



EP(20)6

Ms Veronika VEITS
DG MARE Director
European Commission
Rue Joseph II 99
B-1000 Brussels

Brussels, 16 April 2020

Subject: Social Partners suggestions for future STECF social data in the EU fisheries sector study

Dear Ms Veits,

The European Social Partners in the fisheries sector represented by Europêche, Cogeca and ETF are writing to you regarding the first Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) study on social data in the EU fisheries sector (STECF-19-03).

As you know, the fishing industry has been strongly advocating for much needed social impact analyses in the context of the Common Fisheries Policy, for which we highly appreciate the efforts made by the European Commission on this direction and welcome the study. As relevant data, the report indicates an ageing workforce with 58 percent of fishermen between the ages of 40-64 years old, therefore the urgent need to make the sector more attractive to young professionals, combat the shortage of crews, increase the professional qualification and technical and professional skills as well as allowing generational turnover.

However, challenges such as the abovementioned cannot be overcome without a vast amount of socio-economic data made available to policy-makers and stakeholders. In this context, the European Commission has already identified areas to explore in future social studies which we fully endorse and would like to reiterate. Namely, to refine the existing variables on employment status; unpaid labour; age brackets; add a combination of economic and social variables; define trends based on historical data available in some Member States; and include comparisons with other sectors such as aquaculture.

In addition to the abovementioned areas covered by the European Commission, the Social Partners would like to raise additional points to be included regarding the social indicators to improve and refine the collection of social data in EU fisheries:

- Clarification on data concerning fishers. Since there can be fishers who own the vessel, self-employed fishers and employed fishers, it has to be clear to which of these categories the study refers to when it addresses 'fishers' data. This should be better clarified, considering their different status is of high relevance when interpreting the data;
- Data on whether a fisher works for a cooperative or for a company;
- Data concerning social security such as the age when a fisher should stop working (pension);
- Data on sick leave due to work caused illnesses or work related incidents;
- Data on open-ended or temporary employment contracts. We suggest to include temporary agencies workers in the data as well;

- Data on how the wages are determined – be that a fixed salary, percentage of the catch or other criteria;
- Data on the working time – for instance, maximum time on board per voyage, maximum days per year sailing, amount of days off, minimum rest hours per day, maximum working time per day/week/month;
- Data on work-related accidents and incidents solely within the fishing industry. Therefore, not combined with other sectors such as forestry to facilitate a clear overview;
- Data on the minimum medical requirements in place for the crew on board fishing vessels;
- Data on education should be enhanced with data on vocational and technical training, shipping and other specific fisheries education which were followed by fishers as well as detect the skills and qualification needs of the company and of the workforce;
- Take caution when looking at a share of the fishing sector when concluding findings as fishers can be self-employed and employee simultaneously;
- Data on recruitment of non-EU fishers. Which fleets need to hire non-EU fishers due to a deficiency of national workforce?

Considering that the next study on social data in the EU fisheries sector is due for 2022, the Social Partners call upon the European Commission to include, to the largest extent possible, these indicators within the terms of reference for the next STECF study on social data as well as to streamline and communicate the economic and social benefits of the fishing industry to society.

Yours sincerely,



Juan Manuel Trujillo Castillo
ETF Fisheries
Section Chair in the SSDC-F



Ment van der Zwan
Europêche
Spokesperson in the SSDC-F

CC: DG EMPL