MINUTES – 207/26- 04/08/026

IER Committee meeting 25th June 2026

The Chair, Federica Pericciolі, welcomed the participants and the agenda was adopted.

1. ROUNDTABLE ON NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

Pieter-Jan Germeaux (Belgium) started his intervention by referring the budgetary negative situation in Belgium as well as to the labour market situation. The government has now limited unemployment benefits to 2 years. Activation measures to try to bring back into employment people on sick leave (more than 6000000 active persons are on some kind of leave) are currently also being discussed.

As regards industrial relations, he explained that for the period 2025 2026, the interprofessional social partners had not reached an agreement to set the level of the wage norm. This put the ball in the government's court. The government finally set the wage standard at 0%, but with the compromise of raising the legal limit for meal vouchers.

Pieter-Jan Germeaux then explained that meal vouchers are agreed in collective bargaining agreements at sector level (which is rare), at company level or in individual agreements. As a result, the focus of the sectoral negotiations was largely on the increase of meal vouchers.

For Agoria, meal vouchers are a theme that must be agreed a priori at company level. The trade unions, on the other hand, wanted to make a sectoral agreement so that almost every employee would receive an increase in meal vouchers. However, after a few rounds of negotiations, it became clear that no compromise could be found. Other topics were also discussed, such as career leave and commuting interventions, but an agreement on this without an agreement on meal vouchers was not possible. The sectoral negotiations have thus broken down, shifting to the company level.

Mads Storgaard Pedersen (Denmark) started his intervention explaining that the economic situation is doing very well with a growing GDP. The unemployment rate is pretty steady, fluctuating around 3% since the end of 2023.

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As regards the collective agreements in the MET industries, he mentioned that they were renewed on 1st March 2025, and cover a three-year period. The settlement contains, among others, the following changes:

Pay levels:

- Minimum hourly wages increased by 3.75 DKK in 2025 (approximately a 2.75% increase), followed by increases of 3.5 DKK in 2026 and 2027 (approximately a 2.5% increase each year)
- Nuisance pay for overtime will rise by 3% each year.
- Nuisance pay for staggered hours/shiftwork will rise by 3,5% each year.
- Employers' pension contributions increased from 10% to 11% of wages starting May 1, 2025.
- Employers' contributions to the Free Choice Account will increase by 1% of the employee's wages in 2026 and 2027, totaling 11% for white-collar employees and 15% for blue-collar workers.
- Health and Safety representatives, who are union members, received a yearly fee of 9,000 DKK.

Work life balance for employees:

The negotiations had a strong focus on employee flexibility and work-life balance. To address this:

- Parental leave rules have been simplified, with an additional 2 weeks of paid leave for parents to share. The leave now covers social parents and solo parents.
- Employees can now take unpaid time off under certain family circumstances, including a child's third sick day (first and second sick days were already covered), health emergencies

Regarding emerging practices in collective bargaining, Mads Storgaard Pedersen mentioned that their way of their collective bargaining has remained largely unchanged since the 90's. However, an increasingly pressing issue is the expansive practice of the EU Court on labor law issues, that are already implemented or regulated by Danish collective agreement. The changes or additions to previous labor law, such as registration of working hours (Deutsche Bank), overtime for part time work (Lufthansa and Dialyse) and Equal treatment of temporary agency workers (TimePartners) impact the existing balance in the Danish collective agreements system and the autonomy of the social partners to negotiate freely.

Johanna Ahokanto Niemi (Finland) explained that the economy is doing more or less well in Finland. Regarding the industries, she mentioned that Finland counts on a very large military industry that is expanding rapidly.

As regards the political context, she highlighted that elections will be held in April 2027 and TIF hopes that the trade unions will not call for strikes before the elections.

Furthermore, Johanna Ahokanto explained that, due to the fact that Finland shares a large border with Russia , a couple of times Ukrainian drones have impacted in their territory. In these cases, TIF had recommended workers to stay at home which opened discussions regarding the payment of the salary. In the end it was agreed that, on those occasions, workers would be paid their wages. Regarding the gender pay gap, TIF companies often emphasise that there is no problem regarding the gender pay gap, but it is also a fact that 80% of blue-collar workers are men. Companies are more worried about pay transparency.

Lucile Uhring (France) highlighted that the performance of the French economy in the first quarter of the year, has been revised further down by the INSEE and growth is now estimated at just -0.1%. Along these lines, Lucile Uhring mentioned that the industrial climate is very contrasted, varying across sectors and regions. Some regions are seeing a significant decline in their order books. The sectors affected remain: the automotive industry, agricultural machinery, mechanical engineering, and alloys/metal products, whilst the aerospace sector is performing well.

