



First Vice-President Mr Frans Timmermans
Vice-President Mr Valdis Dombrovskis
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
1049 Brussels
Belgium

24 April 2015

Dear Vice-Presidents,

The European Social Partners welcome the fact that the European Commission wishes to reinvigorate the EU social dialogue, as clearly highlighted at the high-level conference on 5 March. One of the issues discussed during this conference was better regulation.

According to our information, there are plans within the Commission to subject European social partner agreements, under article 155 paragraph 2 of the EU treaty, i.e. for which social partners request an implementation by Council decision, to impact assessment and public stakeholder consultation procedures.

Contrary to the political objective of this Commission to re-launch the EU social dialogue, this risks a considerable weakening of the social dialogue at European level.

As social partners, we share the same views as regards the need to ensure that the better regulation agenda genuinely respects the specific nature of social partners' agreements. This means that:

- Agreements that deal with issues within EU and social partner competences that are signed by representative organisations must be respected;
- Social partner agreements should not be subject to public stakeholder consultation: Such a consultation process is highly inappropriate as it would risk undermining the delicate balance of the negotiated outcomes;
- Any analysis by the Commission or Council should not interfere with the dynamics of the negotiations. The involvement of social partners is necessary to ensure that social partners' views as negotiators are taken into account.

We are aware that latest requests of transposition of sectoral agreements have raised some questions and problems. Hearing that the issue of public consultation has not been decided upon by the college yet, we are writing to you to request a meeting to discuss this issue before the Commission reaches its own conclusions on the matter.

We also send a copy of this letter to Commissioner Thyssen with whom we have had a first exchange on this important matter during the last informal Employment and Social Affairs Council held in Riga on 21-22 April

Yours sincerely,



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