obliged to scan various media sources weekly, and these weekly reports were consolidated annually. Additionally there was digital scanning of media sources throughout Europe, which was then notified to the correspondents who prepared the report. Factsheets were also provided by the correspondents and were published on the website within a week.

Positives of the ERM were that it was a unique measure of job loss in Europe. It was also quick, which was appreciated by policymakers. The named cases in the public domain permitted follow up research, quality control was good. Caveats were that it did not pick up all restructuring cases due to the threshold, it meant that more manufacturing firms were reported on, it had a country bias (with some Member States having fewer large companies), and a country-size bias in reporting (job loss might be big news in smaller economies). It did not capture all job losses for economic reasons. It was not representative of comparisons between Member States, was somewhat representative of sector (given the known biases) and was representative over time in some Member States.

It was quick when the labour market was volatile, and had provided data on a monthly basis to the European Commission in its monthly labour market reports throughout the Great Recession. The ERM had the potential to be an early warning system but, he said, it was the named case approach that was its major strength. There were over 20,000 restructuring cases in the database and it was used extensively by the European Globalisation Fund (EGF) to monitor new cases and the Quality Framework on Restructuring (QFR), for example in producing the Cercas report.

It was useful also for exemplifying representative data, through its cases. It had good offshoring data that had been used recently in a high profile article by the prestigious journal the *American Economic Review*. There were roughly 20 requests for the dataset per annum, most recently from the OECD.

A consultant's review of the ERM in 2007 found that redundancies announced eventually resulted in job losses in all cases, with however over-reporting of the number of job losses in 50% of cases. This was due, Mr Storrie asserted, to the phenomenon where job loss announcements led to job quits or voluntary redundancies prior to the actual restructuring, amongst other reasons. The consultants in 2007 had found it difficult to find accurate company data. They noted that where companies

notified to the authorities, often the public authorities were not diligent about collecting and publishing the information.

Eurofound identified a huge variation in the type of data and the timing of the reporting in Member States. This had led to an initiative in Belgium, with the assistance of Governing Board member Mr De Gols which utilised the collective redundancy data and reported it to the ERM correspondent there.

In the external evaluation of the ERM (which had included Board members) there had been unanimity on the perception of the strengths and weakness of the ERM as laid out in Eurofound's background paper. Two of the main restructuring experts recognised the limitations of the ERM but stated that they used it extensively. They recommended expanding the digital monitoring, and said that it was worthwhile to pursue the notification data as a complement to the ERM.

It was, he said, an effective project at an annual cost of EUR 120,000. The EMCC was mentioned in the regulation on the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund 2014-2020.

5.2 The **Chairperson** thanked Mr Storrie for his presentation.

As time was short, he stated that as Governing Board member for Belgium he had taken the notifications in the ERM announcement database and compared all ERM results for 2012 *ex post* with the data for the same companies unemployment, as registered later on in their officially registered accounts and balance sheets.

It provided significant discrepancies between ERM and the reality. In 9-21 retrievable cases the error was between 0- 30 %, in 7-21 cases between 30 and 100% and in 4 cases errors between 100-600 % or opposite outcomes, job growth versus announced declines or *vice versa*.

He asked if it would be possible to initiate an exercise that would validate the data across the Member States in a similar way.

5.3 **Mr Maes (Commission)** did not think that the Bureau was a suitable place to carry out this exercise but that a means should be found to reflect on the questions raised by the Chairperson.

5.4 The **Director** proposed that it could be discussed in the Advisory Committee in the autumn.

5.5 The **Chairperson** concluded that a way would be found to organise a meeting. It could include experts and the issue could then be reported back to the Bureau.

6. **The update on information and communication activities** was deferred until the **Bureau meeting in June**.

7. EurWORK reporting, country profiles and country updates (B 256/7)

7.1 **Ms Aumayr** presented on the quarterly reporting in the European Observatory on Work (EurWORK) and on the new country updates product.

With the launch of the new website in 2014 the research outputs previously presented in the EIRO and EWCO observatories had been brought together into a single observatory covering both industrial relation and working conditions. It had meant

significant changes in how the teams worked internally.

Previously, correspondents in the Network of Correspondents (NEC) had been required to produce a specific number of information updates on the basis of country size, but the volume produced had made it difficult to publish all of them in a timely manner. In the new contract period, it had been decided to switch instead to quarterly reporting, and these quarterly reports were grouped around topical areas: actors and institutions; collective employment relations; individual employment relations; pay; working time; health and wellbeing at work; skills, learning and employability; work organisation and additionally developments at EU level.

The correspondents submitted their quarterly reports around the eight topical areas, with some brief 200-300 word articles published quickly, and subsequently longer topical updates had also been prepared focusing on common issues across countries.

Quarterly reports were also used to select interesting country-based articles that were proposed by the correspondents and to update the working life country profiles. Finally all the contributions were reviewed for inclusion in the report: *EurWORK Annual review - Developments in Working Life*.

The 'Working Life Country Profiles' had been a long standing product (previously known as the 'Industrial Relations profiles') conceived as a product to provide national context for all the other reporting. The profiles described the *status quo* in a country, the actors, the institutions and how they worked, and in a way were Eurofound's most comparative product.

Recent developments included the extension of the scope of the profile to cover working conditions, and where available, comparative data within the different sections of the profiles.

New areas of reporting included a new topic on equality and discrimination at work, and reporting on public authorities involved in regulating working life, as well as a short paragraph on representativeness that included a section on which tripartite and bipartite organisations existed in a country and how they worked. The main section remained collective industrial relations profiles, to which a section on dispute resolution mechanisms had been added. A section on individual employment relations incorporated a section on employee rights. This had been rather broad previously so there were efforts to introduce more information here on entitlements and obligations. Pay developments were no longer reported in the profiles, as they were reported elsewhere on the website.

On working time, there was now more information on different working time relations, overtime, part-time and how working time flexibility was regulated. Correspondents were also asked to provide the main legislation in the areas of health and wellbeing at work, health and safety, psychological risks, and to describe a short paragraph on the national system for entering skills and employment, including the involvement of the social partners. The section on work organisation was still rudimentary, and finally a section on equality and non-discrimination at work looking not only at the gender pay gap, but putting it in the context of equal pay and any quota regulations in place.

The 'Country updates' were a new product to complement the 'Country profiles'. They were developed to respond to the difficulty in selecting the main issues from the quarterly reports, something which it was felt the correspondents were better placed to do. Also it was felt that there was a risk when using the topical and EU-level approach that interesting national developments might fall under the radar. It was

intended to complement the topical approach with a country perspective in a short 600 word country update.

Preparation of the country updates had been piloted and it was planned to upload them on a quarterly basis, with the first updates due in April 2016. They would be titled 'Latest developments in working life' and linked to the working life 'Country profiles' already on the website.

- 7.2 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** thanked Ms Aumayr for her presentation and congratulated the staff and team on their work. She found the Swedish update to be content rich and very balanced, with a good indication of issues that were important in Sweden.

The 'Country profiles' disseminated to the Bureau were also good, but she noted in relation to the Italy profile that language editing was important and required some more work.

What was likely to be developed in the section on work organisation she asked?

- 7.3 **Ms Rossi (Employers)** agreed that the reports were good and were a valuable resource for stakeholders, where sometimes comparability of data was important. She agreed that quality and language editing were of great importance.

- 7.4 **Mr Blomsma (Governments)** said that it was important to have basic information on the kinds of institutions, legislation and structures in a country and at the same time to have on a more regular basis information on new developments that are taking place. What was the relationship between the 'In brief' articles and the 'country updates' he wondered.

- 7.5 **Mr Maes (Commission)** congratulated the staff on the work and agreed that the comparability of data was very important. The Commission welcomed the emphasis on social dialogue and the involvement of the social partners in the working life country profiles. In the Commission these were used for the preparation of missions to the Member States in relation to the European Semester, and the quick reporting would be very useful for the geographical desks within DG Employment to check on the most recent developments.

- 7.6 **Ms Aumayr** thanked the members for their comments and feedback.

Responding to Mr Blomsma she said that in time the 'In brief' articles would be reduced. The trend was towards more in depth articles such as the article on the Uber case or the introduction of the German minimum wage and the discussion it had triggered in other Member States in the transport section.

It was not easy to say how the section on work organisation would be developed, it was considered that more information was available in other sections of the website such as the section on the European Working Conditions and the Company Survey. The country profiles on the website were considered as a kind of first point of entry to the range of material. On the Italian profile, she reminded that the last update had been done by the end of 2014, whereas much had changed in Italy in the meantime. Work was ongoing to improve the quality of the Italian content including a complete overhaul of the country profile as the correspondents reported that much had changed there in recent times.

She noted that there were some delays in publishing updated content on the website that were being addressed.

- 7.7 **The Director** added that country specific information was becoming more and more important for policymaking at European level.  
The feedback of the members was important and he asked them to review their own country profiles.
8. Annual feedback on National Correspondent's contacts with Board members (B 256/8)
- 8.1 **The Deputy Director** reported briefly on the item which concerned the type of contacts with the national correspondents during the previous year. As a number of Member States had not yet provided feedback it was agreed to extend the deadline for reply and report back to the Bureau in June.
- 8.2 **Mr Maes (Commission)** noting that there would be a meeting of the network in April, said that it would be good to encourage the correspondents to keep in touch with the European Semester Officers in the representations of the Commission. Details of Eurofound's national correspondents had been circulated to the Officers.
- 8.3 On a separate but related issue **Ms Welter (Governments)** asked if the stakeholders should add missing information, when it was available to them, to any representativeness study questionnaires sent to them for review. What was the responsibility of Governing Board members in following up on missing information in the questionnaire?  
**Ms Aumayr** said that she would check with colleagues and respond.
9. Work Programme 2018 planning schedule (B 256/9)
9. **The Work Programme 2018 Planning Schedule was adopted without discussion.**
10. The proposal for the **schedule of the Summer Group meetings (B 256/10)** was **approved** with a **decision not to have topical presentations** on the morning of the first day. The meetings would start at 14h00 on the first day.
11. The **Chairperson** asked that in future all slide presentations be made available to Bureau members in advance of the meeting.  
The date of the next Bureau meeting would be **Friday, 3 June 2016** in **Brussels**.

[Signed H.Fonck]

[Signed J.Menéndez-Valdés]

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Chairperson\_\_\_\_\_  
Director

**DRAFT AGENDA**  
**257th MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE GOVERNING BOARD**

*Conseil Central de l'Economie (CCE), Room 6,  
20 avenue d'Auderghem, 1040 Brussels,  
Friday, 3 June 2016, 9h00-13h00*

1. Draft Agenda (B 257/1), *For Adoption*
2. Draft Minutes of the 256th Bureau Meeting of 10 March 2016 (B 257/2), *For Adoption*
3. Progress Report of the Director (B 257/3), *For Information*
4. Revision of Founding Regulation - update by the Commission (B257/4), *For Information*
5. Initial draft Programming Document - incl. Work Programme 2018 (B 257/5),  
*For Discussion*
6. Consolidated Annual Activity Report (CAAR) 2015 (B 257/6), *For Discussion*
7. Update on Information & Communication activities (B 257/7), *For Information*
8. Renewal of the mandate of the Governing Board 2016 (B 257/8), *For Information*
9. **Annual feedback on National Correspondents' contacts with GB** (B 257/9) *updated document previously submitted as B 256/8, For Information*
10. AOB

Date and venue of **next Bureau meeting**:

**Friday, 16 September 2016 at 9:00 hrs**

Brussels, Conseil Central de l'Economie (Eurofound's Brussels Office)

**FINAL MINUTES**  
**257TH MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE GOVERNING BOARD**

*9.00-13.00, Friday, 3 June 2016*

*Room 6, Conseil Central D'Économie, Avenue d'Auderghem, Brussels*

<b>Mr Fonck</b>	Chairperson of the Governing Board (Workers)
<b>Ms Welter</b>	Member of the Governing Board (Governments)
<b>Mr Kokalov</b>	Member of the Governing Board (Workers)
<b>Mr Blomsma</b>	Coordinator, Member of the Governing Board (Governments)
<b>Ms Bober</b>	Coordinator (Employers)
<b>Mr Scherrer</b>	Coordinator (Workers)
<b>Ms Hoffmann</b>	Alternate coordinator (Workers)
<b>Mr Maes</b>	European Commission
<b>Ms Scanferla</b>	European Commission
<b>Mr Menéndez-Valdés</b>	Director
<b>Ms Mezger</b>	Deputy Director
<b>Mr Grimmeisen</b>	Secretary to the Governing Board
<b>Ms McCaughey</b>	Eurofound
<b>Ms Gerstenberger</b>	Eurofound
<b>Ms Jacquet</b>	Eurofound

1. Adoption of Draft Agenda (B 257/1)

**The draft agenda was adopted.**

Apologies were received from Ms Bulgarelli (Governments) and Ms Rossi (Employers).

2.1 Adoption of amendments to Minutes of Bureau meetings December 2015 and January 2016

Amended minutes of the December (B 255/2b) and January (B 256/2) Bureau meetings in relation to discussions on negative priorities had been submitted to the Bureau. The **Chairperson** said that there would be no further discussions on these minutes **and the amendments were agreed.**

2.2 Adoption of Minutes of Bureau meeting 10 March 2016 (B 257/2)

5.2 The **Chairperson** said that the paragraph should be amended to fully reflect his intervention on this point.

‘As time was short, he stated that as Governing Board member for Belgium he had taken the notifications in the ERM announcement database and compared all ERM results for 2012 *ex post* with the data for the same companies’ employment, as registered later on in their officially registered accounts and balance sheets.

It provided significant discrepancies between the ERM and the reality. In 9 of 21

retrievable cases the error was between 0-30 %, in 7 of 21 cases between 30 and 100% and in 4 cases, there were errors between 100-600 % or even opposite outcomes (job growth instead of announced declines or *vice versa* were reported).'

The **Director** confirmed that in relation to this point it had been decided that the ERM will be reviewed again in an Advisory Committee to which experts can be invited by the groups to replace some members. This discussion will be reported back to the Bureau.

- 2.3 **4.6 Mr Maes (Commission)** The last sentence in relation to the role of the Deputy Director should be deleted, as he had not indicated any openness within the Commission on this issue.

7.5 The sentence should be amended to clarify that the country profiles were used in the preparation of missions to the Member States in relation to the European Semester and by the geographical desks within the Commission.

- 2.4 Page 3, Mr Blomsma (Governments) on behalf of Ms Bulgarelli requested the following change to her intervention.

‘**Ms Bulgarelli (Governments)** further asked about the project on the integration of refugees in the labour market and particularly how the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) was included to deliver research on the topic, in light of all the work being done at the OECD and throughout the Member States’.

- 2.5 8.3 Ms Welter (Governments) said that the minutes did not fully reflect her question here, which concerned what actions a Governing Board member should take in relation to missing information in the questionnaires they received from the national correspondents for the representativeness studies. Her question was whether they should look for the missing information themselves or refer it back to the correspondent.

3. The **Director** updated the Bureau in his progress report.

- He highlighted a number of presentations by Eurofound in collaboration with the Dutch EU Presidency:
  - On integrated approaches to combating poverty across the EU at the informal Social Protection Committee (29 March),
  - On the role of the social partners in the European semester, at the informal Employment Committee (31 March),
  - On fraudulent forms and undeclared work, in the Employment and Social Affairs Council (19-20 April),
  - Some preliminary results of the segregation of NEETs report, which supported retention of the NEETs indicator, at the Employment Committee Indicator Group (21 April).
- Visitors to Eurofound included the newly appointed Director of the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA). He highlighted that discussions on the amendment of the founding regulation of FRA included considerations to add social and labour rights to the Agency’s remit. He highlighted the risk of overlap with Eurofound’s activities, and the need to avoid this.
- The first of two sessions of the tripartite Foundation Seminar Series on the impact of digitalisation on work in the EU were held in Eurofound on 26-27 May, with the second session planned for 13-14 October in Berlin.

- On 27 May the Director attended the launch of the European Platform for tackling undeclared work, of which Eurofound would be a member.
- He also attended the OECD Forum on 31 May on ‘The Digital World and the Future of Work’. It would be important to consider what Eurofound’s contribution to the debate might be in the future, as so much work was being done in this area already, and he mentioned informal discussions he had held at that meeting which had the potential to pursue a line of global comparison based on the EWCS for Latin American countries that would be very relevant for Eurofound.
- Eurofound had hosted the 39<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Data Protection Officers of the Institutions and Agencies and the European Data Protection Supervisor on 27-28 April.
- Eurofound had launched a selection procedure for a Policy Advisor (as Seconded National Expert). Two applications had been received, and information on the characteristic of the candidates and the procedure was provided, to ensure full transparency and non-conflict of interest in the process.
- The procedure for the renewal of the Governing Board had been launched by the Council in May. The mandate of the current Board would expire on 30 November 2016.
- He noted some recent publication highlights and reported on upcoming reports, explaining where there were delays.
- In relation to the project ‘Representativeness studies at the EU level’ and the concept of representativeness at national and EU level, the comments of the Advisory Committee were currently being incorporated into the report, as well as a request by the Commission to describe some pros and cons of possible scenarios’.

The study had led to a discussion of representativeness thresholds that existed in certain Member States at national level, and that might be considered at EU level. The report would map the situation at national level, but would be clear that any discussion of EU-level thresholds was the remit of the Commission and the social partners.

**Mr Scherrer (Workers)** said that Eurofound should describe the situation and should not make recommendations, which would be beyond its remit.

**Mr Maes (Commission)** said that he understood that the report mapped what was happening at national and EU level and that the idea was to also see to what extent, if at all, there could be some inspiration taken from what was happening at national level. Therefore in order to completely inform the discussion, the report would need to touch upon the issue mentioned by the Director, that certain concepts of representativeness that were used at national level might or might not be transferable at the European level.