Regarding the labour market it is slowing down, but there is no sudden collapse:

- Early estimates show that 11,000 private-sector jobs were lost in Q1 2026;
- In industry, around 20,000 jobs have been lost since Q1 2025, after gains of 106,000 jobs since early 2021.

As regards collective agreements in the MET industries, Lucile Uhring referred to the following agreements:

A. **Company savings plan and value sharing schemes:** On 20 February 2026, UIMM and several trade unions signed a series of agreements aimed at promoting the rollout of company savings plans and value-sharing schemes in metal industry companies.

The five agreements cover the following areas:

- Profit-sharing and incentive schemes (so-called “participation et intéressement”): the collective agreement provides for simple, clear, and flexible formulas, with accessible threshold and distribution options;
- PEI and PERECOI (inter-company savings plan and inter-company collective retirement savings plan) : these are savings plans allowing medium- or long-term savings in a pooled and secure framework. As part of these savings plans, the social partners also wanted to offer a fund with a focus on “industry.”
- Joint Monitoring Committee (CPS): a joint governance body will be responsible for analyzing changes in company subscriptions to these schemes, the financial and non-financial performance of the funds, the quality of service offered to companies and their employees, and proposing any changes deemed necessary.

UIMM, CFE-CGC, and FO have signed all five agreements. CFDT is a signatory to the PEI and PERECOI agreements and to the agreement on the Joint Monitoring Committee.

B. Collective agreement on minimum wages: the negotiations on minimum wages in the metal industry ended without success last year. As a result, the minimum wage scale applicable in 2024 continued to apply in 2025.

This year, negotiations ended on 20 February 2026 with an agreement signed by the UIMM and three trade unions, FO, CFE-CFC, and CFDT, (out of 4) providing for an average increase in the pay scale of 0.86%.

Mid-May, the Government announced an early 2.4% increase in the statutory minimum wage, to take effect on 1st June. This increase is a result of the statutory inflation-linking mechanism. Consequently, the first two levels of our pay scale have fallen below the statutory minimum wage. The trade unions have the right to request renegotiation of wages, and they have done so. Negotiations will therefore be reopened.

C. **Disabled workers:** On 31 March 2026, UIMM and three out of four trade unions signed an agreement on the employment of people with disabilities. This agreement sets a specific target of a 5% employment rate in the metal sector by 2032. This target is not binding.

Stefan Solle (Germany) initiated his intervention by highlighting that in terms of the economic situation the MET industries are back in recession in Q1. Regarding the number of MET employees, it fell further in March to 3.766 million (-2.4% or 92,100 compared to the previous year). Overall, the MET business climate remained unchanged in "recessionary waters".

With regard to collective bargaining in the MET industries, he noted that negotiations will restart in autumn 2026. Trade unions' demands will only be submitted in the end of September 2026. However, at this stage, it is impossible to predict what those demands will look like. Rising inflation will certainly play a role in the formulation of their demands. The peace obligation remains in force until 31st October 2026, meaning that strikes are possible as from 1st November 2026.

Overall, the collective bargaining round is expected to take place against a very difficult backdrop. As regards MET, companies find themselves caught between a re cession and poor business conditions and are also struggling with excessively high unit labour costs. As a matter of fact, Germany is already losing around 10,000 industrial jobs every month.

Federica Perriccioli (Italy) started her intervention by referring to the economic situation: the Italian economy recorded a GDP increase of +0.3% in the first quarter of 2026, confirming same growth rate as at the end of 2025.

Having said that, she highlighted that results of a survey carried out amongst companies describe a picture that remains still critical. Despite short-term forecasts indicating a moderately positive change in total production, there is concern about the contraction in foreign orders and financial sustainability:

- 26% of companies report a decrease in their order portfolio, while 32% have seen an increase.
- 12% of companies (up from 9% in the previous survey) rate their liquidity situation as “poor or very poor.”
- 30% of companies have initiated crisis and/or restructuring procedures; of these, 14% have already resorted to social safety nets (in 8% of cases such activation is expected within the next three months).
- Employment has remained stable for 72% of the sample, while 14% anticipate an increase and another 14% foresee reductions.

The survey also examined the consequences of the tension in the Middle East as well as the effects on energy costs.

As regards the role of collective bargaining in gender pay gap, she mentioned that Italy has definitively approved the decree for transposing the Directive 2023/970 (pay transparency directive), which came into force on 7 June 2026.

