



Press release

Brussels December 15 2008

**The social partners in the EU Furniture Social Dialogue, UEA, EFBWW, and EFIC organized a seminar on best practices on the work place environment in furniture companies on December 12.**

Purpose of the seminar was to present how European legislations on health and safety in the furniture sector have been transposed into national legislations in the EU countries and specifically for those legislations that have limit values, what different national values are applied in individual EU member countries. In the second place the seminar examined and presented best practices on the application of these legislations and especially how national authorities and organizations are helping companies and workers to deal with the requirements of the different legislations. Some sixty representatives of workers organizations and of employers' organizations of the furniture sector met in Paris in the auditorium of the FCBA, the French technical center for the furniture industry.

The seminar was chaired by Mr. William Van der Straeten and Mr. Remi Clavreul of the EFBWW.

After an introduction on the European social dialogue by the representative of the European Commission responsible for the European Social Dialogue Committee Furniture, Mr. Lopes, and a presentation of the project by UEA social commission president Rodrigo Rodriguez, Mr. Kimtsaris of the UEA presented the results of the enquiry on the application of the EU acquis in the different countries. Some of the major differences noted concerned the differences in exposure limits to wood dusts and national legislations on exposure to emissions of formaldehyde.

Mr. Jacques Juan of the FCBA presented the interventions of the FCBA in the field of wood dust emissions.

Dr. Alistair Bromhead explained the monitoring system of wood dust exposure in British factories by the BFM, the British Furniture Manufacturers.

In name of both the CBM, the Dutch employers organizations and of FNV Bouw, the workers organizations, Ms Janneke Waage illustrated how the social dialogue is used to improve the working environment in the furniture sector in the Netherlands.

UEA Secretary General Bart De Turck presented the intervention program BSP of the European Commission. This program has allowed the UEA and its member organizations to work on preparing the adoption and compliance with the EU acquis of companies in candidate countries to the European Union.

Ms Pinto of Confemadera presented how interactive movies are used to improve the workplace safety in Spain.

Mr. Ulrik Spannow presented the prevention fund in Denmark, an innovative way to improve occupational health and safety in the companies. In name of Mr. Erik Nielsen he also presented the activity of the regional safety representative in the furniture companies.

The last presentation was made by ingénieur Conseil Mr. Gérard Marie of CNAMTS of the French government who presented how working condition in the French furniture industry are improved using the support of the social security system.

All best practices have been included in a booklet that is available in English French and German on the project web site: [www.ueanet.com/FIWEC](http://www.ueanet.com/FIWEC).

The seminar closed with a round table discussion with representatives of the social partners and of the European Commission. The social partners expressed their satisfaction with the event and decided to sign a joint opinion reinforcing the work

Union Européenne de l'Ameublement  
26 rue de la Loi / B - 1040 Brussels

T : 003222181889  
F : 003222192701  
Email : [secretariat@uea.be](mailto:secretariat@uea.be)  
[www.ueanet.com](http://www.ueanet.com)



done in the seminar and stressing the importance of continued initiatives to improve the working environment in the furniture industry.

The project and seminar was co-funded by the European Commission and by the social partners.

For more information contact the UEA secretariat or the project manager

[kimtsaris@uea.be](mailto:kimtsaris@uea.be)