He urged the Groups to pay close attention to this issue in the Advisory Committee as it was in the interests of all that the report be supported by everyone.

Both **Mr Kokalov (Workers)** and **Ms Bober (Employers)** said that Eurofound should not make policy recommendations.

**Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** explained that the report was due to be discussed at an Advisory Committee meeting that had been cancelled due to the Brussels bombings, and it had not therefore been given the attention it deserved. There

were sections of the report that required closer scrutiny particularly the section on policy recommendations or policy pointers.

**The Director** said that the report would be revised and circulated once again to the Groups. Eurofound's remit he reminded, was to provide knowledge to assist in policy discussions. Eurofound would map what was happening at national level and would indicate what kind of implications and possibilities could be considered at European level, without making any specific proposals. As there were reflections about this issue currently it would not be acceptable if they were not included in the report.

**Mr Maes (Commission)** agreed that with discussions on thresholds out in the policy debate it would make it really odd if Eurofound published a report on the concept of representativeness that did not touch upon the question.

**The Chairperson** said that the social partners should pay close attention to the report when it was circulated again for comments, but it was clear that Eurofound's role was not to make recommendations.

- **The Director continued**, noting that the 4<sup>th</sup> European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS) preparation of the fieldwork was ongoing. He reminded the Bureau that for cost reasons it had been necessary to reduce the sample size.
- There were good discussions with experts and the OECD on the case studies on Social Mobility in Europe.
- He gave details of the Steering Committee for the *Future of Manufacturing in Europe (FOME)* project, which met twice a year and whose next meeting was scheduled for 2 June. It was pointed out that one member of the Steering Committee had changed.
- He updated the Bureau on the budget implementation and informed them about budgetary transfers (i.e. between budget lines) of EUR 18,054.10 for the year to date.
- The preliminary observations of the Court of Auditors had been received. The report was good, with the only comment relating to the high level of carry-overs but with an additional explanation that they were 'mainly in relation to multiannual projects implemented according to schedule'.
- The next internal audit by the Internal Audit Service (IAS) was scheduled for 13-17 June and would concern project management.
- The discharge report by the Parliament for all the Agencies was very good (it had been coordinated for the network by Eurofound). It emphasised that 'the revision should preserve the key roles of these highly reputable agencies and their tripartite nature'.

Eurofound received a good discharge report, with an appreciation of 'the research provided by the Foundation and the valuable comparative information' and a note of 'their key importance for ensuring evidence based discussion on social and work-related policies'. A good discharge report demonstrated satisfactory planning and compliance in terms of budget implementation, but was important also at a time when discharge procedures were tending to emphasise more and more the performance and value of agencies.

- He outlined staff arrivals and departures, noting that a new web administrator would take up post in August.
- He outlined organisational developments which were arranged around three blocks. One followed up on the results of the staff engagement survey in the areas of vision, decision-making, cooperation, accountability, empowerment; Another

known as the ‘fit for purpose’ exercise, concerned adjusting the organisational structure to ensure a focus on priorities, improve coordination and consistency and ensure quality and responsiveness; and a third block addressed complementary issues such as better integration of research and communication, improved project management, improved career paths and better use of skills.

He outlined proposals for the organisational structure which were designed to align the work around the activities in the Programming Document, and introduced the post of Research Coordinator who would deal with the scientific coordination of research, and address *ad hoc* requests.

**Mr Scherrer (Workers)** asked whether the research coordinator represented an additional hierarchical element within the Directorate and what exactly was meant by coordination in the support area.

The **Director** replied that the role was a coordinating one rather than a managerial one, similar to the coordinator role played currently by Barbara Gerstenberger with no line management responsibilities over the Heads of Research. In the case of the support units it was not proposed to merge them, nor to create a full time job to coordinate them, but rather to try some softer coordination there exercised by one of the Heads of Unit.

He continued his report.

- Eurofound as a member of the troika coordinating the agencies had been invited to an Inter-Institutional Working Group on Performance Based Budgeting which was feasible in fee receiving agencies such as Alicante, but was perhaps more challenging for an agency like Eurofound.

He mentioned that Eurofound as coordinator of the network had introduced the procedure whereby the chairs of the Agencies Staff Committee were represented during plenary meetings of the Heads of Agencies.

- He reminded the members of a user satisfaction focus group meeting on 14 June, which formed part of Eurofound’s Performance Monitoring System (EPMS). The target group for the user survey were the stakeholders, and a random group had been selected for participation in the focus group.

It emerged through discussion that it had not been clear that these invitations had been randomly selected and that in some organisations multiple invitations had been received and had led to some confusion, including proposals to assign staff to participate in the focus group, which would of course go against the intention of the exercise.

The Director explained that the main focus of the exercise was the use of Eurofound outputs and publications.

- **Mr Blomsma (Governments)** wished to thank Eurofound for its contribution during the Dutch EU presidency with an involvement in nine meetings.
- **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** asked for information on the outcome of discussions with Cedefop on the Fourth European Company Survey. She had participated in the *ad hoc* working group where it had been decided that the group would inform their respective Governing Boards. What was the latest information, she asked.
- The **Director** replied and **Ms Gerstenberger** clarified that a note drawn up by the Group had been circulated for final agreement, with a conclusion that by September both Governing Boards should have formed an opinion to either go ahead or not with the decision to collaborate on the survey.

The **Director** concluded his progress report and the Chairperson thanked him and

closed the agenda item.

4. Revision of the Founding regulation – update by the Commission

4.1 **Mr Maes (Commission)** updated the members on progress in relation to the planned revision of Eurofound’s founding regulation, and responded to questions from the Bureau.

The Commission had prepared proposals based on indications given at the previous Bureau meeting, which had gone to an inter-service consultation where delays had occurred due to discussions on whether it was the right moment and right approach to bring a proposal for a new regulation, given also the discussions in the Inter-Institutional Working Group (IIWG2) on efficiencies and synergies. There was a view that it would be better to wait until a review and evaluation of the agency in relation to its tasks and mandates had been completed.

The outcome of discussions was to follow the initial proposal, to revise the founding regulations of the three tripartite agencies as a package, aligning as far as possible with the common approach, whilst at the same time the Commission would launch an in-depth evaluation looking at the mandates, tasks, synergies and performance of the three agencies. Preparations for this evaluation had already started with a plan to launch before the end of the year or by early 2017. It would run in the next year in parallel to negotiations with the Council and the Parliament on the revised founding regulation.

The revision of the regulation therefore would not touch fundamentally on the tasks and mandate of the agency, the review of which would form part of the more in-depth review of the agency. The commission would look also to ensure that the tasks are not overlapping and that maximum synergies are achieved.

The deadline for completing the evaluation was before the next Multiannual Financial Framework (i.e. before 2020).

The Commission had published a fiche on efficiency gains and synergies in the agencies presented at the March IIWG2 meeting, and there was explicit reference to the fact that there needed to be a closer look at the agencies working in the same policy areas.

5. Initial Draft Programming Document (B 257/5)

5.1 The **Director** highlighted some points for consideration, namely the structural problem in the new Programming Document, that the Board would discuss projects in 2018 that were continuations of 2017 projects which had not yet started, and how to have a rolling programme.

In his opinion it would be necessary to drop some of the projects in light of the increasing pressure on resources.

5.2 **Mr Maes (Commission)** said that in relation to previous discussions on negative priorities it would be necessary, and he would recommend that it be sooner rather than later, to have a more substantial identification of negative priorities, as the work programme would not be sustainable in the future.

5.3 There was a discussion on the Programming Document, touching in particular on how it was linked to the multiannual work programme, on whether the multiannual programme was a real rolling programme that each year should roll, and how the Board might consider the question of identifying negative priorities, which was one that would have a greater significance with increasing pressure of carrying out the

surveys and the network of correspondence against a situation of frozen or restricted budgets.

With an explanation of the background to these questions by the Director and Mr Grimmeisen, the issue of negative or lesser priorities would be discussed in the September Bureau.

**The document was not discussed and it was decided that a first draft of the Programming Document would go forward to the Groups for their consideration on 30 June.**

6. Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2015 (B 257/6)
- 6.1 The **Deputy Director** introduced the report to be sent to the Council, Parliament and the Commission by 15 June. Following any comments received during the Bureau and the inclusion of the Chairperson's introduction it would be submitted to the Governing Board for adoption.

There was a short feedback on the Chairperson's introduction.

7. Update on Information and Communication activities (B 257/7)
- 7.1 **Ms McCaughey** made a presentation on Eurofound's information and communication activities, and its broad communication direction for 2016, and provided an update on national level communication.

She focused on user feedback and performance analysis, national-level communication, events, and communication in the new Programming Document.

With a strategic objective to produce high quality, timely and policy relevant knowledge, Eurofound endeavoured to measure to what extent this had been achieved. Target groups were clearly defined and included EU-Level decision makers, EU social partners. At national level Eurofound sought to contribute useful comparative information on issues that were relevant at European level. Also at national level, the website had improved content at country level, and the survey mapping tool was available in all languages. An internal impact tracking database kept track of contacts and influences of Eurofound's researchers in their activities.

Targeted communication was directed at national level in the national languages via the website.

The recent cluster seminars had gathered groups of experts together at national level to discuss particular areas of interest. The fifth and final cluster seminar for this particular four year programme would be held in Berlin and would look at the integration of refugees into the labour market. She asked for the Board's feedback on whether these seminars should continue, and said that where members had been involved, their own personal experiences of the seminars would be very welcome.

Eurofound had taken a proactive approach to presenting at the various Parliamentary and Council committees. Efforts had been made to increase Eurofound's visibility at the tripartite economic and social committee, for example carrying out a number of joint events with the committee.

The collaboration with the EU Presidencies was very beneficial and relied on the good cooperation of the members of the Governments.

Events were largely focused in Brussels, but participation by Eurofound staff in events in Korea, Japan and Brazil demonstrated a global reach also.

Web downloads indicated a high number of users in the UK but a good spread across the Member States, with a high number of downloads of content in non-native

languages.

With regard to the Key Performance Indicators, KPI no. 8 concerned the contribution to policy developments through events, and she said that of the 206 contributions to events in 2015, 63% of those were to key targets already defined as communication priorities.

KPI no.9 concerned the use of Eurofound findings in key EU policy documents, and the outcomes were positive, with 25% of the total number relating to key EU policy documents, a 56% increase in references in European Parliament papers, and nearly 50% increase in EU-level social partner documents, over the period concerned.

In user surveys the responses were overwhelmingly positive that Eurofound was reliable, pan-European, objective and considered a key source at EU level which they would recommend to colleagues.

She highlighted factors that influenced the impact at EU level, including the personal relationships of colleagues in Eurofound's Brussels Liaison Office with the Parliament and the other EU Institutions.

In relation to the KPI no. 7 (uptake of Eurofound's knowledge through Eurofound's website) the most downloaded report in 2015 was the 6<sup>th</sup> European Working Conditions Survey first findings resumé, which went online in the last month of the year.

She turned to events and their role in the communication strategy. Her slides demonstrated that with a much reduced budget, the KPI targets were raised, demonstrating an efficient use of available resources.

Regarding future proposals, communication would hinge on the strategic areas of intervention, with a flagship report for each area over the four-year period, combined with a publication series formed around the activities, and a spotlight theme per activity or per strategic area of intervention, still to be decided.

It was planned to streamline the reports in order to reduce the number of outputs.

Plans were to introduce a new Policy Papers series, short papers which would refer to particular developments in a particular activity or strategic area and would be produced on an ongoing basis.

The external communication focus was yet to be decided although internally the work would be focused around the activity areas. The number and format of publications was also under consideration.

It was proposed to create a third portal on the website, to be called EURLife, from where users would access all the content on living conditions.

She concluded and welcomed questions or feedback on items in her presentation.

- 7.2 **Mr Scherrer (Workers)** said that there should be a targeted effort to communicate with the social partners on the national level, in order to make them aware of Eurofound's research output, to target for example not only the trade union headquarters but also at company level, to bring to the people at that level an awareness of the research of a European organisation working on their behalf. In response **Ms McCaughey** indicated a willingness to work with organisations like for example the ETUC, in order to see how improvements could be made.
- 7.3 **Mr Kokalov (Workers)** reiterated the importance of the language barrier and the need to have more content available in the various languages.
- 7.4 **Mr Blomsma (Governments)** made a practical suggestion regarding the

communication approach on the website, which was to start from the interests of the users and the reading audience. A very different structure emerged from designing in this way he said.

- 7.5 **Mr Maes (Commission)** had a question on the proposal to have flagship reports, which had so far not been a part of the programme planning. How would the Governing Board and Bureau be involved in deciding on these flagship reports? Were cost savings and environmental impacts of the new publication strategy a factor?

- 7.6 **Ms McCaughey** said in relation to the language barrier, that the focus would be on increasing translation of the various landing pages on the website coupled with the translation of the executive summaries. This would allow for investment in other areas such as policy papers, the translation of which could be demand driven, based on a cluster of countries.

She agreed that the user was the primary focus for website design, whilst understanding the need for a defined infrastructure using metadata and key words. A usability study of the web would be carried out in 2016 to form the basis of changes and any adaptations to the website in 2017.

The flagship reports would be around the strategic areas of intervention during the four year programme.

The priority publications were highlighted each year based on a list of criteria such as relevance to a particular policy debate and this was usually made available to the Bureau.

The policy papers would be short and succinct so that they could be translated quickly and cost effectively. They would be available online.

- 7.7 **The Director** added that the targeting of social partners had significantly improved following discussions in the Governing Board and Bureau in previous years, with, for example, Eurofound participating for the first time in the cross-sector Social Dialogue Committee in 2014.

From recommendations issued in the evaluation of the previous work programme it was expected that one of the roles of a Governing Board member was to be an ambassador for Eurofound. It would be important to follow up on this recommendation.

The country cluster seminars, for example, were an important on-demand element of Eurofound's interactions with stakeholders, including the social partners, at national level. They were mostly requested by the Governments (who could provide a venue and contribute to the organisation of the seminar) but he reminded that the recent such event in Poland had been requested by the Employers.

In relation to the Foundation Forum, which had not been discussed in detail during the meeting, he informed the members that it was scheduled for 2017, that preparations would begin after the summer and that a theme would be selected based on the strategic objectives of the Programming Document. A venue (most likely Dublin Castle) and date would be secured before approaching the Bureau for more detailed input.

- 7.8 **The Chairperson** reminded the Bureau of the content of the discussions on the Forum within the Workers' Group in the past. It had been suggested to take a different approach in the Forum, to have an internally-oriented seminar, focusing more on Eurofound's results than on external speakers, or perhaps to change the target audience and to take the approach of a kind of summer school for the tripartite

groups. It was not the proposal of the Group to cut the Forum but rather to replace the current format.

- 7.9 **Mr Blomsma (Governments)** added on a positive note that he found the Forum good value for money and an event that brought a good deal of exposure to the agency. The Governments' Group had never doubted the value of this kind of activity.

8. **Renewal of the mandate of the Governing Board**

**Mr Grimmeisen** explained that the Council had launched the procedure for renewal of the Governing Board on 25 May with a deadline for receipt of nominations by 16 October.

There was a short discussion of the procedure mentioned in the renewal whereby it was stated that nominations from the social partners would be sent via the Commission. **Mr Maes (Commission)** said that colleagues had not been able to trace the original reference to this procedure, but stated that a more recent note from 2009 indicated that the nominations should be sent by the ETUC and BUSINESSEUROPE directly to the Council Secretariat. He suggested that Eurofound clarify the procedure.

**The Chairperson concluded that Eurofound should inform all Governing Board members about the renewal and urge them to contact their coordinators regarding the new nominations.**

9. **Annual Feedback on the National Correspondents (B 257/9)**

- 9.1 **The Deputy Director** introduced this point which had been deferred from the Bureau meeting in March.

She reported that the feedback on contacts with the national correspondents (47 replies from a possible 84) was positive overall, with most stating that cooperation was good and that the correspondents were perceived as very relevant to linking European comparative research with the national agenda. Some Member States were using the network colleagues proactively for other activities such as dissemination.

Some of the feedback indicated a need to reassess the evaluation criteria for the next procurement procedure, which would be launched in spring 2017 to run for the period 2019-2022.

A number of Board members felt that the national correspondents could be used more for national communication, and some felt that more effort should be made to improve the visibility of the correspondents who were seen as strategic partners and experts, not just service providers.

The Bureau would be consulted in the drawing up of the tender specifications.

- 9.2 **Mr Blomsma (Governments)** updated the information in the note, stating that a meeting had now taken place with the Dutch correspondent.

- 9.3 **In the context of efficiency gains expected from EU Institutions and Agencies, the Director** suggested for consideration the opportunity for synergies with the Commission, who also had a network of experts in the European Observatory on Employment Policy. The new framework contract for Eurofound correspondents had to be prepared in the next year to start on 2018, and maybe there was scope for a joint procurement or similar approach.

**Mr Maes (Commission)** noted this and said this would be considered within the evaluation. The Commission was also developing activities and it was important to see how those related to the activities of agencies working in the same policy area.