Article 4 identifies the central concepts of equal work and work of equal value. This provision is the cornerstone of the decree, providing uniform criteria for assessing different pay positions in order to identify any gender-based pay gaps within the same work organization. This article reiterates the essential and central role played by collective bargaining in the national framework, recognizing, through a rebuttable presumption of conformity, that national collective labor agreements ensure objective and gender-neutral pay classification systems, which constitute the reference tool for guaranteeing non-discriminatory treatment. It is important to note that the demonstration of discriminatory individual pay treatments remains possible. More information regarding the concept of equal work, see report.

On another note, she also explained that the "May 1st Decree" (Decreto Primo Maggio) introduced the "fair wage" (salario giusto) principle in Italy, which links minimum pay to national collective agreements rather than a fixed national minimum wage. It requires employers to pay workers at least the total compensation specified in the leading collective contracts (CCNL) signed by the most representative trade unions. The House of Representatives has given the green light, with 137 votes in favour, to the decree-law containing urgent provisions on fair wages, employment incentives and combatting digital labour trafficking. The law should have been sent to the Senate and should have been converted into law by 29 June, failing which it shall lapse. For the main points of the law, see national report.

Eva van der Boom (Netherlands) started her intervention highlighting that the Dutch economy remains resilient, but the outlook is cautious, a 1.4% GDP growth is expected in 2026 with an inflation rate expected of 2.3% in 2026. The unemployment rate is of 3.8%. As a matter of fact, the labour market is quite tight, which explains partly the pressure from the trade unions for wage increases.

As for the political context, the Government is a minority government. She further mentioned that the Government will come up with an industrial policy strategy soon.

Regarding the collective bargaining for MET, the agreement is running from 1st January 2026 to 31st December 2026. FME is currently in discussion with companies on what they should aim for the next collective bargaining agreement ground.

As regards the automotive sector, the Dutch automotive sector is shifting away from large-scale passenger car assembly towards a smaller, more specialized ecosystem of suppliers, heavy vehicles, special vehicles, mobility technology and high-tech components.

Overall, the Netherlands doesn't have manufacturing of automotive products anymore but have supply chain of companies. As a matter of fact, the closing of the last manufacturing plants in the Netherlands made 2000 people redundant- hence, FME is working together with the trade unions to find measures on how to support those redundant workers.

As regards the gender pay gap and collective bargaining, the Netherlands has postponed the implementation of the EU Pay Transparency Directive to enter into force on 1 January 2027.

The Dutch government states that in 2024 women in the private sector earned on average 14.5% less per hour than men; after correction for relevant characteristics, the private-sector gap remained 6.1%. In the MET sector, the corrected pay gap is 2.3%: significantly lower but still too much. However, the most severe structural issue in MET is the unequal gender representation in higher paid roles and scales.

Daniela Jimenez (Spain) started her intervention by explaining that the collective agreements in Spain operate on multiple levels. In the metal sector, there is a nationwide collective agreement that sets the general framework for labor relations, while specific matters—such as wages and working hours—are negotiated at the provincial level. This leads to significant regional differences.

As regards restructuring trends in MET industries, Daniela Jimenez mentioned that in 2025, Spain's automotive industry produced 2.27 million vehicles, representing a 4.3% decline compared with 2024. This decrease was mainly driven by weak demand in Europe and production adjustments linked to factory adaptation processes and the launch of new models. Despite this, exports continued to be a key pillar of the sector, although they also declined.

In terms of employment, the automotive sector ended 2025 with mixed results. Total employment reached 590,183 workers at year-end, up 4% year-on-year. However, the vehicle manufacturing subsector experienced a decline in activity, while the components industry continued to face pressure on margins, investment, and workforce levels.

In this context, she highlighted that many companies are undergoing restructuring processes to adapt to this new environment including cutting costs, closing plants, relocating production, and implementing collective redundancy plans.

With respect to collective bargaining as a tool to improve gender pay gap, Daniela Jimenez explained that the MET industries has traditionally been male-dominated. For this reason, in recent years many collective bargaining agreements have incorporated specific measures aimed at reducing the gender gap and promoting equal opportunities. Among the most noteworthy measures are the following:

- Pay transparency and pay audits: Several collective agreements reinforce the obligation to maintain pay registers and conduct pay audits in order to identify and correct any unjustified pay differences between women and men.
- Positive action measures in recruitment and promotion: Many collective agreements include positive action measures favouring the underrepresented gender where candidates have equivalent qualifications, merit and ability.
- Gender-neutral job classification systems: Some agreements require that professional groups and job classification criteria be reviewed from a gender perspective.
- Training and awareness-raising on equality: Training and awareness measures are also increasingly common.

