



Social Dialogue in the Active Leisure Sector (DIAL)

Application ref. VP/2013/001/0195 Agreement ref. VS/2013/0374

PROJECT SUMMARY

November 2014

Following the signature of the Grant Agreement with the European Commission, contact with UNI-Europa – the main organisation of employees identified by the Eurofound Representativeness Study on Sport – was made in December 2013 to establish formal cooperation (a representative from UNI-Europa was later present at the DIAL Project inaugural meeting in Mijoux). Key employers and employer groups in the active leisure sector in each of the nominated 14 Member States were identified, mostly through EHFA's and EC-OE's contacts and information sharing platforms. The information was compiled in a comprehensive database which was subsequently used in the preparation of the meetings to build capacity in social dialogue and establish representative employer and employee groups from fitness and the outdoor sectors.

In addition to the DIAL Project website and other preparatory actions, an operational handbook to establish precise procedures for disbursement of grant money (including a project expenses reclaim form) and a leaflet to explain the purpose of the action in 9 European languages were produced between December 2013 and March 2014. In order to ensure an appropriate dissemination of the expected outcomes, a dissemination plan was also drawn up in this period.

Seven meetings were organised between March and July 2014, bringing together 147 employers and employee groups, vocational trainer providers and prominent academics from 20 EU Member States.

- Mijoux: 21 delegates from 5 Member States (FR, ES, NL, PT and UK);
- Budapest: 16 delegates from 3 Member States (HU, CZ and BG);
- Brussels: 11 delegates from 2 Member States (BE and NL);
- Athens: 26 delegates from 2 Member States (EL and CY);
- Cologne: 12 delegates from 2 Member States (DE and CZ);
- Tallinn: 34 delegates from 5 MS (FI, EE, LT, LV and PL);
- Bucharest: 27 delegates from 3 Member States (BG, RO and SE).

The invitations were accompanied by an extensive information package, which include the DIAL project promotional materials (leaflets and flyers), practical details about the host city, expenses reclaim procedures, amongst others. In the aftermath of each meeting the minutes and the PowerPoint presentations used were uploaded in the DIAL project website and circulated to all participating delegates. With the aim of assessing the perception about general issues of representativeness in the Active Leisure Sector as well as the main topics in social dialogue, a feedback questionnaire was sent by email to all 147 delegates. In total, 48 questionnaires from 18 Member States were completed and returned (approximately one third of the total participating delegates).

The results of the questionnaire proved to be of critical importance in the preparation of the third and last stage of the DIAL project, particularly the plenary session convened at the UK Trades Union head office in London on 17th September. The meeting gathered approximately 60 employers and employers' organisations from 20 different EU Member States to define not only a plan for future action in social dialogue for Active Leisure, but also a concerted action to address the key issues facing the sector. Following DIAL's plenary session, a press release was issued to ensure a wide diffusion of the project's findings and outcomes. The press release was shared not only with the members of the organisations present at the London meeting but also with all those delegates involved in the previous reunions, reaching tens of thousands of employers, employees and training providers in the Active Leisure sector across Europe.

The project actions were reported to EHFA Board in February, April, June and October 2014 where it was possible for Board members to question progress against the workplan. In April 2014, representatives from EHFA attended a DG EMPL networking day for the beneficiaries of the call and in May 2014 John Stringer from Berkeley Associates was appointed the external evaluator of the project.

The inaugural meeting of EHFA-Employers was held in Cologne in April 2014 where the objectives of the DIAL project were fully explained. Following this meeting 14 fitness national associations have joined EHFA-E. A second meeting of EHFA-E was incorporated into the London plenary meeting on 17th September 2014.