10. The meeting concluded. The next Bureau meeting would be held on **16 September 2016**, in **Brussels**.

[Signed H.Fonck]

[Signed J.Menéndez-Valdés]

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Chairperson

Director

**DRAFT AGENDA**  
**258th MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE GOVERNING BOARD**

*Conseil Central de l'Economie (CCE), Room 6,  
20 avenue d'Auderghem, 1040 Brussels,  
Friday, 16 September 2016, 9h00-13h00*

1. Draft Agenda (B 258/1), *For Adoption*
2. Draft Minutes of the 257th Bureau Meeting of 3 June 2016 (B 258/2), *For Adoption*
3. Progress Report of the Director (B 258/3), *For Information*
4. New Founding Regulation - update by the Commission (B 258/4), *For Information*
5. Budgetary situation and negative priorities (B 258/5), *For Discussion*
6. Programming Document 2017-2020 – final draft version 2017 (B 258/6), *For Discussion*
7. Programming Document 2017-2020 – draft 2 version 2018 (B 258/7), *For Discussion*
8. Progress report on action plan for external evaluation of 2009-2012 programme (B 258/8), *For Discussion*
9. Advisory Committees – establishment and rules of procedure (B 258/9), *For Discussion*
10. Schedule of November Board and Group meetings (B 258/10), *For Decision*
11. AOB

Date and venue of **next Bureau meeting**:

Thursday, 10 November 2016, 13h00 – 14h30  
Dublin, Loughlinstown House meeting room 4 (LH4)

**FINAL REVISED MINUTES**  
**258TH MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE GOVERNING BOARD**

9.00-13.00, Friday, 16 September 2016

Room 6, Conseil Central D'Économie, Avenue d'Auderghem, Brussels

<b>Mr Fonck</b>	Chairperson of the Governing Board (Workers)
<b>Ms Bulgarelli</b>	Vice-Chairperson (Governments)
<b>Ms Rossi</b>	Vice-Chairperson (Employers)
<b>Mr Mühl</b>	Member of the Governing Board (Employers)
<b>Mr Blomsma</b>	Coordinator, Member of the Governing Board (Governments)
<b>Ms Bober</b>	Coordinator (Employers)
<b>Mr Scherrer</b>	Coordinator (Workers)
<b>Ms Hoffmann</b>	Alternate coordinator (Workers)
<b>Mr Maes</b>	European Commission
<b>Ms Scanferla</b>	European Commission
<b>Mr Menéndez-Valdés</b>	Director
<b>Ms Mezger</b>	Deputy Director
<b>Mr Grimmeisen</b>	Secretary to the Governing Board
<b>Ms Gerstenberger</b>	Eurofound
<b>Ms Jacquet</b>	Eurofound

1. Adoption of Draft Agenda (B 258/1)

The **Chairperson** thanked Ms Jacquet who was retiring soon, for her excellent work over the years in liaising with the institutions in Brussels on behalf of Eurofound. She had made a most valuable contribution.

**Mr Scherrer (Workers)** informed the Chairperson that he would have to leave the meeting early.

**The draft agenda was adopted.**

2. Adoption of draft minutes of Bureau meeting of 3 June 2016 (B 258/2)

- The **draft minutes were adopted** with minor correction at the Chairperson's intervention in point 2.2 ('the data for the same companies' employment' (not unemployment)).
- **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** noting that the minutes stated that the Governing Board would make the final decision on whether the joint European Company Survey with Cedefop should go ahead asked whether a formal decision of the Bureau or Governing Board was therefore required.

The **Director** replied that Cedefop had insisted on a formal decision by their Governing Board. In Eurofound, this had not been considered necessary as the decision was recorded in the Work Programme but it could be recorded as a formal decision of the Board in November.

3. Progress report of the Director (B 258/3)

The **Director** outlined activities since the previous Bureau meeting on 3 June.

- In collaboration with the Slovak Presidency, Eurofound had participated in the informal EPSCO meeting in Bratislava on 14-15 July, presenting on *Recent*

*Employment developments and trends in Europe* with an emphasis on segmentation of the labour market.

- On the previous day, Eurofound staff had held an information session for staff in DG Employment in the Commission. It had been a good opportunity to make contacts and to outline what information Eurofound could provide the colleagues.
- Eurofound continued to contribute to the Commission's workshops and websites on the potential for a *European Pillar of Social Rights*.
- Eurofound had contributed also to the Commission's 2016 *Employment and Social Developments in Europe* report, in particular to the chapter on the social partners.
- On 5 September the fieldwork for the *Fourth European Quality of Life Survey* (EQLS) would begin. He thanked the Commission for clarification on the funding for IPA countries which had allowed the fieldwork to be carried out at the same time in the IPA countries.
- Visitors to Eurofound included the Irish government ministers with responsibility for social affairs: the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Ms Mitchell O'Connor on 29 August, and Minister for Social Protection, Mr Varadkar on 7 September, as well as the Director of the Translation Centre in Luxembourg, Ms Killoran, who is Irish.
- The period ahead was a busy one in terms of publications and he highlighted the assistance the Governing Board members could provide in supporting the dissemination of reports to interested parties.
- He highlighted the *European Jobs Monitor* report which used a task-based analysis and the report on the *Diversity of NEETs*, which had been the subject of much discussion in the Employment Committee of the Council with a number of Member States concerned that the NEETs indicator was making them look bad.
- A report on *Inadequate Housing in Europe* attempted to put a cost on the consequences of poor accommodation in comparison to measures that could be put in place to address the issue. It used a similar approach to that used previously in the NEETs and Gender Employment Gap projects.
- The annual summary of developments in working life in Europe, The *EurWork Annual Review* would also be published.
- The report *Do reduced non-wage labour costs lead to more sustainable jobs?* would be evaluated in an Advisory Committee in September. It used a novel and interesting methodological approach which was a kind of meta evaluation, to try to draw some conclusions by evaluating evaluations.
- An important upcoming event was the launch of the overview report of the 6<sup>th</sup> *European Working Conditions Survey* (EWCS) on 17 November in Brussels. It was a global report, following cooperation with USA partners on analysis of USA data.
- Additionally the Network of Agencies was organising a meeting in Alicante in order to present the work of the agencies on the European Policy Agenda and Europe 2020 to the social partners, and he asked the members from BusinessEurope and ETUC to bring this invitation to the attention of their colleagues.
- Regarding the proposed joint *European Company Survey* it was proposed to split costs with Cedefop, and the news that the IPA funds would be available was particularly welcome, although Cedefop were not interested in the candidate countries, so Eurofound would take the lead here. There was potential to explore collaboration with the European Training Foundation in Turin whose area was the candidate countries, but as plans were relatively advanced on the survey, this might complicate matters.
- An overview Comparative Analytical Report (CAR) on fraudulent forms of work would be published soon, whilst the other part of this project that involved interviews

and more qualitative research was ongoing. At the previous day's meeting with the Commission, there had been interest in the CAR on self-employment.

- A new database on wages, working time, collective disputes, systems and outcomes was now available on the *EurWork* website. It would be relevant not only for the policy audience but also for academics.
- The concept report on representativeness would be published in October.
- The Deputy Director and a number of colleagues had contributed to the 11<sup>th</sup> International Labour and Employment Relations Association (ILERA) in Milan in September.
- The report on *Social Mobility in Europe* had triggered the interest of the OECD who were proposing a joint event on social mobility and equal opportunities for the first half of 2017.
- The report on *Europe's refugee crisis – Evidence on approaches to labour market integration of refugees* would be evaluated at the Advisory Committee in September. A short article had been submitted for the 2016 Employment and Social Developments (ESDE) report.
- He updated the meeting on progress on the European Parliament pilot project on the *Future of Manufacturing in Europe*.
- He outlined the budgetary difficulties in relation to Title 1 (staff) indicating how a shortfall in Title 1 had emerged, due in the main to an increase in the coefficient figure for Ireland. The coefficient was designed to ensure that staff in different Member States were not favoured or disfavoured in relation to their salaries in comparison to staff in Brussels and Luxembourg. An increase in the correction coefficient for Ireland of 7 points in three years had led to an additional cost in salaries of more than EUR 600,000.

In light of the situation he said that Eurofound was engaging with DG Employment to see if an additional payment could be made, adding that there was a precedent for such an arrangement.

Whilst adjustments had been made in the budget, subject to the final budgetary forecast which would take place at the end of September it might be necessary to further reduce costs by reducing translation of some of the executive summaries of Eurofound reports, and he asked the Bureau's permission to do this.

In order to deal with estimated shortfalls in 2017, changes had also been introduced in Title 1 (Staff) and Title 3 (Operations) where it was proposed to defer the Foundation Seminar Series (FSS).

There was a considerable shortfall in the budget for the 2018 programme on which the Bureau and Governing Board were just beginning discussions, and apropos of which they had been asked to identify negative priorities.

- The Court of Auditors annual report for 2015 was due in November. It was expected that there would be findings in relation to problems with over and under payments in staff salaries, which it seemed was a legacy issue due to how data had been entered in the Commission's salaries system following the introduction of the 2004 staff regulations to which Eurofound had moved in 2005. However the material impact on the budget would not be significant.
- The Seat Agreement with the Irish Government had finally come into force on 19 July 2016.
- He outlined changes in the organigramme following a reorganisation to align the structures to the new programming document.

The research units would be renamed A, B and C with additionally a unit for coordinating the surveys. New managers would be appointed in two of the units, and two new posts a Chief Researcher/ Coordinator and a Policy Advisor had been created. There would be activity coordinators who would have overview

responsibilities for the activities listed in the Programming Document.

- A User Satisfaction survey would be launched shortly, and Governing Board members were actively encouraged to participate. The output of this exercise would be consolidated user trend data for the complete 2013-2016 programme.

3.2 **Mr Scherrer (Workers)** made the following comments:

- He asked for clarification on what was proposed regarding the assessment of the *European Restructuring Monitor* (ERM) mentioned in the progress report.
- The Group supported the proposed cooperation with the OECD on the *Social mobility in Europe* project which addressed both inequality and equal opportunity.
- More information was required on the proposals to reduce translation of the executive summaries of reports, which were an important aspect of the national outreach activities.
- It would have been nice to see the names of individual staff members in the organigramme, and he noted that it did not seem to be a flat organisational structure which was currently the aspiration in many organisations.

**Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** asked if the social partners would be involved in the planned expert meeting in September on the role of the private sector in residential care.

3.3 **Mr Maes (Commission)** made the following comments:

- Whilst understanding the problems with timing, the Commission would encourage Eurofound to explore the potential for collaboration with the ETF on candidate countries in the European Company Survey.
- In relation to the potential to have some collaboration in Latin America on the European Working Conditions Survey, colleagues in the Commission were reluctant for Eurofound to enter into such arrangements, as although the actual survey would not involve the staff, the advice that would be necessary would require significant staff involvement.
- In relation to the organigramme the Commission noted the high number of support units in Eurofound in relation to the size of the agency. In relation to the Advisor posts he said that the policy in the Commission had moved away from former Heads of Units assuming these posts, and that these posts should be properly advisory and should be recruited on that basis.

3.4 **Mr Mühl (Employers)** would like more information about the coefficient and how it operated.

He would support the reduction in translation of the executive summaries if it were necessary to balance the budget.

3.5 **Ms Bulgarelli (Workers)** called on the Commission to investigate a way to compensate for the effect of the coefficient increase.

It would have been preferable to have been presented with a number of options for balancing the budget, rather than having to agree to a proposal.

In relation to the costs of translation, it was the case that the Agencies were obliged to use the Translation Centre of the European Union who therefore had a kind of monopoly and she wondered if it were possible to explore options for translation, such as for example using the Translation Centre for legal texts, and using other translation services for Eurofound's research. It might be worth investigating the legal possibilities for so doing. This particular issue was relevant also to the proposals for the founding regulation, which incorporated this relationship with the Translation Centre. This would have a significant impact on the budgetary situation and discussions on negative priorities.

The Group would not comment on the reorganisation which was an issue for the management of Eurofound.

It was important that key activities like the European Working Conditions Survey were developed in non-EU countries as they dealt with topics that were global, so she welcomed the investigations to collaborate in Latin America.

3.6 **The Director** replied to the questions and comments.

- It had been suggested to discuss the European Restructuring Monitor within an Advisory Committee and the Bureau had been invited to nominate experts to participate in that discussion.
- Social mobility was an emerging topic which was high on the agenda of the UK government who were looking for data in other EU countries. The OECD was also interested in this field and it was felt that the joint conference, the only activity planned in this area, was a good opportunity for Eurofound to work with the OECD, an organisation with which up to now, there had not been many opportunities for collaboration.
- The work programme stated that regarding the Working Conditions Survey Eurofound should look beyond the European Union. There had been an agreement with the ILO (approved by the Commission) to take the survey to China, but the ILO were not in a position to take it to Latin America. Further survey collaboration had taken place in South Korea and the USA and this provided a great opportunity to have a harmonised data source of job quality in countries beyond the EU.

Contacts with a German researcher in Chile had suggested taking advantage of Chile's chairing of the OECD to cooperate by perhaps advising on the questionnaire. Whilst acknowledging the Commission's concern that this would be too large a commitment of staff time, he thought it represented a good opportunity for Eurofound.

- The proposed reduction in translation to deal with the budgetary situation would be carried out on a targeted basis i.e. for those language versions that were demonstrably less utilised.
- The structure in the reorganisation was quite flat, with the new classifications not representing an additional layer of hierarchy.
- The European Training Foundation (ETF) was not experienced in surveys but Eurofound would investigate the scope for collaboration in the European Company Survey.
- The report on the role of the private sector in residential care would be evaluated in the Advisory Committee. The planned expert meeting would gather feedback from academic experts.

3.7 **Mr Maes (Commission)** said that the Commission was concerned about the Advisor posts only where they had an impact on resources.

The reorganisation was clearly a matter for Eurofound's management. However in terms of outcome it would be important to see whether this type of organisation worked and whether it would have an impact on the quality of the research.

He assured the Bureau that the Commission were considering the issue of the coefficient. Regarding international cooperation he noted that the new regulation provided for the Commission to have an input in this area, particularly in the context of budgetary restraints. In relation to the proposal on the survey in Latin America, the concern was primarily budgetary where it was felt that resource should be devoted to the survey in the European Union.

- 3.8 **Mr Scherrer (Workers)** asked about the working group on survey methodologies and what was proposed in relation to the exchange with DG Employment as mentioned on page 21 of the progress report.  
He noted that the Commission had just launched a network combining the former European Labour Network and the European Employment Policy Observatory and he wondered if there was scope for synergies with Eurofound's network of European Correspondents.
- 3.9 **Mr Maes (Commission)** noted that there were ongoing discussions on the topic of surveys within the Commission, looking not only at the content but at the running of the surveys and whether contractual arrangements that the Commission had in place might be used to reduce the costs of the surveys in Eurofound.
- 3.10 **The Director** replied that the Surveys Methodology Group was an internal group of all colleagues involved in surveys.  
There had been some discussions on survey methodology with Eurostat who were in the process of changing their own surveys. These exchanges of information with the Commission did not constitute a working group where decisions would be made in relation to Eurofound's surveys.
- 3.11 **Ms Bulgarelli (Governments)** said that it would be useful in the list of events to know who was organising an event.
- 3.12 **The Director** said this would be possible. He added that Eurofound's participation in events was always decided against a number of set criteria.
- 3.13 **The Chairperson** thanked the Director for his progress report and information.
4. Update from the Commission on the new Founding Regulation (B 258/4)
- 4.1 **Mr Maes (Commission)** updated the Bureau on proposals for the new founding regulation for Eurofound.
- The Commission's proposal had been adopted on 23 August 2016 and transmitted to the European Council and the European Parliament. On 5 September, the Commission had attended a half day meeting in the Social Questions Working Party of the Council, where they had presented the proposal. There had been some exchanges with Member States already, but the real discussions would start on 26 September when the Social Questions Working Party would meet for the whole day to consider the draft regulation.
  - The Commission had been informed that the Parliament was appointing three rapporteurs from three different groups. Discussion in the Employment Committee of the Parliament should take place before the end of the year.
  - The Slovakian Presidency of the EU had stated its intention to have a general approach on the three regulations by the end of the year, and had set a number of meetings already
  - The draft regulations no longer referred to Article 235 of the Treaty, and each had a specific legal basis, requiring consultation with the Social Partners beforehand in the case of Eurofound and EU-OSHA..
  - No new tasks had been added and the regulations reflected the current tasks of the agencies. The focus of the proposals was on aligning the provisions to the 2012 'Common Approach' on EU agencies.
- The Commission had decided not to change the tripartite structure of the Governing Board. The programming schedule had been aligned to that of the Programming Document. Voting rules had been aligned, with voting by a majority of members with voting rights, except in relation to the appointment of the Executive Director

and the Annual budgets and Programming Document.

- The Advisory Committees were mentioned in explicit but general terms, the procedures for these committees being left to the agency to decide.
- The Executive Director would be appointed by the Governing Board upon a proposal made by the Commission unlike the current reverse practice.
- The Management Board was the Appointing Authority and delegated this authority to the Director. A template existed already describing why and how the Management Board would take this delegation back in exceptional circumstances where it was considered necessary.
- The role of Deputy Director was no longer included in agencies of a small size like Eurofound.
- General provisions aligned the agency to the Common Approach with regard to transparency, combating fraud and security rules on the protection of classified information.
- The reference to the Translation Centre of the European Union was retained as legally this was a horizontal rule that applied across the Agency regulations.
- A new provision was inserted in relation to the local liaison offices. As they existed in a number of agencies it was felt that they should be provided for in the regulations.
- Evaluation provisions were aligned to better regulation principles. The evaluations would be carried out by the Commission and would look not only at the objectives, mandates and tasks of the Agency but also at the specific question of whether there should be an amendment to the regulation or even a repeal of the regulation.

He would, he said, keep the Bureau informed of any developments in the negotiations with the Member States and Parliament.

- 4.2 **Ms Bulgarelli (Governments)** said that the Member States were following the negotiations closely through the Permanent Representations.

There were concerns about the change in the role of the Governing Board from a supervisory to an executive one.

**Mr Blomsma (Governments)** added that there had been more discussion than was usual at such an early stage of the procedure. Only one Member State had suggested that retaining the structure of the Governing Board was not in line with the 'Common Approach' and there were concerns about the change in role of the Governing Board and the executive.

- 4.3 **Mr Scherrer (Workers)** reaffirmed the Group's support for the retention of the fully tripartite Governing Board.