Anna Nordin (Sweden) started her intervention by referring to the economic situation and highlighted that the Swedish economy continues to develop relatively weakly, although recent GDP indicator data suggest some resilience despite the disruptions caused by geopolitical uncertainty. As regards the labour market, unemployment increased from 8.5 to 8.8%, and the iInflation increased to 1.5 % in May, up from 0.8% in April. Overall, Sweden faces a difficult economic environment. Growth remains subdued and the labour market is cautious, while inflation risks are still hard to assess due to temporary policy effects and earlier supply disruptions.

Regarding collective agreements in MET industries, she mentioned that:

- The agreement is valid from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2027.
- The agreement value for the agreements is 6.4 %. The cost of the agreement is allocated at 3.4% for 2025 and 3.0% for 2026.
- The salary review took place on 1 April 2025 and 1 April 2026.
- Apart from salary increases, a key issue was reduced working hours, particularly for white-collar employees. The trade unions strongly pushed this demand, resulting in further working time reductions in the new collective agreements for white collars.

The current collective agreement expires on 31st March 2027, and negotiations for the new bargaining round will formally begin in January 2027, but the exchange of demands will take place between the parties in December 2026. Teknikföretagen expects tough negotiations, particularly in the light of the topic of reduction of working hours.

As a matter of fact, the blue-collar unions have asked to negotiate a reduction in working time at national and cross-sectoral level, meaning between the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise and LO, the umbrella organisation for blue-collar unions. LO has submitted a formal request to open negotiations on working time reduction at that level.

Teknikföretagen did not give a mandate to the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise to enter into such negotiations. The reason being that the issue of working hours is closely linked to wage formation, and wages are negotiated within sectoral collective agreements.

As regards the topic of collective bargaining as a tool to improve gender pay gap, Anna Nordin explained that in Sweden and within the industry, the work to promote gender equality is linked to the collective bargaining model and the cooperation between the social partners.

On what concerns restructuring and AI development, she explained that larger member companies are increasingly signaling that AI development is affecting their need for white-collar employees. This applies in particular to certain roles within programming and development, where AI is being used to make work processes more efficient. This means that issues relating to redundancy, skills shifts and transition among white-collar employees may become more important.

This development may put pressure on Teknikforetagen in their role as an employers' organisation and social partner.

Marcel Marion (Swizterland) explained that Switzerland's GDP rose by 0.2% in the fourth quarter of 2025, after a contraction of 0.4% in the previous quarter. Overall economic development thus stabilized at the end of the year.

As regards the Tech (MET) industry revenues, they have gradually declined over the last few years, with a slight improvement in the final quarter of 2025. In the first quarter of 2026, revenues grew by 3.4% compared to the previous year. After a long period of stagnation, turnover in the Tech industry is showing a slight upturn again. Revenue growth is gradually picking up.

Swiss Tech exports developed in the first quarter of 2026 worldwide in a slightly positive way (+1.1%), with different ways depending on the sales markets. At regional level, tech exports to Asia fell by 4.5% overall, while the EU is once again sending slightly positive signals (+3.9%). Despite its high share (23.3%), Germany, the most important export market, is in stable, with in the first quarter of 2026 a little growth of 1.8% compared to the same period last year. The USA remains the second largest market (14.0%) with an increasingly marked decline in exports of 4.2%. A sharp decline can be observed in China: minus 8.3% – despite a still significant share of 5.7%.

Regarding the collective agreements in the MET industries, he pointed out that the current collective agreement for the MET (Tech) industry was extended by five years in 2023 and remains in force until 30 June 2028.

On the matter of restructuring trends in MET industries he mentioned that the MET industry currently employs around 323,000 people in Switzerland. Last year, around 6,600 jobs were lost. Numerous companies in the export-oriented MET (Tech) industry are on short-time working due to a lack of orders.

As regards the issue of collective bargaining as a tool to improve gender pay gap, collective labour agreements contain general provisions prohibiting discrimination against women. This also applies to pay. The collective agreement for the MET (Tech) industry does not contain any specific procedure for addressing wage discrimination against women.

The Federal Act on Gender Equality, however, requires companies with 100 or more employees to carry out a mandatory pay equality analysis. Statistical surveys in the MET sector in Switzerland have shown that the gender pay gap stands at around 3% and therefore falls within the 5% tolerance limit prescribed by the federal government.

