



**NEWCHALLENGES**

## **“INFORMATION AND CONSULTATION- NEW CHALLENGES”**

VS/2019/0057

### **WORKSHOP IN SOFIA**

Sofia, Friday 27 September 2019

2, Angel Kanchev str, Sofia

### **"NEW CHALLENGES PUT BY TECHNOLOGY AND LEGISLATION THAT WORKERS' REPRESENTATIVES HAVE TO FACE IN INFORMATION AND CONSULTATION"**

#### **Minutes**

The workshop was attended by representatives and participants invited by partner organisations OBES and PODKREPA CL.

The workshop was held on the following agenda:

1. Opening-Introduction , overview of the project
2. 2. Presentation of participants and their experiences regarding new challenges for information and consultation
3. 3. Round table with presentation of changes in the labour Law in Bulgaria and Greece and how they affect I&C in companies
4. Parallel small groups discussing main challenges for information and consultation
5. Round table on issues and changes (environmental, use of biometric data, use of telematics control etc.) that constitute new challenges in information and consultation
6. Conclusions and closure

#### **Proceedings**

Opening of the workshop the President of OBES Mr Konstantinos Margaritis and PODKREPA Secretary of Transnational relations Mr Vesselin Mittov, which made an introduction to the subject of new challenges to information and consultation.

Mr. Todor Kachkov welcomed all participants- the representatives of OBES and trade unionists from Podkrepa CL.



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Presentation of participants. Participants took the floor and presented themselves and their organization, the experience they have from their position concerning information and consultation as well as new challenges they have encountered.

Summary presentation of the subject of the workshop concerning information and consultation by Mr Aris Chronopoulos. Participants referred to previous common projects between PODKREPA and OBES and the role of international cooperation in promoting common goals. They also spoke about Directive 94/45/EC and recast Directive 2009/38S and the way these Directives have played a role of catalyst as far as transnational cooperation of employees' representatives and information & consultation with top management within European-scale companies is concerned.

Mr Chronopoulos presented the New Challenges project, which aims at empowering trade unionists and employees' representatives to give them tools to facilitate their job in forming and expressing their opinion as far as subjects constituting new challenges for information and consultation are concerned, to exchange experiences and to respond to new raising demands regarding information and consultation. These new challenges in information and consultation derive mainly from changes in the European Law, the legislation of each country, the raising of awareness about the environment, the importance of energy saving and, most of all, the business context and the technology (referring to changes in the framework of proceeding towards Industry 4.0). He also presented the project site [www.newchallenges.obes.gr](http://www.newchallenges.obes.gr) with project information and results as well as the site [www.informationandconsultation.eu](http://www.informationandconsultation.eu), which was created in the framework of the Strengthening Involvement project, in which will be uploaded also the results of the New Challenges project. This last site is also available in Bulgarian language. It may be used as a reference point for trade unionists as far as information and consultation is concerned.

Bulgarian representatives spoke about the two main issues they face in Bulgaria concerning information and consultation, namely:

- Confidentiality, which top management requires for a series of subjects of information. In this prospect, employees' representatives have two alternatives they can use: either making recourse to the Labour Inspectorate to define if a subject can be considered as confidential or not, or to ask for help and expert assistance from their confederation.
- In order that there is no misunderstanding on what has been said during information and consultation, in Bulgaria there is an established procedure of keeping either minutes in written or recorded ones (sound recording or video recording). Greek participants complained that there is no such standard practice in Greece.

Mr Vesselin Mitov, the international Secretary of the Confederation Podkrepa added that European and national legislation and practices are of course very important, however perhaps most important is that trade unions are active and have a high participation rate. This makes them both stronger and allows them having more resources, which is also helpful. He also emphasized the importance of the new tendencies of the industrial relations and their influence to the information and consultation processes.



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Mr Todor Kachkov emphasized that the project comes to meet actual needs of trade unionists. During discussions with trade unionists in the framework of the previous project and else Podkrepa found that there have been major changes concerning the information and consultation issues (technological changes, work organisation, environmental requirements and recent legislative changes) that preoccupy trade unionists. Trade unions therefore need the skills that will enable them to cope with the above mentioned issues.

There was a Round table with presentation of changes in the labour Law in Bulgaria and Greece and how they affect I&C in companies, moderated by Mr Kachkov and Mr Chronopoulos.

Participants were split into small groups to discuss how they sense recent changes and which they envisage will be the main challenges of the labour movement in the next five years.

Coming back to the plenary discussion with their findings, participants followed presentations of a second round table which moderated also by Mr Kachkov and Mr Chronopoulos dealt with the subject of the impact of technological change, environmental, use of biometric data, use of telematics control on information and consultation in companies.

Afterwards there was an animated discussion on main challenges regarding information and consultation process in Bulgaria and Greece and how to handle them. Participants also discussed how the labour movement and the trade union organisations can handle the problem of the reduction of job positions and the differentiation of job qualifications that will be caused by technology changes.

With this point the meeting was closed.