They regretted the loss of the Deputy Director post and thought that this element of social partnership representation would be missed.

It could be said also that social partner representation in the Bureau would be reduced, and it might be concluded therefore that the representation of the tripartite part of Eurofound was decreasing whilst that of the Commission and was increasing.

- 4.4 **Mr Maes (Commission)** replied that the Common Approach had been decided upon by the Institutions and the Commission was therefore obliged to adhere to its provisions.

The Commission were aware of the concerns in relation to the circumstances and provisions for taking back the delegation of powers to the Director, for the involvement of the Governing Board in the selection of the Director and in relation to deadlines in the regulation that were inconsistent with the programming schedule as raised by the Director.

In 2016 and 2017, DG Employment would launch a cross-cutting evaluation across the four agencies within its remit (Eurofound, Cedefop, EU-OSHA and EFT) looking at the tasks and mandates of those agencies, looking into potential overlaps and possibilities for synergies and efficiencies.

He would keep the Bureau informed on progress with this evaluation procedure.

5. Budgetary situation and negative priorities (B 258/5)

5.1 The **Director** outlined the situation in relation to the budgetary shortfall primarily due to increasing staff costs as previously mentioned.

He reminded the Bureau that the issue of negative priorities concerned areas of research that would have been undertaken in normal budgetary situations, but that had been dropped from the programme in order to balance the budget.

He outlined the pressures in Title 3 (Operations) of the budget which was frozen despite the increasing costs for example of surveys. In light of these pressures it would not be possible to continue with the current programming cycle and he outlined some proposals for reducing costs in the surveys, and the network of correspondents. The details had been presented in a paper and the Bureau were now asked to give guidance on negative priorities.

5.2 **Mr Scherrer (Workers)** reiterated the Group's opinion that nothing should be done to affect the quality, frequency and content of the European Working Conditions Survey.

**Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** elaborated that with regard to the surveys the Workers' Group did not think that all surveys were equal, and that there was scope to think about prioritising among the three and considering where the unique contribution of Eurofound could be found in the surveys. The EWCS was fundamental and the European Company Survey (ECS), particularly with the new collaborative approach was also unique. The Group had carried out some background research on the surveys which they would be happy to share with Eurofound.

They could see overlaps between the European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS) and the EU-SILC instrument, as well as the European Social Survey, so it seemed that there might be scope for synergies or even replacement. If cooperation with Cedefop worked well, there might be scope for cooperation with EU-OSHA.

She asked for more information about the savings that would be made through collaboration with Cedefop on the ECS.

5.3 **Ms Bulgarelli (Governments)** agreed with the comments of the Workers on the surveys and felt that there was also scope for reviewing the contract with the network of correspondents, to perhaps be less ambitious there.

Discussions in the Group meeting in June had included the suggestion, that just as the Governments sometimes paid extra to top up the sample size in the surveys, the Commission might make money available for the representativeness studies.

**Mr Blomsma (Governments)** added that it might be possible to make cuts across the programme.

The Group were pleased that savings would be realised through collaboration with Cedefop and that the Foundation Seminar Series had been deferred, as the Group felt it was a nice activity but not a necessary one and wondered whether the investment in this activity was really worth it.

The discussion on the ERM might yield some possibilities for savings, as might changes to the contract for the correspondents.

He did not think it would have a great impact if the cycle of surveys was lengthened.

It seemed that there was an informal understanding that each of the three units in Eurofound would spend equal amounts on its activities and if this arrangement were

more flexible it was felt that it would be possible to have more focus in the work of the agency. Another suggestion would be to carry out more in-house reports and to ensure that participation in events, which took time from other research tasks, was targeted.

In relation to possible savings in the communications area, he felt that there were too many publication series.

In the area of industrial relations it would be good to spend less time constructing industrial relations models and instead to look at what was actually taking place in the Member States.

He felt that ways should be found to modernise the EQLS.

He would suggest retaining some high profile events such as the Foundation Forum in order to showcase the work of the agency.

- 5.4 **Ms Rossi (Employers)** said that it was difficult to consider reductions in surveys because these were successful products that were much appreciated by the stakeholders. Rather than reduce the number of surveys, she echoed the concerns of the Workers' Group in relation to avoiding overlaps with other surveys.

The Group agreed with the Governments that extending the period between surveys would give a longer term might provide a wider and longer term perspective on the changing world of work, and therefore might even bring added value.

It was not clear why the cost of surveys was rising so much. Was this linked to the costs of the secondary analysis of the surveys, and if so could they be reviewed in relation to achieving savings, she wondered.

In relation to events, Eurofound needed to be visible and to highlight its role at European and national level. The Foundation Forum was such an event and was supported by the Group, but it might be considered whether the Foundation Seminar Series represented real added value to stakeholders.

**Ms Bober (Employers)** in relation to the Network of Correspondents said that it was already quite difficult to find contractors for the network, one reason for which was that the price already offered to the contractor was quite low, so there was a risk that even retaining the current subsidy the quality of respondents might not be good. Perhaps it would be better to contract specific reports as required, rather than having a framework contract. There was a risk that in the end Eurofound might lose quality without saving much money.

- 5.5 **Mr Maes (Commission)** said that the added value of the surveys was uncontested and noted that the references in the progress report to discussions with the Commission on the surveys referred to requests for information to facilitate internal discussions in the Commission.

At the same time it should be possible for Eurofound to look into methodologies and possible overlaps. The EQLS and EU-SILC overlaps had already been mentioned and the Commission had found that it would be worthwhile to examine whether it would be possible to combine the EWCS and ECS. He said that it would be good for Eurofound to prepare some concrete proposals around the surveys, sooner than was currently planned.

The frequency of the surveys must remain useful for policy makers but should be considered. If collaboration on surveys brought significant savings it would certainly be an avenue to pursue.

The Commission would be very willing to consider synergies with their own network of correspondents but underlined that the representativeness studies, which he said were well suited to a tripartite organisation like Eurofound and were valuable not only to the Commission but to the Social Partners and Governments as well.

The Commission agreed that further efficiencies might be sought in the area of events

and also, without putting that instrument into question, within the ERM.

In relation to communications, the first and foremost task of Eurofound was to inform policymakers at European level, so that investments in national events were not a priority.

He concluded, repeating that it was necessary to have more insights about possible efficiency gains in the surveys, and the sooner the better in order to be prepared for the discussions on the overall financial framework of the European Union.

- 5.6 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** said that national-level disillusion with what was happening at European level was an important consideration for national-level communications and activities.

To involve Governing Board members in relaying information it was necessary to have information to relay and this was linked to the availability of appropriate language versions, so that multilingual communication must be supported.

The tripartite involvement in advisory committees was also essential and this should not be bypassed by going directly to experts.

- 5.7 **The Chairperson** thanked the members for their constructive suggestions in relation to a difficult subject.

- 5.8 **The Director** responded with the following:

- It was not necessary that the Bureau should look for areas in the budget that could be reduced. The discussion on negative priorities should not be at the level of a project, but should rather provide guidance with regard to thematic areas or tools that would lead to specific decisions.
- He noted the comments on the surveys which had been discussed internally with the colleagues in research. Investigations were ongoing as to how to reduce costs, through for example the use of web surveys.

The option to combine the EWCS and ECS had been investigated thoroughly in the past and it was found that it would be considerably more expensive and complex to do so. In the past a proposal to combine the EQLS and EWCS had been ruled out.

The potential to increase the frequency to every six rather than five years could be considered, with first an assessment of the impact of that on policymakers, for example looking at the link now to the OECD framework for job quality.

- It was felt that the current balance between EU and national-level communications was appropriate.
- If the Bureau so requested, participation in Eurofound events, including that by Board members, could be evaluated with a view to ensuring that new audiences were being served, but the potential for savings would not be great.

- 5.9 **The Deputy Director** indicated that planning was ongoing for the next procurement process for the network of correspondents and discussions were being held with the Commission as to possible synergies in the approach.

- 5.10 **The Director** in response to earlier comments said that it was not that the value of the contracts for the network was too low, but rather that sometimes the requests were too many. He did not think that in light of the lead-in times for procurement, it would be feasible to have individual procurement processes for each project.

He added that it was not the case that the budget was distributed equally between the three research areas.

- 5.11 **The Chairperson** said that the issue of negative priorities would be of increasing importance in the coming years.

He accepted the Director's response to a request by him to do so, that it would not be a

good use of his staff's time to produce a report for the Bureau, taking each suggestion made today, and placing it against supporting facts and figures, feasibility, advantages and disadvantages of the approach.

Instead the discussions would be considered and reflected upon in activities that were ongoing or planned (e.g. the survey methodology group, the review of the ERM in the upcoming advisory committee).

The Programming Document would reflect the discussions and ultimately the decisions in the section on negative priorities.

6. Programming Document 2017-2020 – Version 2017 (B 258/6)

The **Director** noted a change introduced in this advanced draft, a proposal to defer the Foundation Seminar Series.

It was not considered necessary to discuss the document.

7. Programming Document 2017-2020 – Version 2018 (B 258/7)

7.1 The **Chairperson** asked the Groups to make general comments only on the document and to send their more detailed comments later in writing.

The **Director** asked for indications where the programme could be reduced.

7.2 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** made the following comments.

- A number of requests by the Group had not been taken up. The request for more on migration and digitalisation; a call for clarification on secondary analysis of the EWCS and whether the analysis was external or internal (perhaps the externally contracted reports could be deferred); topics on social dialogue such as the role and impact of labour inspection models for social dialogue in companies that have a dispersed workforce.
- With regard to capacity building, the programme indicated that it should be left to the Social Partners at the highest level but, she said, that might not be enough. There was a real need for assistance from Eurofound to look at which policies enabled social partners to develop capacities and which policies eroded it. The Group would like to have seen more about skills in the programme.

7.3 **Ms Bulgarelli (Governments)** said that most of the issues raised by the Group had been taken up in the document.

**Mr Blomsma (Governments)** said that migration and mobility had been mentioned by all the Groups and had been included in the negative priorities. Perhaps in light of the interest it was worth considering whether there was some scope to include migration mobility in the 2018 programme.

The Group's suggestion to find objective data on unfair working conditions had it seemed been taken up in only a minor way in the programme, and might perhaps be reviewed.

7.4 **Mr Maes (Commission)** made the following comments:

On the issue of refugees, the Commission would like to see a follow up to the current work that was being done by Eurofound. It would be a pity to have the current project as a one-off exercise and then not go back to review the situation in 2018. Reference was made to the topic in relation to public services but it was not clear if that particular focus would be sufficient for a follow-up in 2018.

He welcomed the references to the joint statement of the Presidency of the Council, the Commission and the European Social Partners of 27 June and further reference to the discussions on the European Pillar of Social Rights.

There were a few areas where the Commission would like to draw Eurofound's attention

to ongoing work at the Commission. For instance, the sharing economy where DG GROW was working, or in the area of job creation or job retention, where of course the OECD was also working. It was important to ensure that there was added value in Eurofound's research and no overlaps. It might be useful for Eurofound to refer to this external research, and indicate how it was utilising it in its own work.

Overall however the Commission were pleased with the document. They would send their comments in writing.

- 7.5 **Ms Bober (Employers)** said that the Employers had no major remarks on the document. They were confronted with this need to cut projects, but found that they had only more proposals.

They agreed that something on the issue of refugees and the labour market would be of interest.

In an effort to reduce, they saw that a large number of secondary analyses of the EWCS were proposed in 2018 and suggested that they could be split over 2019 as well.

They had questions around the new online forums or blogs, as they would require resources and perhaps this could be looked into again.

Regarding the ERM, there would be a discussion in the advisory committee and it might be considered whether the overview report could be published every two years rather than annually.

The project on the articulation of social dialogue was very unclear. It would be important to have a focus in this project on the links between the issue of collective bargaining and competitiveness of companies.

- 7.6 **Ms Gerstenberger** said that further work on refugees in 2018 was announced in the programme based on the report currently in production on the labour market integration of refugees and then on consultation with the Board on the 2017 programme it would be decided whether Eurofound should go further with this topic. It was a hot topic, but one that a lot of organisations were researching so it was important to identify exactly where Eurofound's contribution could be made.

- 7.7 The **Director** responded to some of the comments made by the members.

- The activities were not research activities but 'content' activities that combined research and communication elements. In relation to communications, he outlined that Eurofound was reviewing the type and number of publications it produced.
- His request to the Bureau had clearly been to provide guidance for reductions in the programme and it was of some concern that additional research was now being proposed. He reminded the Bureau that it was required to address the research topics outlined in the four-year programme.
- He reminded the Bureau that research on migrants and refugees was included throughout the 2017 and 2018 programmes. However whilst additional resources had been allocated to some agencies dealing with the migrant issue Eurofound had received no additional funding, and therefore the treatment of migration and youth as separate research topics had been cited as negative priorities in the programme.

- 7.8 The **Chairperson** concluded that written comments should be sent to Eurofound. The next draft of the 2018 work programme would be circulated on 20 October.

8. Progress report on action plan for ex post evaluation of 2009-2012 work programme (B 258/8)

- 8.1 The **Deputy Director** outlined the recommendations and the actions taken by Eurofound.

- Two papers were proposed, one regarding the recommendation to involve the

Governing Board members on various levels, but particularly as regards communication, national outreach, dissemination of Eurofound reports. Eurofound had made some proposals in this regard and the Bureau could decide if this was something that they wished to discuss further in their groups and with the Board in November.

- Another recommendation related to quality assurance of Eurofound's research through external and internal peer review.

8.2 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** said that in their Group meeting in June, the Workers Group had discussed how Eurofound might help the members to be more active in disseminating their research. She thought that it would be good for example to discuss the upcoming important publications directly with the members, to ascertain whether there were particular audiences who could be identified.

8.3 **The Chairperson** concluded that the role of the Governing Board in disseminating research and the peer review would be taken up during the Groups and Governing Board meeting.

## 9. **Advisory Committees – establishment and rules of procedure (B 258/9)**

9.1 The **Bureau** discussed the number of advisory committees, the procedures for the committees and for appointing experts.

Most were in favour of retaining four committees as was currently the case, with back-to-back meetings for the Advisory Committees for Working Conditions and Industrial Relations.

9.2 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** wondered if the Governing Board would have a role in the appointment of experts.

9.3 **Mr Maes (Commission)** clarified that the Commission would retain two members on each committee, with two alternate or substitute members. In future, at least one member would be from the Commission's Social Dialogue unit of DG Employment in order to coordinate the Commission's input.

9.4 **Ms Bulgarelli (Governments)** said that the duration of membership of a committee should be limited, and that the procedures should be amended to state that either Board members or alternates could be members.

The role and contribution of experts should be clearly defined, to distinguish them from the role of Governing Board members who also undertook peer reviews of research in their work on the committees.

9.5 **Mr Blomsma (Governments)** added that Article 2 might include something in relation to a role for the Committees in advising on future research. In Article 8 of the rules of procedure he suggested to remove the phrase that committees were chaired 'in principle' by the Director etc. as it implied that somebody else might chair the meeting.

9.6 **Mr Mühl (Employers)** said that the Group still considered that three committees would be sufficient, but as a compromise supported back-to-back meetings of the committees for working conditions and industrial relations. The Group supported the proposal that alternates could also participate in the committees. The role of experts needed some clarification, and he noted that his own experience was that their input in committees was limited.

9.7 The **Director** reminded the Bureau of some of the background to the current rules.

He referred to previous discussions where it had been decided that the advisory committees would be consulted in the work programme planning but would not have a formal role in the process. This discussion should not be reopened.

Eurofound took its guidance in appointing experts from rules used by the Commission. The Governing Board did not have a role in appointing the experts on the committees, though members were of course able to raise any concerns they might have in relation to an expert. The participation of experts was important to provide an independent, scientific evaluation. The cost of their involvement was not great, being usually the reimbursement of travel and accommodation costs.

He also said that Eurofound was willing to investigate virtual meetings of the Advisory Committees, as had previously been suggested for meetings of the Bureau.

9.8 **Ms Rossi (Employers)** supported this proposal, having found that webinars could be an effective means of collaboration. Webinars, she added, could also be an effective means of promoting or launching important publications or events.

9.9 The **Chairperson** suggested that the amended rules of procedure and the list of Advisory Committees for the next four-year programme would be presented to the Governing Board for decision in November.

10. Adoption of schedule for Governing Board and Group meetings in November 2016

10.1 It was decided that this year the Governments' and Workers' Groups would not have an additional half day meeting and that all Groups would meet on Thursday, 12 November only.

In order to maximise the time available to the Groups, there would be no general introduction beforehand and instead the Director and Deputy Director would be available to introduce the programme in the Group meetings.

The Bureau would meet during lunchtime on Thursday 12 November, for one and a half hours, in order not to delay the meetings of the Groups, as had happened in previous years with the Bureau meeting running too long.

The Groups opted not to have topical presentations by research staff on this occasion.

11. AOB

The Groups were asked to review a schedule of dates for meetings of the Governing Board in 2017 to ensure that they did not conflict with any important meetings planned by their interest Groups.