On the topic of emerging practices in collective bargaining he explained that today's collective bargaining negotiations generally follow the traditional format, with demands put forward by both employers and employees.

That said he highlighted that when new employee-friendly provisions are introduced into collective bargaining, there is a risk that trade unions will attempt to have these provisions enshrined in law and that even higher demands will be made during the next round of negotiations for a new collective bargaining.

The current collective agreement for the MET industry provides for an automatic annual adjustment of minimum wages in line with changes in the national consumer price index.

Mesut Serin (Turkey) started his intervention by referring to the new legislation on maternity and paternity leave that entered into force in May 2026.

Under this new legislation, postnatal maternity leave for female employees has been extended from 8 to 16 weeks, while the total maternity leave period has been increased from 16 to 24 weeks. In parallel with this change, the entitlement to unpaid leave following maternity leave has been preserved, and it is now explicitly regulated that female employees may take up to 6 months of unpaid leave after the expiry of the 24-week period, or 26 weeks in the case of multiple pregnancy.

Another amendment concerns the period during which a pregnant employee may continue working before childbirth with medical approval. Previously, a female employee could work until 3 weeks before childbirth, whereas this period has now been reduced to 2 weeks before childbirth.

The new law also introduced an entitlement to 10 days of unpaid leave for employees who become foster parents, either jointly with their spouse or individually, as from the date the child is placed with them.

In addition, paid paternity leave in the event of childbirth was increased from 5 days to 10 days.

As regards MESS collective agreements, their Group Collective Bargaining Agreement, will expire on 31 August 2027.

With respect to the gender pay gap topic, Mesut Serin explained that MESS is putting in place different actions to improve awareness as regards the importance of gender equality. As a matter of fact, lots of communication campaigns and awareness raising campaigns are being launched to address this issue.

Moreover, MESS is currently focusing on identifying the factors that make women participate less in working life.

On another note, he referred to MESS meetings with industriAll Global and explained that within the framework of the "Labour Rights in Automotive Supply Chains in Türkiye Project", a meeting was held with IndustriAll Global Union to address the current and emerging needs of the automotive industry.

Last but not least he also referred to the meetings that MESS is holding with Turkish Metalworkers' and with United Metalworkers' trade unions who are exchanging views on current industrial relations issues. The objective of these meetings being also to maintain regular and constructive dialogue between the employers' side and trade unions.

Richard Rumbelow and Rose Sargent (United Kingdom) started their intervention explaining that the political situation is very unstable in the United Kingdom with elections that might be held by the end of the year.

As regards the economic situation in the MET industries, they mentioned that members have reported an increase level of productivity in the last months- however, still some constraints remain due to the international conflicts. Domestic orders have increased. Hence, overall, the business confidence is positive.

As regards the employment rights act that entered into force XXXX, Rose Sargent mentioned that it will mean lots of changes to trade union rights and many burden on companies. In Make UK views the manufacturing sector is still not aware of the changes of the Employment Rights Act, and the consequences it will have for companies, in particular SMEs.

Regarding gender pay gap she mentioned that employers will have to publish action plans if they have more than a certain number of employees.

2. MANAGING OLDER WORKERS

Federica Perriccioli explained that collective agreements in Italy are more focused on early retirement.

This is provided for by law. The mechanism is called isopensione and it acts as an income bridge for eligible private-sector employees, allowing them to stop working up to 7 years early (until December 2026, after this deadline it will be up to 4 years).

The employer needs to sign an agreement with the unions and the plan has to be approved by the national institute of social security.

The employer bears the full cost of the monthly checks (the amount is the same as the pension that the worker would have at the time of termination of the employment relationship, not at the time of "the real pension" when the worker has the legal requirements to retire). The employer has to pay social security contributions until the employee reaches regular retirement age.

Stefan Solle highlighted that the government is currently discussing different measures to reform the pension system. As a matter of fact, the government has released a package of recommendations on the pension system where they suggest introducing a more capital-based pension approach (closer to the Swedish model). The idea is that 2% of the gross wage of the employee is put apart and invested in the stock market (1% paid by employers and 1% employees).

Regarding the retirement age in Germany, it is currently set on 67 years; however the government wants to couple the retirement age progressively to the life expectancy.

In Germany, there is a general rule that allows an employee to take early retirement when he/she has been working for long years. However, the government wants also to gradually opt out of this system as this is very costly for companies – in particular as regards the very skilled workers.

