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## SECTORAL SOCIAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE FOR SEA FISHERIES

EP(15)50

Brussels, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2015

### **For the attention of fisheries & maritime stakeholders**

**Re: Invitation to the workshop “Addressing the restricted work mobility of seafarers in fishing and boating sectors in Europe, Athens, 29<sup>th</sup> May 2015”**

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

The European social partners in the sea fisheries sector (Europêche, ETF and Cogeca) are delighted to invite you to attend a workshop organised jointly with the European Boating Industry to tackle the restricted work mobility of seafarers in Europe.

Our Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee has been working for a number of years on the issues of vocational training, preventing accidents at sea, workplace health, safety training and recognition of certificates. As for the latter, over the past years and despite a single internal market and simplified administrative procedures to live and study anywhere in Europe, we have repeatedly reported that fisheries professional qualifications are still not accepted between EU countries.

The need for an adequate regulatory framework to ensure safety in the profession has been constantly raised with national authorities and the European Commission. Various initiatives have been undertaken by the social partners to address these issues and to make progress in the search for solutions. These include an IMO tripartite seminar on the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel, 1995 (STCW-F Convention) in Gothenburg in 2012, the creation of the European Network for Fisheries Training and Employment, the European Guide to Prevention of Accidents at Sea and the Safety of Fishermen (translated into 18 languages).

Nevertheless, the fact remains that the initiatives undertaken by professionals cannot close the legal gaps existing in the fishing industry with regard to safety, recognition of certificates and work mobility.

**In this context, the EU social partners in the fishing industry and small commercial vessels are organising a workshop addressing the restricted work mobility of seafarers in fishing and boating sectors in Europe on Friday, 29 May 2015 from 8:30 to 10:00 in Room: MC 3.3 in, [Megaron - The Athens Concert Hall, Leof. Vasilissis Sofias, Athens, Greece.](#)**

**Bringing together Member of European Parliament Sofia Ribeiro (Employment Committee), the European Commission and representatives of the fisheries and boating industries, the workshop will look at problems faced by the fishing and boating industries in Europe, owing to the lack of recognition of seafarers' qualifications on fishing and small commercial vessels. It will highlight its impacts on maritime employment, safety at sea, vocational training, nautical tourism and discuss possible solutions.**

From the fishing sector's point of view, the recent adoption of the Council Decision authorising Member States to sign and/or ratify the STCW-F is a major step in the short-term for the fishing industry towards a satisfactory framework to guarantee safety at sea and work mobility. Now, it is time to remove any possible obstacles impeding the ratification of the STCW-F by Member States and identify possible ways forward to effectively implement the text in Europe.

For more information, we are pleased to send you herewith a draft programme of the workshop.

Participation to the workshop is free and open to all participants who are registered for the European Maritime Day (click [HERE](#) for online registration).

Link to the workshop on official website:

<http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/maritimeday/en/programme-items/addressing-restricted-work-mobility-seafarers-fishing-and-boating-sectors-europe>

Link to the European Maritime Day website:

<http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/maritimeday/en/piraeus-2015>

Yours sincerely,

Cor Blonk

Chair

Flemming Smidt

Vice-chair

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