12. The meetings concluded. The next meeting of the Bureau would be held in **Dublin** on **Thursday, 10 November at 13.00.**

[Signed H.Fonck]

[Signed J.Menéndez-Valdés]

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director

Date:

Date:

**DRAFT AGENDA**

**259<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE GOVERNING BOARD**

*Thursday, 10 November 2016, 13.00-14.30 sharp Room LH4, Eurofound, Dublin*

1. Draft Agenda (B 259/1)
2. Adoption of minutes of Bureau meeting, 16 September 2016 (B 259/2)
3. Examination of Agenda of 90<sup>th</sup> Governing Board meeting

**REVISED FINAL MINUTES**  
**259th MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE GOVERNING BOARD**

*13.00-14.30, Thursday, 10 November 2016*  
*Room LH4, Loughlinstown House, Eurofound, Dublin*

<b>Mr Fonck</b>	Chairperson of the Governing Board (Workers)
<b>Ms Bulgarelli</b>	Vice-Chairperson of the Governing Board (Governments)
<b>Ms Rossi</b>	Vice-Chairperson of the Governing Board (Employers)
<b>Ms Kauffmann</b>	Vice-Chairperson of the Governing Board (European Commission)
<b>Ms Welter</b>	Member of the Governing Board (Governments)
<b>Mr Blomsma</b>	Coordinator, Member of the Governing Board (Governments)
<b>Ms Bober</b>	Coordinator (Employers)
<b>Mr Scherrer</b>	Coordinator (Workers)
<b>Ms Hoffmann</b>	Deputy Coordinator (Workers)
<b>Mr Mühl</b>	Alternate Member of the Bureau (Employers)
<b>Mr Menéndez-Valdés</b>	Director
<b>Ms Mezger</b>	Deputy Director
<b>Mr Grimmeisen</b>	Secretary to the Governing Board
<b>Ms Gerstenberger</b>	Eurofound

1. Discussion on Agenda for 90<sup>th</sup> Governing Board meeting, Friday 11 November 2016
  - 1.1 Programming Document - Version 2017 (GB 90/5)
    - 1.1.1 The **Chairperson** asked the members to be brief in their comments on the document which had been adopted in principle in January.
    - 1.1.2 **Ms Rossi (Employers)** noting the budgetary constraints behind them, on behalf of the Employers' Group supported the recent changes introduced by Eurofound.
    - 1.1.3 **Ms Bulgarelli (Governments)** was concerned that changes had been introduced into the programme at the last minute.
      - The postponement to 2018 of some of the secondary analyses of survey data was regretted as it was important that Eurofound's data was exploited as much as possible and as soon as possible.

The specific projects referred to were the *Report on Working Conditions and Employment and Development* (Activity, 2.1.1, [page 27](#)) and the exploration of links between workplace practices and wellbeing in the European Company Survey and European Working Conditions Survey (Activity, 2.1.11 [page 38](#)). It was felt that Eurofound could better utilise the internal research capacity of Eurofound staff.
      - In order to further reduce costs it might be considered that hard copy publications would no longer be produced.
    - 1.1.4 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** said that the Workers' Group shared the comments made by the Governments on changes in the document in relation to the two projects. The Group would like clarification on why the changes were necessary.

They wanted also to better understand the multiannual planning process; the implications for planning when something that had been agreed was subsequently

changed.

- 1.1.5 Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** said that the Commission were satisfied with the document as the Commission's opinion on resources was taken on board. She recalled that resource constraints could indeed lead to modifications in the planned projects and that this should be addressed by identifying negative priorities.
- 1.1.6 The Director** explained that the activities approved in the Programming Document were translated into detailed project plans only after the draft was endorsed. In the case of the project on working conditions and employment and development, for budgetary reasons it was not possible to outsource this research and there was no more in-house resource capacity, so it had been decided to postpone it.
- In the case of the exploratory research on the two surveys, the colleague who had proposed the research was currently on leave. In light of the resource challenges it had been decided to postpone it. This was a technical exercise but not a report.
- 1.1.7 Ms Bulgarelli (Governments)** noted positively a strategic reshaping in the programme in order to better exploit the more analytical capacity of staff. It was suggested in her Group that by reducing Eurofound's participation in meetings and conferences the researchers would have more time to devote to develop analytical work.
- 1.1.8 The Deputy Director** stated that there were already six outputs in the research activity on working conditions and employee engagement development and she did not think that a seventh was feasible. She cautioned against over-committing the internal research capacity.
- 1.1.9 The Chairperson** urged the Director and Deputy Director to find a solution in response to the concerns expressed by the Groups.
- 1.1.10 The Director** said that it was not possible to have additional research projects at this stage in the planning process, new proposals would have to replace current projects.
- He would explore if the project on exploratory work on the surveys were retained and could be replaced by another exploratory project in the work programme.
- 1.1.11 Mr Scherrer (Workers)** asked if this project was related to earlier discussions on efficiencies that might be gained in the surveys.
- 1.1.12 The Director** replied that the future development of the surveys was part of an ongoing discussion within Eurofound that included innovations like the cooperation with Cedefop on the next European Company Survey.
- This exploratory work on the surveys was a methodological exercise to check the potential matching of the datasets of the EWCS and ECS and had been proposed by one of Eurofound's researchers. It was not part of this ongoing strategic look at surveys.
- 1.1.13 The Chairperson** concluded that the Director would find a way to address the concerns raised by the Groups at the Board meeting on the following day.
- The Groups would make no further requests for changes.
- 1.2 Discussion on Programming Document – Version 2018 (GB 90/6)**
- 1.2.1 The Chairperson** noted that the document would need to be finally adopted in December. He asked the Bureau members to be brief in any comments on the document.

1.2.2 **Mr Blomsma (Governments)** said that the Group felt that the programme was not as innovative as one might have wished. Most projects were continuations of earlier research.

- 2.1.6 *Innovation and job creation in companies* - It was a severe limitation that it was proposed to investigate only one type of organisation. The Group regretted the reduced budget for this project.
- 2.1.9 *The digital age: challenges and opportunities for work and employment* - There was a dominant view in the Group that this was essentially an explorative activity still, that policies that were developed at national level but also within companies were not receiving enough attention. Whilst there was a quite substantial budget allocated to this research there was a request to be clearer on what it added to other activities Eurofound was working on in the field of digitalisation.
- There was some criticism around the fact that the proposal put forward by the Governments' Group in June to have an activity on objective data in relation to perceptions of unequal working conditions had not been taken up in the programme. There was a strong feeling that resources should be found to do something on the subject which was politically very interesting. Perhaps, it was suggested, some of the smaller projects that were not so politically high-profile could be dropped.
- There was support for including research on mismatches on the labour market in the 2018 programme, especially as it was based on Eurofound's own data.
- There were strong emotions in the Group around the inclusion of the research on undeclared work in the area of negative priorities.
- There was a request to be more careful with the formulations regarding the European Pillar of Social Rights as it was not yet clear what would emerge in this regard.
- He asked for information about what was meant by the term 'non-worker' which appeared in the document.
- The Group also hoped that the *ad hoc* research capacity could be used to follow up research on refugees and new migrants in 2018.

1.2.3 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** made the following comments on behalf of the Group.

- 2.1.1 *Working conditions and sustainable work, p33* - The Group had a number of problems with the changes made. The focus was now completely different with an emphasis on engagement. It was not acceptable to the Group to delete the proposed research on inequalities and working conditions based on age and gender. It was also not acceptable to delete the subsequent paragraph on research in the area of undeclared work.
- Page 34 - The new sentence to 'explore stakeholder interest in analysing working conditions' was unnecessary as it was clear what the interests of stakeholders were. The previous sentence that the research would consider job quality and working conditions in different sectors had been removed.

1.2.4 **Mr Scherrer (Workers)** said that a more balanced way should be found to describe the role of motivation in keeping workers in work longer.

1.2.5 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** continued:

- 2.1.2 *Social dialogue, page 36* - The Group felt that the project should be about the policies that encouraged and discouraged collective bargaining and the autonomy of the social partners. The description currently seemed to concern

training and not the question of within which political legal framework the social partners were able to exercise autonomous social dialogue.

- Page 41 the Group had discussed the living wage in relation to the 2017 project, where it was considered that the link to the time worked in order to get that living wage would be an interesting aspect. Suggestions had been made to look at some point too at mapping minimum wages in order to work out a relationship between minimum wage and living wage.
- The Workers' Group agreed with the Governments that the issue of refugees and new migrants should be included. On page 43, line 1311 the Group would like to see refugees and migrants included in the analysis of how demography impacts on the employment structure.
- Page 45 - In the qualitative research on organisations identified as positively contributing to employment, on what basis would the organisations for further consideration be selected, she wondered.
- Page 50, line 1523 should say that gender inequality will be addressed.
- Page 51 - The reasons for deletion of the research in the area of mobility and migration should be clarified. Was the research on analysis of measures to reduce the barriers encountered by refugees a replacement for the deleted project? Mobility and migration were important in the context of posted workers and the Group wished to see something on this area in the work programme.
- *2.1.9 The digital age: opportunities and challenges for work and employment, Page 53* - The Group asked if it were possible to deliver the results of the research sooner than currently planned.

What was the link between the ongoing study about game changing technology in the manufacturing sector and the game changing technologies in the services sector?

- Page 56 - Care should be taken in the wording around the Social Pillar until information was available.

**1.2.6 Mr Scherrer (Workers) added** that on page 18, the statement should be more ambitious and state that the 7<sup>th</sup> EWCS 'will' be implemented.

**1.2.7 Ms Rossi (Employers) prefaced** the comments of the Group by stating that it was necessary to focus on activities that could be strategic for all the Groups in the medium and long term perspective in a constructive way.

- *2.1.1 Working conditions and sustainable work* - There was a lack of focus in this part of the programme. The Employers would like to see a priority on the analysis or links between employee engagement and development of workers' knowledge and skills, to look at how workers and companies could develop skills at the company level, and also to look at the attitude of workers towards training and skills development.
- *2.1.2 Social dialogue* - This chapter should be more strategic and look at how innovative work place practices through social dialogue were producing positive effects for workers and businesses. The Group would propose to change the focus in the research that was currently limited to a very specific element of industrial relations at European and national level, which is multinationals and articulation between EU level and social dialogue.

The Group thought that 2018 could be an opportunity to explore social dialogue in SMEs which were still the most common type of EU company. The research could look at whether social dialogue was contributing to the growth of

employment in SMEs, with a clear focus on workplace innovation.

- *2.1.3 Reporting on Working Life developments, page 38* - There was interest with regard to the proposed feasibility study for an ‘industrial action monitor’.
- *2.1.3 Reporting on working life developments* - The Group supported the proposal to establish a holistic portal on collective bargaining. It was important to resource the initiative properly in order to ensure that it was credible.
- *2.1.4 Well functioning and inclusive labour markets* - In relation to the issue of the living wage it was felt that an analysis on living wages without some reflections on active labour market policies was not helpful to really capture the reality and developments of labour market dynamics at the national level. What was missing was the perspective on how active labour market policies were contributing to inclusive labour market policies.
- Regarding the note on the European Restructuring Monitor (ERM) the Group thanked Eurofound and the Chairperson for the opportunity to reflect on the tool. Whilst being aware of its limitations, it was a unique tool and the Group would like to retain it until something different and better was developed. The Group requested that Eurofound provide a commitment to continuing to improve the methodology, and to refer back to the Governing Board from time to time. This would be a constructive approach for the future.
- *2.1.7 Quality of Life and Quality of Society* - The reference in *line 1438* to social tensions was not clear.
- *2.1.9 The digital age: challenges and opportunities for work and employment* - The Group were not happy with the focus on crowd employment as it was felt the issue was a much wider one and suggested eliminating the focus on types of organisation to make the research more generally focused on crowd employment whilst not referring to specific types of organisations.

In relation to digital services the Group asked for the research to be more ambitious, with a clearer focus. The Group were aware that other institutes and research organisations were exploring elements of this new development in the labour market. It was a complex issue, for example the question of the contractual relationships that arose with these new phenomena. It would be interesting to take into account not only the employment relationship but also the economy that was changing and the context of digitalisation.

**1.2.8 Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** said that it was surprising that after much discussion there were still so many requests and amendments regarding the research. There was potential she thought for overloading the programme and causing delays.

- The Commission agreed with the programme and were positive about the project supporting capacity building by the social partners, which it seemed was about more than training.
- The social pillar and migration might be dealt with under the *ad hoc* research arrangement.
- Although she understood that many of the topics proposed were important, it was the case that sometimes they were covered elsewhere by other organisations. For example, some of the topics were covered in the Commission’s *Employment and Social Developments in Europe* report, and the Commission had recently published its *Labour market and wage developments in Europe* annual review which included a chapter on minimum wage.
- In relation to the platform on undeclared work, it was the platform and not the Commission who would decide what was required, if at all, from Eurofound and

this would be early in 2017.

- As regards the skills package the Commission definitely saw the importance of addressing the challenges mentioned by the Employers' Group but underlined that the research might overlap with the work of Cedefop. She noted that the Commissioner was keen to avoid such overlaps.
- The European Restructuring Monitor was supported by the Commission whilst noting that opportunities for further efficiencies needed to be seized.
- In relation to the financial and human resources in the Programming Document the Commission could not agree to some of the figures presented in the document since these needed to be brought in line with the 2013 Commission communication on agencies' resources.

1.2.9 **The Chairperson** thanked the Groups for their comments and added that the Workers Group were completely in agreement with the statement of the Employers regarding the European Restructuring Monitor.

In light of the time constraints he invited the Director and Deputy Director to reply to the comments more fully during the Governing Board meeting.

1.2.10 **The Director** said that the number of projects in the programme currently was too great and that it would be necessary to delete some. The Governing Board should provide some guidance on that.

It was necessary also to ensure a capacity to carry out *ad hoc* research in 2018.

1.2.11 **The Deputy Director** added that of the 47 projects in the 2018 programme 28 were continuations and 19 were new projects. She reminded the Bureau of the call by the Governments Group in the past for less projects, more quality, and more strategic research with a greater impact. Despite this, the number of projects was growing instead of reducing.

1.2.12 **The Chairperson** said that the message to take back to the Groups was clear that if projects were added, then others would have to be deleted.

2. As the meeting was shorter than usual the Bureau did not discuss the other agenda items for the Governing Board meeting in detail.

It was confirmed that an update on the Network of Correspondents would be included on the agenda of the December Bureau meeting.

Following on from previous discussions it was decided that the December meeting of the Bureau would be a virtual one, with members participating via a web connection. It was considered that it was feasible to hold shorter meetings virtually, though it would not be a suitable format for longer meetings.

The short meeting concluded and the members returned to the Group meetings.

3. The next meeting of the Bureau would be held on **Friday, 9 December 2016 at 9.00 Local Time (Ireland) via web conference.**

[Signed H.Fonck]

[Signed J.Menéndez-Valdés]

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Chairperson

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Director

**DRAFT AGENDA  
NINETIETH MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD**

*Raymond-Pierre Bodin Conference Centre 9.00-13.00 Friday, 11 November 2016*

1. Opening of meeting and examination of Draft Agenda (GB 90/1) (EN, FR, DE) *For Adoption*
2. Draft Minutes of 89th Meeting of the Governing Board, 13 November 2015 (GB 90/2) (EN, FR, DE) *For Adoption*
3. Progress Report of the Director on the activities of Eurofound (GB 90/3), *For Information*
4. New Founding Regulation – update by the Commission (GB 90/4), *For Information*
5. Programming Document 2017-2020 *Version 2017* (EN, FR, DE) (GB 90/5), *For Adoption*
6. Draft Programming Document 2017-2020 *Version 2018* (EN) (GB 90/6), *For Discussion*
7. Election of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons and the Bureau (GB 90/7), *For Adoption*
8. Schedule of Meetings 2017 of the Governing Board, Bureau and Groups (GB 90/8), *For Adoption*
9. Advisory Committees
  - 9.1. Establishment of Advisory Committees (GB 90/9.1), *For Adoption*
  - 9.2. Rules of Procedure ( GB 90/9.2), *For Adoption*
10. Follow up to *ex post* evaluation of Work Programme 2009-2012:  
Governing Board members' potential role in exchanging and disseminating Eurofound's work (recommendation 1(b)) (GB 90/10) *For Discussion*
11. Administrative Questions
  - Ratification of decisions by the Bureau (GB 90/11) *For Adoption*
12. AOB

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING APPROVED AT  
GOVERNING BOARD MEETING ON 17 NOVEMBER 2017**

## **FINAL REVISED MINUTES**

### **OF THE NINETIETH MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD**

Friday, 11 November 2016, Raymond-Pierre Bodin Conference Centre, Eurofound

1. Welcome to the meeting and adoption of draft agenda

The **Chairperson** opened the meeting and thanked Eurofound for organising the reception on the previous evening.

He welcomed new members (from 1 December) who were attending the meeting as observers. **Mr Sommer Moeller** (alternate, Denmark), **Mr Raileanu** (Romania), **Ms Forsselius** (Sweden) Governments, and **Mr Eamets** (Estonia) of the Employers.

**The draft agenda was adopted.**
2. Adoption of minutes of Governing Board meeting 13 November 2015 (GB 90/2)
  - 2.1 **4.1 Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** asked to amend her intervention as follows "The Commission was appreciative of the tripartite nature of the Agency but would have to see how that could be reconciled with the Common Approach on the decentralised EU Agencies from 2012".

With a further minor correction **the minutes were adopted.**
3. Progress report of the Director (GB 90/3)
  - 3.1 The **Director** said that members had received a full written report on activities in Eurofound since the previous Governing Board meeting in 2015, so that he would only present the highlights.
    - He outlined Eurofound's ongoing cooperation with the EU Presidencies which he said was an important element of the communication strategy, facilitating the dissemination of Eurofound research at high-level events.
    - The European Commission continued to be one of the greatest users of Eurofound's results. Eurofound had contributed to discussions on the proposed European Pillar of Social Rights, publishing articles on the consultation pages of the Commission's website on the pillar, as well as participating in three hearings on the pillar. Eurofound had also collaborated in an information session organised by the Commission for its staff which had been useful on both sides.
    - Cooperation with Eurofound's sister agency Cedefop remained strong, and he highlighted a joint presentation with the Director of that agency at the European Economic and Social Committee.
    - There were 24 visits with 305 visitors to Eurofound by the end of October, including the ETUC confederal secretary Ms Mir Roca, the Heads of two EU Agencies, as well as members of the Irish government with responsibility for labour and social policies [one of whom, Mr Varadkar had subsequently become prime minister].
    - Staff had been active in presenting Eurofound's research at over 140 events during the year. A highlight was the presentation in the European Parliament on 27 April 2016 of the report on *Regulation of labour market intermediaries and the role of social partners in preventing trafficking of labour*, research carried out in close collaboration with the Commission's department with responsibility in the area of trafficking. A report on the gender pay gap had been presented at the FEMM

committee of the European Parliament on 11 October 2016.