Eva Van der Boom explained that the pension system has been reformed and has been turned into a much more flexible system where you can retire earlier but with less pension allowances. The retirement age is increasing progressively with life expectancy

Rose Sargent explained that British manufacturers tend to keep more talented older workers in the workplace, by reducing their working hours. However, these kind of measures are creating controversy and political debate, as some people are of the opinion that it is preventing younger workers from accessing the labour market.

Moreover, many employers are investing in the health care of older workers to keep them in the workplace – (to treat muskuloskeletal diseases etc)

Furthermore, companies are also introducing measures to ensure that older workers remain in the 'teaching/training sphere" so that they can train younger workers.

Lucile Uhring mentioned that in France the retirement age is 62 years and 9 months. In France, we have the concept of Employment and Career Path Management (GEPP). This is an approach that employers must implement and regularly negotiate with employees' representatives in order to anticipate changes in roles, workforce numbers and skills within the organisation, with a view to preventing job losses and preparing employees for future changes, in particular through training and internal mobility 12. For older workers, the GEPP serves, in practical terms, to organise continued employment by providing for measures such as ‘second-half-of-career’ interviews, targeted training programmes to update their skills, retraining pathways towards less physically demanding or more suitable roles, as well as measures to adapt workstations or working hours towards the end of their careers (voluntary part-time work, mentoring, knowledge transfer). GEPP agreements or plans must therefore combine several approaches: an assessment of the situation of older employees, objectives for retaining and recruiting older workers, lifelong learning initiatives, the prevention of occupational burnout and arduous working conditions, adjustments to the organisation of work, and more gradual end-of-career arrangements, all aimed at securing the career paths of older employees rather than pushing them towards retirement.

GEPP (management of jobs and career paths) is a **statutory obligation to negotiate**, not an obligation to reach an agreement.

The obligation to negotiate on GEPP applies to **companies and groups of companies with at least 300 employees, as well as companies and groups of Community dimension comprising at least one establishment or company with at least 150 employees in France.**

Johanna Akohanto explained that the retirement age in Finland is of 68?. However, companies are required to interview employees from the age of 58 onwards to assess whether they are able to continue working, etc

Marcel Marioni explained that in Switzerland the retirement age is 65. However, there is currently a political debate about raising the retirement age, although this proposal has been rejected in a referendum.

Anna Nordin explained that in Sweden as part of the collective agreement model, workers who reach a certain age can apply to work part-time as they approach retirement. The aim is for workers to remain in their jobs for longer.

Daniela Jimenez explained that in Spain some collective agreements have included measures designed to encourage workers to remain in the labour market for longer. Moreover, she mentioned that people over 55 may be exempted from night shifts.

Mads Pedersen Stoorgard highlighted that in Denmark there has been an increase in the retirement age – currently it is set at 67, and in 2030 it will be set at 68.

Mesut Serin mentioned that in Turkey the retirement age is 65. He also highlighted that even if the Turkish population is younger on average than the European one, the demographic situation is little by little becoming more challenging, hence some programmes have now been introduced to deal with this situation.

Pieter-Jan Germeaux explained that numerous discussions are taking place in Belgium with a view to getting people back to work.

As for the pension system, it consists of two parts: the statutory pension paid by the State and the supplementary pension. In this regard, Pieter Jan mentioned that the problem lies in the fact that, under the statutory pension scheme, up to 30 % of pension entitlements in Belgium are not linked to employment, but to factors such as illness, maternity leave, unemployment, etc.

The Government is currently working on reforming the statutory system. The statutory retirement age in Belgium is 67.

3. QUALITY JOBS ACT

Isabel Sobrino updated members on this topic. The second phase consultation of the quality jobs act should be released in July.

4. SOCIAL DIALOGUE AT EU LEVEL

Isabel Sobrino updated Members as regards Ceemet involvement in EU funded projects, in particular TRIREME and SKILLS4ADC+.

She also briefed members on the latest developments regarding Ceemet-industriAll Europe social dialogue.

5. AOB & NEXT MEETING

Isabel Sobrino briefed members on the anti-poverty strategy that emphasizes once more the role of social dialogue and social partners in finding balanced solutions in response to changes in the world of work and as a result in addressing in work poverty and in supporting labour market activation measures (for unemployed).

In the second half of 2026, the Commission will launch the first-stage consultation of European social partners to obtain their views on the possible direction of EU action to support the activation of persons excluded from the labour market and equality between women and men with regard to labour market opportunities.

The next meeting will be held in Brussels on 24th November 2026.

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