He explained that the decision to present at or participate in events was decided on the basis of a number of set criteria designed to ensure the maximum impact with Eurofound's target audiences.

- He highlighted projects to be completed in 2016 including *Europe's refugee crisis: Evidence on approaches to labour market integration of refugees*; a follow up report on new forms of work organisation looking at *Strategic Employee Sharing*, and a report on whether the reduction of non-wage labour costs led to more sustainable jobs. The delayed reports on *National Concepts of Representativeness* and *Changing places: Mid-career review* would also be published.
- He highlighted a number of recent publications in the Employment area such as the *European Jobs Monitor 2016* that included an interesting task-based analysis that would be followed up on, as well as *The Gender Employment gap: Challenges and Solutions* that incorporated an estimate of the potential costs or theoretical costs of the non-participation of women in the labour market.
- In the area of Industrial Relations, he highlighted the report on the *Role of the Social Partners in the European Semester* which was being updated with additional information that had been prepared for the Employment Committee of the Council (EMCO).
- He presented a list of the most downloaded publications from the website, with a number of older reports featuring highly in the list (e.g. the European Working Conditions Survey and the NEETS report)
- The overview report of the 6<sup>th</sup> *European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS)* would be launched at an event on 17 November 2016. Further dataset analysis was underway in a number of areas of interest (self-employed, ageing workers, working time and ICT-based mobile workers). Eurofound was collaborating with the ILO and other organisations on global comparisons to the survey (with the application of the EWCS beyond the EU to include China, US and South Korea (where the government were using the questionnaire)). Interest in the EWCS had also been expressed in Latin America.
- The fieldwork on the 4<sup>th</sup> *European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS)* had commenced and would be completed in 28 Member States by the end of 2016. The fieldwork in five candidate countries would start in November 2016.
- Agreement had been reached to carry out the 4<sup>th</sup> *European Company Survey* jointly with Cedefop in 2018/2019 sharing the costs equally. Cooperation with other EU Agencies was also envisioned (e.g. with the European Training Foundation in relation to the candidate countries and EU-OSHA where it was planned to have some consultation on the questionnaire).
- Eurofound used a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPI) to evaluate its activities, and the Director highlighted the use of Eurofound documents in key EU policy documents of the European Commission (67), European Parliament (40), Council (12) and EU Social Partners (33).

Eurofound's EU Impact database recorded that Eurofound's research was cited in Commission papers on the European Pillar of Social Rights, *Employment and Social Developments in Europe 2015* and the *EU Youth Report 2015*; In European

Parliament papers on the European Semester<sup>1</sup> in the Resolution on Skills Policies for Fighting Youth-Unemployment<sup>2</sup> and the Resolution on application of the directive implementing the revised Framework Agreement on Parental Leave<sup>3</sup>. Eurofound had contributed to the EPSCO and EMCO committees who prepared the work of the meetings of the ministers.

Eurofound was mentioned in the Statement by the Dutch Presidency, the European Commission and the European Social Partners on a new start for social dialogue on 27 June 2016.

- In relation to budgetary matters, due to increases in staff costs linked to the cost of living in Ireland there was a need to amend the 2016 budget and the 2017 budget. The shortfall amounted to EUR 600,000 over three years. It had been possible to balance the budget in the end and to make the adjustments in the upcoming budgets.
- As a follow-up to a previous audit exercise, Eurofound had regularised some mistakes with the salaries.

A clean budgetary discharge report had been received from the European Parliament.

- Eurofound was on target to achieve its KPI on budget implementation and timely programme delivery in 2016, following a failure to reach this KPI in the previous year. The situation was being monitored.
- Eurofound was still involved in the coordination of the network of the EU Agencies, though without a leading role. The Director informed the members of an EU Agency Forum that would be held in the European Parliament on 6-7 December 2016. Members were invited to participate, at their own cost, in an event that sought to establish the link between the work of the agencies and the agenda of the European Union.

3.2 The **Chairperson** thanked the Director for his progress report, which clearly demonstrated that Eurofound was fulfilling its mission and producing relevant research for decision-makers and governments and social partners. He thanked the staff of Eurofound for their work.

4. Update by the Commission on the Founding regulation (GB 90/4)

4.1 The **Chairperson** invited the Commission to update the Governing Board on the status of the proposed revisions to the founding regulations of the three tripartite agencies including Eurofound.

4.2 **Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** noted that the Commission had adopted its proposal for the new founding regulation on 23 August 2016. The key aim of the exercise was to align the function and operations of the agencies with the Common Approach on Decentralised Agencies endorsed by the Council, the Parliament and the Commission in December 2012.

It was important to underline that the revisions to the regulation did not change the mandate and tasks of the agencies. They provided updated wording to properly reflect

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<sup>1</sup> (2015/2330(INI))

<sup>2</sup> (2015/2088(INI))

<sup>3</sup> (2015/2097(INI))

the activities the agencies were carrying out.

The tripartite nature of the Agencies was acknowledged and preserved in the proposals. Notably, the current composition of the Governing Board had been retained. She reminded the meeting that this was one of the reasons why the proposal had taken some time to adopt, and said that a year earlier the new Commissioner had underlined that she would make efforts to maintain the Governing Board in its current format, even though it was contrary to the Common Approach which envisaged smaller Boards.

The proposal was that the Governing Board would be renamed the Management Board, and the Bureau, the Executive Board, however their functions did not change. As was currently the case, the Management Board would retain its key role in sending out strategic orientations for the agency, adopting the Programming Document and budget, carrying out its supervisory functions etc. The Governing Board would now take the decision regarding the appointment of the Director on the basis of proposals from the Commission.

As foreseen in the Common Approach the Management Board would become the Appointing Authority for staff, a role which would be delegated to the Director who would make the appointments and the decisions on a day-to-day basis. Only in exceptional circumstances would this delegation be suspended, and in that case somebody else on the staff of Eurofound would receive the delegation.

The proposal no longer foresaw the role of a Deputy Director in such a small agency, in practice the role was reserved for agencies with more than 300 staff. The other tripartite agencies did not have a Deputy Director.

The regulation now included a specific reference to the Advisory Committees.

Discussions were ongoing in the Council and the Slovakian Presidency had undertaken to take the three proposals for the tripartite agencies as a package. In discussions with Member States it was clear that some members now questioned key principles of the Common Approach, although they had agreed to them alongside the European Commission and the European Parliament in 2012.

Discussions in the European Parliament would take more time and would happen only in 2017.

4.3 The **Chairperson** thanked the member from the Commission for this information and invited any comments or questions.

4.4 **Mr Scherrer (Workers)** said that the Workers' Group appreciated the retention of the tripartite structure of the Governing Board and the recognition of the Advisory Committees.

They did not agree with the suppression of the Deputy Director post which reflected the cooperation between the Social Partners and contributed towards a good balance of the various interests in the leadership of Eurofound.

It appeared that the influence of the Commission in the Agency was growing, for example in relation to the changes in the way the Director was appointed. It was, he said, a political issue at a time when it was necessary and important to strengthen the influence of the social partners in society and it would be seen that way in discussions in the European Parliament.

- 4.5 **Ms Bober (Employers)** said that the Employers' Group supported the retention of the current level of Social Partner representation in the Board, but were similarly concerned by the decision to suppress the post of Deputy Director. Having listened to the discussions in the Council it was considered that there was a need to reflect more on the role of the Management Board. The Employers' Group would be following up on the issue of the role of the Governing Board.
- 4.6 **Ms Bulgarelli (Governments)** said that the Group appreciated the changes of the Commission in relation to the tripartite nature of the Governing Board. There were ongoing discussions in the Council, and a number of amendments had been proposed in relation to the tasks of the Agency in Article 1 and Article 2. **Ms Welter (Governments)** added that it was felt that the Governing Board should not have the power of the Appointing Authority and that it was not necessary to interfere in such a way with the day-to-day management of the Agency.
- 4.7 **Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** emphasised that the proposal to reduce the size of the Governing Board was driven by the Common Approach and the desire to achieve efficiencies. In relation to comments about the reduced Bureau she noted that a smaller executive body worked well in Eurofound's sister agency Cedefop.

Whilst in future the Commission would be responsible for selecting the Director, it was the case that the Governing Board would have the power to accept or reject the Commission's proposal.

The process of delegation from the Governing Board to the Appointing Authority (Director) was similar to the arrangement whereby the Commission delegated to a Director General.

She noted the points made in relation to the role of Deputy Director in Eurofound and was sure there would be further discussions on this point.

5. Programming Document – Version 2017 (GB 90/5)

- 5.1 The **Chairperson** noted that the document had been agreed by the Governing Board in January 2016 before being submitted to the various bodies for comments, as provided for in the regulation. A number of minor changes were tabled.

He explained that in the Bureau meeting on the previous day, the Governments and Workers had raised strong concerns about the deletion of two projects from the Working Conditions area of the programme and had agreed with the Directorate that a means would be found to carry out the research on *Working Conditions and Employee Engagement and Development*, if not in 2017 then at least in 2018.

The Groups also requested the insertion of the following sentence in this section of the programme in relation to the other deleted research.

'In 2017, Eurofound will examine whether a combined analysis of data from the 3rd ECS and the 6th EWCS is possible. If this turns out to be a viable option, combined analysis of the two surveys could be the basis for further research into the link between certain workplace practices and employee well-being in the future'

- 5.2 The **Director** clarified that the research on employee engagement and development was in fact a secondary analysis of the EWCS. The project had been postponed in order to balance the resources. The sentence proposed by the Chairperson referred rather to a feasibility study in relation to a methodological approach to the surveys.

- 5.3 **Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** noted that the Commission had made comments on budgetary matters and staff matters but not on the content of the programme, which had been agreed already.
- 5.4 The **Director** added that **by adopting the Programming Document the Governing Board also formally decided to carry out the 4<sup>th</sup> European Company Survey jointly with Cedefop.**
- 5.5 **Ms Bulgarelli (Governments)** stated that within the Governments' Group discussions had focused on the need to align the strategic proposals with the allocation of budget and resources, and to consider carefully the distribution of work using internal and external resources. The Group considered that the surveys were key outputs that produced important data which should be exploited as much as possible. It was this factor that lay behind her Group's concern at any delays to secondary research on the European Working Conditions Survey.
- 5.6 **With these amendments and comments the Groups adopted the 2017 Work Programme.**
6. Draft Programming Document – Version 2018 (GB 90/6)
- 6.1 The **Director** introduced the document which had been discussed in the Group meetings in the Summer, and thereafter by the Bureau in September. He noted that a number of projects were continued from the 2017 programme.
- He stressed that negative priorities should be understood as research topics that were priorities for Eurofound but which had been left out of the programme owing to constraints of budget. For example, youth and migration had not been selected as discrete research activities, although they would be covered in various projects. He noted that whilst other agencies had received additional funding to cover the refugee crisis, Eurofound had not.
- Though the surveys were prioritised, Eurofound was searching for efficiencies here too, as evidenced by cooperation with Cedefop on the ECS. There would be a need for further reflection beyond the 2020 work programme.
- Also listed in the area of negative priorities was Eurofound's contribution to the Platform on Undeclared Work. Until there was more certainty about the informational needs of the platform, it remained a negative priority.
- He noted that the next draft of the programme, to be sent to the Commission in January, would need to be further reduced, and should have less projects.
- 6.2 **Ms Rossi (Employers)** made some general remarks on the programme.
- The Group noted that there was a need to be more strategic in the programme, to really identify priorities, issues of relevance for social Europe and the interest groups members.
- *Working Conditions and Sustainable Work* - it would be good to have a clear focus on research linking employee engagement and the development of workers' knowledge and skills.
  - *Social Dialogue* - this activity was a great opportunity to have a clear focus on areas that could bring added value to the stakeholders. In this area it would be good to focus on innovative workplace practices of social dialogue, leading to

win/win situations and win/win arrangements. Eurofound should develop research on what was working in relation to SMEs and social dialogue. It would be a good opportunity for the Foundation Seminar Series in 2018 to have a focus on social dialogue.

- *Working Life Developments*, the web portal on collective bargaining was an opportunity to develop a real and interesting tool for all the stakeholders to have a detailed picture of collective bargaining systems at national level, building on information that was already in the hands of the European Commission such as the Representativeness studies, the country fiches etc. It was important that the portal was up-to-date and of good quality.
- *European Restructuring Monitor (ERM)* the Group welcomed the opportunity to reflect on this tool and urged Eurofound and the Governing Board to formally commit to continue reflecting on improvements to the ERM. The note which had been circulated was helpful in highlighting some of the weaknesses of the tool, but also making balanced proposals on how to proceed in the future.

6.3 **Ms Bulgarelli (Governments)** said that the Group would forward more detailed comments in writing.

- The Group felt that the work on the digital age should be less exploratory and more concerned with data. The Group called on Eurofound to start providing information and analysis and to discuss at tripartite level those policy actions already taken at Member State level, as well as those developed at company level. Reflecting the comments of the Employers it would be good, she said, to look at win/win solutions in public policy and company practices not only in the area of social dialogue; to see how the transformational impact of digitalisation was controlled, to look at the solutions already in place.
- On *Innovation and Job Creation in companies*, the Group would favour more investigation of social economies with an internal focus on cooperatives. There was a lot of scope for this theme in actions by Governments at the moment.
- The issue of migrant workers and asylum seekers and refugees and their integration into the labour market was still very relevant. The Group would await the outcome of Eurofound's seminar in Berlin to see what could be done next in the area.
- In relation to negative priorities, the Group believed that 'Undeclared work' and those actions linked to it, such as equal working conditions, were a top priority for Governments.
- In general, the recommendation was to reduce the overall number of projects in the programme, to focus instead on strategic projects and on the quality of those projects.
- In relation to the ERM, the Group supported the call to maintain the tool and to continue to monitor it for improvements. As it seemed that the Commission were the main user of the tool, it would be interesting to understand how they used it, and what were the pros and cons of using it.
- Concerning future discussions on negative priorities, the Group would like to understand what proportion of Eurofound's research was delivered by the Network of Correspondents versus the proportion delivered by internal staff.

6.4 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** outlined the comments of the Workers' Group.

- Although the Group appreciated the need to make choices there was disappointment that there was less research on digitalisation, refugees and undeclared work. The Group shared the comments of the Governments on the importance of the issue of undeclared work. Although there were a number of other institutions working in this area it was important to see what Eurofound was able to bring to the debate, such as responses in labour markets, responses in public policy etc. Two years down the line it was possible that the surveys and pan-European studies might answer some of the questions. This would be in line with a more strategic approach.
- The Group would send written proposals, including for areas where it was considered that it might be possible to add the topics of refugees or digitalisation.
- In relation to the ERM it was important to note that by launching a discussion on the ERM it was not the intention of the Group to end it, but rather to seek ways to improve it. The recent discussions on the ERM in the Advisory Committee had been very helpful in that regard. The problems lay in the quantification, and in the Advisory Committee where there had been a more detailed discussion, it had been suggested that there were other sources that might be used to triangulate the effect. The Group thanked Eurofound for having provided the opportunity to reflect in a more systematic way on how the ERM might be improved, and to pay more attention to how the data was used. The note on the ERM went in the right direction and included the caveats that were necessary for the data.
- **Mr Scherrer (Workers)** added that the project on capacity building and social dialogue was still rather unclear and that in light of the Commission's 'New Start for Social Dialogue' it was an opportunity for the Groups to fine-tune what research was required here.

6.5 **Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** made the following comments on behalf of the Commission.

- She agreed that the capacity building project was one of the four key elements in the agreement and something that needed to be worked on. She added that the forthcoming *Social Developments in Europe* report would include a section on capacity building, which might help to stimulate discussion.  
In this context she referred to the fact that in the Employment Committee recently there had been a discussion between the committee members from the Governments side and invited representatives from the Social Partners, the first time this had been the case. There had been a review of how social dialogue was functioning in all Member States with particular focus on work in the European Semester and a particular focus on employment and social development. It was agreed that this was useful also as a forum for sharing practices that might conceivably include capacity building.
- She supported Eurofound in saying that it was not possible to continue adding projects without running into problems delivering the research. It was important not to overload the staff. The quality of the research was essential. She supported the comments about the strategic relevance of the research and said that it was still possible to take a step back and look at the programme on this basis.
- In relation to *ad hoc* research, she noted the planned follow up to the *European Pillar of Social Rights* and the migration issue as areas where Eurofound might be

- able to provide information on request.
- The Commission supported the ERM and would reply to the questions of the Governments' Group after the meeting.
  - It was necessary to ensure that the staffing resource in the document was in line with the communication of the Commission on staff reductions adopted in 2013.
- 6.6 Following a short break the meeting resumed and the **Chairperson** invited the Director to reply to the comments on the work programme.
- 6.7 **The Director** thanked the Groups for their contribution and asked that written comments be sent within a week.
- In the Social Dialogue area there was a very specific request from the Employers' group to focus on innovative practices and social dialogue in SMEs, and to do so in the context of the tripartite Foundation Seminar Series. Before agreeing to this, it was necessary to see if this proposal was supported by the other groups.
  - In relation to the project on capacity building, he called for a joint proposal from the Social Partners and one that took into account the needs of the European Commission.
  - In relation to the project looking at job creation in different types of companies there was a common understanding that the research would focus on the social economy. It was important to note that it was qualitative research similar to previous research on job creation in SMEs, and consisted of a collection of case studies where a number of general trends and elements would be identified.
  - Eurofound would have to wait to see what the Platform on Undeclared Work would request from it. For the moment the Platform had told Eurofound to wait and see. It had launched a high value tender with a consortium including one of Eurofound's former contractors and was also using the platform of the Joint Research Centre in Seville. He added that the European Commission, Governments and Social Partners were members of the platform and so had some insight into the situation.
  - It must be acknowledged that the area of digitalisation was a busy one with a number of organisations involved in the area. It was not clear what research would emerge between now and 2018, when Eurofound's research would commence.
  - He noted the suggestion to utilise the *ad hoc* research budget to look at capacity building, but said that he would prefer to keep this open for 2018 as it was designed to create a contingency for areas that had not yet emerged.
  - In relation to the proposed staff reductions and the staffing figures in the budget, he said that Eurofound had complied with the requests despite the difficulty it posed in a small organisation.
  - He referred to discussions in the Bureau on the previous day where doubts had been raised by the Employers about integrating the term 'social tensions' in the EQLS survey. He said that it referred to a very specific question in the EQLS which asked about tensions between ethnic groups and that it was necessary to use that analysis.
  - In 2017 it would be confirmed whether the stakeholders wished to repeat the sectoral fiches in the same way in 2018.
  - With the comments on the ERM and a commitment to continue to monitor the

tool, he considered discussions on the matter to be closed. A number of suggestions had been made regarding transparency in the presentation of the data in the tool. It was planned to increase the number of cases and to report instead every second year.

6.8 **Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** said that there were some proposals regarding ‘social tensions’ it seemed to her that social cohesion was also about avoiding social tension so that the topic was already covered in the social cohesion aspects.

6.9 With a proposal from the Director that the research staff could assist directly with questions such as the one concerning social tension, the Chairperson wishing to keep to the agreed schedule invited the coordinators to submit their comments in writing and concluded discussions on this version of the programme.

7. Election of the Chairperson, Vice–Chairpersons and the Bureau (GB 90/7)

7.1 The following Chairpersons were nominated.

- **Ms Rossi (Employers)** Chairperson
- **Ms Bulgarelli (Governments)** Vice-Chairperson
- **Mr Fonck (Workers)** Vice-Chairperson
- **Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** Vice-Chairperson

The Bureau members were also appointed.

- Governments: **Ms Welter** replacing Mr Blomsma as coordinator for the Group, and **Mr Närhinen** joining as member. **Mr Cullen** would remain on the Bureau as an alternate member until his retirement in the New Year.
- Employers: **Ms Andersen** as new alternate member.
- Workers: there were no changes in the Workers’ representation on the Bureau.

The Bureau members thanked **Mr Fonck** for his Chairmanship in the previous two years.

8. Schedule of Meetings of the Governing Board, Bureau and Groups in 2017 (GB 90/8)

**The schedule was adopted.**

9. Advisory Committees (GB 90/9)

9.1 The **Deputy Director** introduced the documents which included proposals for those Advisory Committees that would be established for the duration of the new four-year programme and set out the rules of procedures for the committees. She noted that the Advisory Committees would be mentioned for the first time in the new founding regulation.

The following decisions were made:

- **The Governing Board established the four advisory committees (Labour Market Change, Industrial Relations, Working Conditions and Sustainable Work; and Quality of Life and Public Services)**
- **The Board adopted the rules of procedure (the updated 2012 rules) with amendments to Article 4 that members of the Committees could be full or alternate members of the Governing Board and Article 5 that Advisory Committees would have one member only from the European Commission.**

There were exchanges in relation to the following:

- The Workers' Group felt that the committees could have a role in the planning of the work programme, in providing an opinion on the programme.
- There was discussion also on the selection of experts on the Committees. The Director said that their selection was carried out in accordance with internal rules and that their role in the committees was not as stakeholders but as non-paid experts.
- The **Chairperson** asked that the selection of experts be discussed by the Bureau.

In relation to a role for the committees in the work programme he referred to previous discussions on the matter and the conclusion that the Advisory Committees were not governing bodies. Article 13 of the rules of the committees addressed their role in defining a standard agenda for the meetings.

10 Discussion on the follow-up to the *ex post* evaluation of work programme 2009-2012 (GB 90/10)

10.1 The **Deputy Director** introduced the document that concerned Eurofound's follow up to the conclusions of the evaluation report, and in particular to a recommendation to strengthen the involvement and contribution of the Governing Board in the Agency.

With the understanding that Governing Board members provided their services on a voluntary basis the document set out what might be considered good practice in relation to Board members' involvement in the follow-up of Eurofound activities, in relation to national developments and in relation to the communication of Eurofound findings.

10.2 **Mr Blomsma (Governments)** said that the Group took note of the paper, had held a brief exchange on its contents, and that there was a willingness to consider how to be involved at national level in the exchange of Eurofound results.

10.3 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** said that the Group agreed with and supported the proposals outlined. The Group repeated their offer to review the distribution lists for the executive summaries on a Member State basis, with a view to enhancing the outreach at national level.

10.4 **Ms Rossi (Employers)** said that the Group supported the proposal and felt that there was more awareness of the value of involving stakeholders in this way. It should be understood that the level of stakeholder activity differed in the various states, and that the relationship with the national correspondents of the Network of Correspondents also played a role.

10.5 **Ms Kauffmann (Commission)** added that it was important that the upcoming report of the mid-term evaluation of the Network of Correspondents be discussed in the Bureau, and that there was consideration also of possibilities for coordination with networks used already by the Commission.

She wished to inform the Governing Board of the Commission's cross-cutting evaluation of the tripartite agencies (Cedefop, EU-OSHA, ETF and Eurofound) that would take place in 2017 and report in early 2018 looking at the governance and operations of the agencies, their relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, coherence and added value. The Commission would keep the agencies informed on progress.

She also informed that the Commission organised an annual joint meeting with the

Directors of the four agencies, with the next one planned for 16 November 2016, demonstrating the Commission's desire to ensure coherence between its own activities and those of the four agencies.

- 10.6 The **Deputy Director** confirmed that the Bureau would discuss the evaluation report at its meeting on 9 December 2016, and in January 2017 would look at the collaboration agreements with the sister agencies, with a focus on outcomes and outputs.
- 10.7 **The Director** added that the European Commission would approach the stakeholders during its cross-cutting evaluation and it was important that Board members responded to their questionnaires as it concerned the value of the agency in relation to the European Union.
11. **The Chairperson** concluded the business of the meeting and thanked the outgoing members for their service during the previous years.

The next meeting of the Governing Board would be held on **Friday, 17 November 2017** in **Dublin**.

*[Stefania Rossi]*

*[Juan Menéndez-Valdés]*

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Chairperson

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Director

## **DECISIONS OF THE NINETIETH GOVERNING BOARD**

1. Adopted minutes of Board meeting of 13 November 2015, with minor amendments.
2. Adopted Work Programme 2017, subject to amendments.
3. Appointed the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the Governing Board.
4. Appointed the members of the Bureau.
5. Adopted dates for meetings of the Board, Bureau and Groups in 2017.
6. Adopted decision on establishment of Advisory Committees for the next four years.
7. Adopted the rules of procedure of the Advisory Committees with two amendments (to Articles 4 and 5).

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS AT 90<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD  
FRIDAY, 11 NOVEMBER 2016**

(New members from 1 December in Bold)

1.	Kadi	Alatalu	Estonia	Workers
2.	Dorthe	Andersen	Denmark	Employers
3.	Igor	Antauer	Slovenia	Employers
4.	Juha	Antila	Finland	Workers
5.	Panikos	Argyrides	Cyprus	Workers
6.	Irini	Bardani	Greece	Employers
7.	Rossella	Benedetti	Italy	Workers
8.	Martin	Blomsma	Coordinator	Governments
9.	Magdalena	Bober	Coordinator	Employers
10.	Dimiter	Brankov	Bulgaria	Employers
11.	Aviana	Bulgarelli	Italy	Governments
12.	Jerzy	Ciechański	Poland	Governments
13.	Antal	Csuport	Hungary	Employers
14.	Paul	Cullen	Ireland	Governments
15.	Michel	De Gols	Belgium	Governments
16.	Kris	De Meester	Belgium	Employers
17.	Dinah	Djalinous-Glatz	Austria	Workers
18.	<b>Raul</b>	<b>Eamets</b>	<b>Estonia</b>	<b>Employers</b>
19.	Joseph	Farrugia	Malta	Employers
20.	Thomas	Fischer	Germany	Workers
21.	Herman	Fonck	Belgium	Workers
22.	<b>Hedvig</b>	<b>Forsselius</b>	<b>Sweden</b>	<b>Governments</b>
23.	Harald	Fugger	Austria	Governments
24.	Roel	Gans	The Netherlands	Governments
25.	Paloma	Garcia	Spain	Governments
26.	Matěj	Gregárek	Czech Republic	Governments
27.	Silvia	Gregorcova	Slovakia	Governments
28.	Thorfrid	Hansen	EFTA	Observer
29.	Aline	Hoffmann	Deputy Coordinator	Workers

30.	Martin	Hošták	Slovakia	Employers
31.	Marina	Ioannou-Hasapi	Cyprus	Governments
32.	Liina	Kaldmae	Estonia	Governments
33.	Barbara	Kauffmann	-	European Commission
34.	Melinda	Kelemen	Hungary	Workers
35.	Katalin	Kissné Bencze	Hungary	Governments
36.	Ivan	Kokalov	Bulgaria	Workers
37.	Vladka	Komel	Slovenia	Governments
38.	Maja	Konjar	Slovenia	Workers
39.	Thomas	Kovács	Germany	Governments
40.	Kristina	Krupavičienė	Lithuania	Workers
41.	Katharina	Lindner	Austria	Employers
42.	Pierre-Gaël	Loreal	France	Workers
43.	Raymond	Maes	-	European Commission
44.	Brendan	McGinty	Ireland	Employers
45.	Despoina	Michailidou	Greece	Governments
46.	Lutz	Mühl	Germany	Employers
47.	Antti	Närhinen	Finland	Governments
48.	Brenda	O'Brien	-	EU-OSHA
49.	Bogdan	Olszewski	Poland	Workers
50.	Marcelino	Pena Costa	Portugal	Employers
51.	Ruta	Porniece	Latvia	Workers
52.	Ioan-Cristinel	Raileanu	Romania	Governments
53.	Antonia	Ramos Yuste	Spain	Workers
54.	Stefania	Rossi	Italy	Employers
55.	Manuel	Roxo	Portugal	Governments
56.	Jürgen	Scheftlein	-	European Commission
57.	Peter	Scherrer	Coordinator	Workers
58.	Paul	Sellers	United Kingdom	Workers
59.	Rita	Skrebiškienė	Lithuania	Governments
60.	<b>Andreas</b>	<b>Sommer Moeller</b>	<b>Denmark</b>	<b>Governments</b>
61.	Lucie	Studničná	Czech Republic	Workers
62.	Panagiotis	Syriopoulos	Greece	Workers

<b>63.</b>	Ineta	Tāre	Latvia	Governments
<b>64.</b>	Teodora	Todorova	Bulgaria	Governments
<b>65.</b>	Veronique	Eischen	Luxembourg	Workers
<b>66.</b>	Nadine	Welter	Luxembourg	Governments
<b>67.</b>	Lis	Witsø-Lund	Denmark	Governments (Observer)

The Following staff from Eurofound participated or observed in the meeting

Juan	Menéndez-Valdés	Director
Erika	Mezger	Deputy Director
Markus	Grimmeisen	Secretary to the Governing Board
Andrea	Fromm	Union Syndicale
Pepa	Perez	Staff Committee

**DRAFT AGENDA**  
**260th MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE GOVERNING BOARD**  
*A meeting by web conference*  
*(16-0001-08)*

*Friday, 9 December 2016, 9h00-11h00 (Dublin time)*  
*10h00-12h00 (CET, Brussels time)*

1. Draft Agenda (B 260/1), *For Adoption*
2. Draft Minutes of the 259th Bureau Meeting of 10 November 2016 (B 260/2), *For Adoption*
3. Programming Document 2017-2020 –version 2018, draft 4 - (B 260/3), *For Discussion*
4. Network of European Correspondents – next contract 2018-2020 (B 260/4) *For Information*
5. AOB

Date and venue of **next Bureau meeting**:

Friday, 20 January 2016, 9.00-13.00

Room 6, Conseil Central d’Economie, Avenue d’Auderghem, Brussels

## REVISED FINAL MINUTES

### 260th MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

9.30-12.15, Friday, 9 December 2016

*(Exceptionally the meeting was an online meeting via web conferencing facility)*

<b>Mr Fonck</b>	Vice-Chairperson of the Governing Board (Workers)
<b>Mr Närhinen</b>	Member of the Governing Board (Governments)
<b>Mr Mühl</b>	Member of the Governing Board (Employers)
<b>Ms Welter</b>	Member of the Governing Board (Coordinator Governments)
<b>Ms Bober</b>	Coordinator (Employers)
<b>Mr Scherrer</b>	Coordinator (Workers)
<b>Ms Hoffmann</b>	Deputy Coordinator (Workers)
<b>Mr Maes</b>	European Commission
<b>Ms Scanferla</b>	European Commission
<b>Mr Menéndez-Valdés</b>	Director
<b>Ms Mezger</b>	Deputy Director
<b>Mr Grimmeisen</b>	Secretary to the Governing Board
<b>Ms Gerstenberger</b>	Eurofound
<b>Ms de Boer</b>	Eurofound (for agenda item 4 only)

1. Welcome to meeting and adoption of agenda (B 260/1)

**Mr Fonck (Workers)** chaired the online meeting in the absence of the Chairperson, Ms Rossi. Regrets were also received from Ms Bulgarelli.

The draft agenda was adopted.

2. Adoption of minutes of Bureau meeting of 10 November, 2016 (B 261/10)

2.1 **Mr Maes (Commission)** requested the following changes.

- **1.1.5 to be amended as follows:** Ms Kauffmann (Commission) said that the Commission were satisfied with the document as the Commission's opinion on resources was taken on board. She recalled that resource constraints could indeed lead to modifications in the planned projects and that this should be addressed by identifying negative priorities.
- **1.2.8 fifth bullet point to be amended as follows:** As regards the Skills package the Commission definitely saw the importance of addressing the challenges mentioned by the Employers' Group but underlined that the research might overlap with the work of Cedefop. She noted that the Commissioner was keen to avoid such overlaps.
- **Sixth bullet point to be amended as follows:** The European Restructuring Monitor was supported by the Commission whilst noting that opportunities for further efficiencies needed to be seized.
- **Final bullet point to be amended as follows:** In relation to the financial and human resources in the Programming Document the Commission could not agree to some of the figures presented in the document since these needed to be brought in line with the 2013 Commission communication on agencies' resources.

**With the above amendments the minutes were adopted.**

3 Programming document – Version 2018 (Draft 4)

3.1 The **Chairperson** agreed with the Director to take comments on the multiannual section of the document first. The Chairperson asked members to confine their comments to the Work Programme itself, rather than the table indicating the uptake of comments which was provided for information.

3.2 **Ms Welter (Governments)** noted the following on behalf of the Governments' Group.

- The Group were uneasy that research on undeclared work was mentioned under negative priorities as it was an important subject for the Governments. Eurofound should be a leader in providing policy-relevant information, regardless of the uncertainties around the platform on undeclared work. She underlined the fact that since June the Group had called for an activity on developing objective facts and figures in relation to unfair working conditions in Europe on the basis of existing data inside Eurofound, financed if necessary by cutting other smaller projects. It had not been possible to talk to the members since the Board meeting about which projects might be cut to facilitate that.
- Line 1055, the surveys were a key priority in the research programme and the Group would like the sentence 'If efficiency gains are not found sufficient, Eurofound will review the current approach to surveys for the period after 2020' to be deleted. If necessary the Governing Board would have to decide about the surveys, rather than Eurofound.
- Line 1068 the Group fully supported the intention to look for synergies and to reduce information that could be found elsewhere.
- Line 1973, the Group welcomed the review of the efficient use of resources in relation to events, but stressed that EU Presidency events were key.
- Line 1077, the Group did not agree with the text which said that because Eurofound had not been given additional funding to do so, it would not be dealing with refugees and migrants. The issue of refugees and migrants in the labour market was core business for Eurofound.

**Mr Närhinen (Governments)** added that it would be interesting to see Eurofound's criteria for prioritising participation at events, referenced in the uptake of comments table.

3.3 **Ms Bober (Employers)** made the following comments:

- The number of projects in the programme remained high despite earlier calls for the Groups to identify negative priorities and projects for deletion. Had something changed in the situation she asked.
- It was difficult to suggest projects for deletion as the descriptions at this stage were rather limited and it was not always easy to understand the objective of a project.

3.4 **Mr Maes (Commission)** agreed with the comments of the Governments in relation to changes in the approach to the surveys noting that the Governing Board had the final decision on such issues. He said that the review of efficiencies should not be restricted to cooperation with Cedefop on the European Company Survey.

- Line 1078, the sentence referring to Eurofound not having received additional funding in the area of refugees was not appropriate and should be deleted. As had been discussed previously there would be an *ad hoc* request in 2018 in relation to refugees.

- In relation to undeclared work it seemed that Eurofound had represented the situation correctly in the document, namely that as long as there was no clear request from the ‘Platform on Undeclared Work’ it was not possible to include details in the programme.
- On page 27 the staff population for 2018 was indicated at 93 whereas the Commission foresaw just 91.

3.5 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** made the following comments:

- *Line 1063*, the Group did not consider this sentence which stated that Eurofound would review the current approach to surveys, to be appropriate. The surveys were an absolute priority and to continue to sow uncertainty in this area was not helpful, she said.
- A clear statement was required that the European Working Conditions Survey ‘will’ be implemented as planned in 2019.
- The area of undeclared work was also a priority for the Workers’ Group and it was important for Eurofound to be in a position to say something on the subject in 2018.
- The Group agreed that research on migrants and refugees in the labour market was core business for Eurofound and in light of the refugee crisis and the urgent need to integrate all these new people as best as possible it had to be clearly on the agenda as part of an overall approach to Eurofound’s research.

3.6 **The Director** thanked the members for their comments, noting that this was the multiannual part of the programming document and, in principle, should remain as adopted in previous year, but that it was possible to introduce changes where necessary.

- In relation to the sentence on the surveys, the intention was that the surveys were a priority for Eurofound and that if current efforts to gain efficiencies were not sufficient then in the light of the financial realities it might be necessary to review the current approach after the current programming cycle i.e. beyond 2020. Of course it was clear that any decision to change the surveys would only be taken finally by the Governing Board. It was clear in the document that Eurofound considered the surveys to be key priority.
- On criteria for participation in events, there was an established internal procedure. Research and also communication were core business for Eurofound. The Key Performance Indicator (KPI) in this area included presentations to events, and the communication priorities were the EU Institutions and Social Partners at EU level and the tripartite audiences at national level.
- In relation to the questions on the posts it had not been possible to suppress a post in 2018 in order to meet the 10% reduction required by the Commission, but this would be possible in 2019.

3.7 Due to a loss of the Director’s online connection the **Deputy Director** continued.

- She urged the members to keep in mind that the work programme included an activity called ‘Survey Management and Development’ where it was clearly stated that Eurofound would review and analyse how its surveys were carried out, incorporating issues such as the rising costs of surveys.
- She agreed with the request of the Workers to state that the 7<sup>th</sup> European Working Conditions ‘will’ be done, rather than ‘should’ be done in 2020. Nevertheless,

since 2013 there had been discussions around the frequency of surveys and sample sizes and it had to be acknowledged that there would be discussions and possibly proposals in this regard in the future. It was clear that the cooperation with Cedefop was an exploratory exercise. It was conceivable, she said, that at a future date there would only be two surveys. It was necessary to keep in mind the concept of survey management and development.

- There was a similar challenge regarding the development of the Network of Correspondents.

3.8 **Ms Gerstenberger** further added that the issue of refugees and migrants in the labour market were part of Eurofound's core business, which was why in 2018 there would be a project on the role of Public Services in integrating refugees and asylum seekers that referred to work done in 2016 and 2017 in the area, as well as the *ad hoc* research already foreseen. If the Groups wanted Eurofound to do more, then Eurofound would argue that it should also benefit from additional funding. Without additional capacity however it was not possible to go beyond the research already envisioned unless other research was dropped.

The list of criteria for participation in external events would be circulated. She added that following events, staff were also required to record the added value of their participation.

3.9 The **Chairperson** thanked the members for their comments on the general part of the programme and asked that they be submitted in writing by 10 January 2017.

- Page 18, the text should read 'The 7<sup>th</sup> EWCS will be implemented in 2020 according to the current cycle'.
- Line 1063 delete the sentence after 'The next company survey will be done as a joint exercise with Cedefop'.
- The Groups felt that undeclared work should be a feature of the work programme, but had not had time to consult on where other projects could be dropped. He proposed that the Governments and Workers outline their wishes in this area in order to have a proposal for the Bureau meeting in January.

He moved to the second part of the Programming Document with the project descriptions.

3.10 **Ms Welter (Governments)** made the following comment on behalf of the Governments, in relation to the research on Innovation and job creation in Companies, line 1502 – said that the Group would insist on social enterprises and cooperatives being included in the type of companies to be covered by the research.

3.11 **Ms Bober (Employers)** made the following comments on behalf of the Employers.

- 2.1.2 *Social Dialogue* – the Group did not see as priority and indeed did not really understand the project about analysing vertical and horizontal forms of articulation in multinational companies and would prefer something more focused on social dialogue in SMEs or on the contribution of social dialogue to workplace innovation.
- 2.1.9 *The Digital age* - the Group urged caution in relation to the online survey (line 1723) because the platform and models that were being used were very different.

3.12 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers)** made the following comments on behalf of the Workers.

- *Working conditions and sustainable work* – line 1146 said that Eurofound would

consult stakeholders on the approach for sectoral and occupational comparisons in job quality from 2019, and was it therefore proposed she asked that any work on occupational and sectoral differentiation and job quality was postponed to 2020. The Groups had expressed a preference for looking at occupational and sectoral differences in preference to skills and employee engagement and development of workers' skills, particularly in light of the focus on skills in the joint survey with Cedefop.

- **Mr Scherrer (Workers)** had questions in relation to the proposal regarding the Foundation Seminar Series and capacity building. If it was simply an exchange of experiences there were doubts that it was the right vehicle for looking at capacity building.

**Ms Hoffmann** continued.

- Page 36, in reference to the overview report on the articulation between the EU and national levels of social dialogue, the Workers' Group supported this project which was essentially about looking at the Europeanisation of company-level social dialogue, looking at what happened at the national level and EU level, and that could also be within SMEs. The Group liked the project because it was felt that it could contribute to a lot of the work that the social partners and governments were doing in relation to trying to figure out how to cope with the challenges of Europeanisation. Although the description at this stage was rather vague, the Group would not support that it focus on SMEs as it was the multilevel approach that interested them.
- Page 39, *line 1362*, ... mapping of policies to combat segmentation including those addressing employment protection. What was meant by the new text inserted here?
- Page 41, *line 1445*, the new text implied that access to Eurostat datasets was not guaranteed.
- Page 42, *Monitoring structural change*, in the table with outputs there was an opportunity to assess the impact of demographic change on the employment structure, including 'where possible the impact on and for migrants and refugees.
- Page 43, *Innovation and job creation*, the Group were not clear how it had been decided which kinds of companies would be studied.

3.13 **Mr Maes (Commission)** said that the Commission were happy with the text as it stood.

They had noted the changes, in particular on the capacity building but it was the understanding that this had resulted from a suggestion raised at the Governing Board meeting in November. It was noted that this was only one of the inputs into the reflection on the role Eurofound could play in relation to capacity building.

They welcomed the references to the social pillar initiative, which would need to be updated once the package around it was adopted in March 2017. He suggested that he could also propose some general wording to be included in the version sent to the Commission at the end of January.

3.14 **The Chairperson** thanked the members for their comments.

With regard to the project on capacity building, in view of numerous previous requests by the Director, he invited the Governments and Workers to reflect and send in writing a common proposal on what they saw as an appropriate activity for Eurofound on capacity building.

3.15 **The Director** appreciated the suggestion and asked the two Groups to send their

proposal to the Commission, who also had an interest in this area.

- Social enterprises and cooperatives had been selected as company types in the 2017 work programme, already approved by the Board. It had been the preference of the Governments' Group. The criteria had been to have companies that had some resilience in terms of job retention and capacity in job creation. Even though it was difficult to prove that some companies were better than others, Eurofound would like to investigate it.
- In relation to the project on articulation, as there were opposing views on the project he proposed that the two groups should include this in their discussions and send a proposal.
- He agreed that the survey on platforms could not be representative, the data was not available in the EWCS or any representative survey in Europe as the number of these workers was very limited. It was proposed to start with qualitative research in 2017 and to move to quantitative research in 2018. The results would be published with the necessary caveats.
- He noted that the Social Partners were members of the 'Platform on Undeclared Work' as were the Governments and of course the Commission. He suggested that they should channel their requests in this area through the Platform, where Eurofound is an observer and could address it in the framework of the Platform programme.
- In relation to the project on *Working conditions and sustainable work* it was never planned to do the sectoral research in 2018 as it was considered that no important variations were expected and the research could be done later. The proposal was to produce check information available from the sectors and see if the sectoral social dialogue committees were interested in doing it themselves or do it in a different way. Eurofound could provide the data, format and assistance and the committees could complement that with their own specific information. The project on motivation would look at some data that were new in the EWCS questionnaire and try to address some elements linked to the sustainable work concept.
- The sentence on well-functioning labour markets (page 39, *line 1361*) had been suggested by the Governments, who said that segmentation of the labour market was in reality a dual labour market with people who could not communicate from one group to another, often linked to different levels of protection.
- Page 41, *line 1445*, In 2016 Eurofound committed to an analysis of the Labour Force Survey on migrants which had not been done because the data were not released, so he said it was not certain that the Eurostat data would be available. This was part of the European Jobs Monitor, and not sure that this is a suitable approach to research on migrants, as suggested by Ms Hoffmann.
- He thought that it would be fine to submit the programme to the Commission with only the current general text on the social pillar, and this would be updated for the adoption later in the year.

3.16 **The Chairperson** concluded the discussions noting the following changes.

- ETUC and BusinessEurope would try to prepare a joint text on capacity building to be sent to the Bureau. They should also clarify the approach for the report on articulation of social dialogue.
- The project on *Innovation and job creation* would look at social enterprises and cooperatives, not one or the other but both.
- On *Well-functioning and inclusive labour markets* he accepted a suggestion by the Commission to amend the sentence *line 1361* 'The mapping of policies to combat

segmentation including those addressing differences in employment protection.’

Discussion on the work programme concluded with written comments requested by 10 January.

#### 4. **Network of Correspondents (B 260/4)**

4.1 **The Deputy Director** introducing the item welcomed Ms de Boer who was responsible for the upcoming procurement.

- The papers for the agenda item included the interim evaluation of the network and a list of organisations who would be contacted in relation to the tender.
- She outlined the challenges for the renewal of the network that included the need to limit the share of the budget absorbed by the network to EUR 1.2 million annually without impacting on attracting experienced and high quality correspondents. This would be achieved by adjusting the volume of outputs, by reducing the areas covered by the network and by looking for synergies and reducing information that could be provided by others. Despite this it was the objective to develop the network as a real centre of excellence in the field. The procurement would be prepared up to the end of January 2017 when the tender specifications would be published. It was also the intention to develop the correspondents as focal points within the Member States, which would require some innovation.

4.2 **Ms Welter (Governments)** repeated her previous comments on the network that it was essential that correspondents were experts in the Member States. At a recent meeting of the stakeholders and correspondent for her own country Luxembourg it was not felt that the correspondent, who was based elsewhere, was sufficiently knowledgeable on the local conditions in Luxembourg.

4.3 **Mr Närhinen (Governments)** said that asking for a quite multidisciplinary output whilst at the same time reducing the value of the contract posed a definite risk in terms of quality.

The evaluation report mainly concerned the views of the staff who were users of the services of the network, but he wondered if there was any other end user evidence available (e.g. from the web content, or in relation to the Comparative Analytical Reports (CARs)) in order to understand the added value of the network.

Also, was it known what proportion of the network’s budget was related to the Representative studies?

He would like more information about point 14 in the strategy paper (B 260/4b) which said that Eurofound would investigate a joint tender with the Commission.

4.4 **Mr Mühl (Employers)** similarly was concerned that the reduced budget would mean that the work would not be attractive to qualified correspondents.

4.5 **Mr Maes (Commission)** outlined that there were possibilities to find some synergies with the Commission’s own networks. For example the Commission was investigating whether Eurofound could have access to information collected by its Labour Law Network and whether this network could feed into the European Restructuring Monitor.

He added that the Representativeness studies were an important deliverable not only for the Commission, but also for the stakeholders and they often came up when the Council was dealing with proposals from the Commission when implementing social partner agreements. The Commission felt that Eurofound, as a tripartite agency, was best placed to carry out these studies.

Also for the Commission and the Member States, the EurWORK observatory was an important tool for gathering information on trends and developments in the labour market and was providing important information as part of the European semester.

In looking at areas for cooperation it was important to note the differences between the Commission which looked for a more complete product from its expert networks in order to assist directly in developing policy, and Eurofound where internal experts worked on a less finished product.

4.6 **Ms Hoffmann (Workers) made the following comments:**

- She felt that it was only recently that the decision had been made to extend the scope of the network, so why she wondered were there efforts to reduce that now.
- It was proposed that due to budgetary constraints the correspondents would not be required to have an annual meeting with the stakeholders and she wondered if the anticipated savings would be justified in light of the problems mentioned by Ms Welter, where issues came to light only following a face to face meeting.
- What was meant in point 14 of the strategy document (B 260/4b), when it was said that national governments, the Commission, and other interested parties would be invited to join the tender as a contracting party.
- With regard to point 15 it was difficult to see how a contractor would apply without any clear indication on the number of outputs required i.e. the type of contract on offer.
- It seemed that the consequences of the procurement would be quite momentous especially considering that the observatories like the surveys were key products.

4.7 **The Chairperson** additionally said that in Bureau discussions around the previous procurement procedure, there had been concerns regarding the weighting of the various evaluation criteria. In the Bureau of May 2014, the Workers' Group had voiced their strong disappointment about the way Eurofound had transposed the joint concerns of the Bureau to attach importance to the criterion of expert knowledge of the national industrial relations system and social partners in the selection procedure. The report and justification given to the Bureau after the selection showed that in some cases the score awarded to administrative criteria (for example the description of a mechanism to keep deadlines) was three times more important than the weighting of the criterion of a strategy to access and maintain the connection with relevant social partners, policymakers and other practitioners. He insisted that the design and weighting of the criteria be adapted in order to capture the concerns of the Bureau to select centres with expert knowledge of the national industrial relations systems.

4.8 **The Deputy Director** responded to the comments and questions.

- The list of experts to be contacted was drawn from internal contact databases. Any comments and suggested additions to the list were welcome. Governing Board members would also be asked to circulate the tender information notice within their own networks.
- She confirmed that national expert knowledge and competence were rated highly in the evaluation criteria for the national correspondents.
- There had been an overall reduction in the research budget and the reduction in the observatories and surveys was part of that. There would also be a reduction in the number of Comparative Analytical Reports (CARs).

- The scope of the network was being reduced, reflecting policy priorities, though exactly which priority areas had yet to be decided.
- The cost of the Representativeness studies is currently approximately EUR 80,000 per study, with an expectation of 6 studies per year.
- There would be much discussion up to the end of January around ensuring that quality was maintained in relation to the value of the individual contracts versus the number of deliverables.
- The need for synergies with existing expert networks was an ongoing issue. As mentioned by the Commission there were discussions around a small joint tender with the Commission on the ERM legal database.
- It would always be the case that with some contractors there were initial difficulties in establishing the quality of deliverables to mutual satisfaction. Most of the initial issues with some of the national correspondents mentioned by the Chairperson, had improved over time.

4.9 **Ms de Boer** highlighted a few points in relation to the tender.

- If members had any comments on the list of potential contractors that had been circulated they should contact Eurofound. It would be a great benefit to the process if Governing Board members would circulate the information notice when it was published, also within their own networks in the Member States.
- Later in December, Eurofound's latest user satisfaction survey would have some information on the impact of the network from the end user's perspective. This would be useful information when preparing the tender notice.
- It was a challenge to make the contract interesting from a monetary perspective, and it was being considered whether it might be an option to open the network up to other stakeholders, similarly to the top ups offered in Eurofound's surveys.
- The need to manage shrinking resources was inevitable and already in 2016 Eurofound had managed to reduce costs for the network, almost in line with the figures proposed for 2017 and 2018. This somewhat reflected the cycle of the work programme where in the beginning it was necessary to have more comparative studies. The contract however was designed in a way to allow flexibility. It was important to be as transparent as possible with contractors, for example by providing an indication of the expected volume of annually recurring services. It could be seen that the comparative information was always much more valued than individual topical articles and on this basis Eurofound was looking at adapting the deliverables, for example the quarterly reporting.
- It was always a challenge to ensure the quality of contractors in relation to the relatively modest monetary value of the contracts, but it might be emphasised that there was value in being a member of such a network. There had been a high investment in working with the contractors to improve quality, and also to allow the contractors to come up with ideas themselves. It was hoped to better define the role of senior and junior experts in the network.
- The possibility of joining framework contracts of the Commission over the four-year period was an interesting one.
- It was agreed that contacts with the national stakeholders were essential, but looking over the lifespan of the contracts many of the most successful had been based on regular contact, not necessarily on meetings. Eurofound wanted to ensure that contacts took place, but not to restrict them to face to face meetings. It was

hoped in this way to simplify the tender procedure and to ensure that the money was used in the most important way. It was also hoped that the regular feedback of the Governing Board members would be enough of a stick to prompt the correspondents to make contact.

- In relation to quality issues with some contractors, it was a factor of tender procedures that they were done on the basis of information provided by the tenderer. References could be taken up, but still the evaluation was dependent on the information presented. Indeed all of the criteria mentioned had been part of the former evaluation.
- A serious issue with some of the correspondents had been the timely delivery of research, so ability to deliver was an important element of evaluation.

4.10 **The Director** said that the proposal to invite other stakeholders to be part of the contract was an interesting one that should be considered.

4.11 **The Chairperson** thanked Eurofound for this opportunity to discuss the tender.

He hoped that it would be possible to adhere to the highest quality standards, even in the case that a contract would not be awarded if sufficiently qualified candidates were not available.

5. **The Director** said that Ms Gerstenberger would no longer attend Bureau meetings as she would in future be heading the Working Life unit in Eurofound. He therefore requested that the newly appointed Chief Researcher Coordinator Mr Storrie, and the new Head of the Brussels Liaison Office, Mr Baussaund would participate in Bureau meetings on a similar basis, in order to follow the discussions on the work programme.

As Mr Blomsma would take up his position in Eurofound as a Seconded National Expert in March, the Director would suggest that he should also participate in meetings, but this could be decided later.

6. **The Chairperson** and the Bureau members thanked Ms Gerstenberger for her valuable contribution over the years in relation to the work programme.

He thanked Eurofound for facilitating the online meeting but concluded that in his opinion it was preferable to have face to face meetings of the Bureau.

The **next meeting** of the Bureau would be held in **Brussels on 20 January 2017**.

[Signed H.Fonck]

[Signed J.Menéndez-Valdés]

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Chairperson

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Director