

Modernising of organisation of work in the private security sector Joint declaration by CoESS and UNI-Europa

1. Organisation of work, an important issue for the private security sector

- 1.1. In response to the implementation of the "adaptability" section of the 2000 Employment Guidelines, the European social partners in the private security sector, CoESS and UNI-Europa, welcome the Commission's readiness to launch a debate on modernising the organisation of work. This debate between the social partners will take account of the continual changes and increasing diversification of existing forms of working life. The European social partners of the sector acknowledge the importance of this question for the development of the private security industry in Europe¹.

2. The need for social dialogue at every level

- 2.1. On questions regarding changes to the organisation of work CoESS and UNI-Europa believe that a constructive social dialogue, well-coordinated as between the various levels (European, national, enterprise), must be developed. Only such a dialogue can ensure that the concerns of all parties are taken into account and that balanced and acceptable solutions are sought by workers and employers.

3. Observations of the social partners

- 3.1. Organisation of work in the private security sector presents characteristics linked to the constraints of the market, practices and organisation in the sector, technological developments and the nature of the service.
- 3.2. The European Social Partners have already stated in previous policy declarations that security companies face fierce and sometimes unfair competition in the market. This competition is generally detrimental to the development of quality services. CoESS and UNI-Europa have also noted that some security companies do not hesitate to operate on the very limits of – or even outside – the regulatory framework which governs the organisation of work within the sector.
- 3.3. In the private security market, it is noticeable that clients are demanding increasing flexibility on the part of service providers. In view of this, CoESS and UNI-Europa believe that it is necessary to consider practical ways of adapting to this change. However, CoESS and UNI-Europa also believe that these changes should take place against a background of improvements in job security and the quality of private life.

¹ Already in their "manual for public authorities awarding contracts for guarding services" (June 1999), CoESS and UNI-Europa estimated that organisation of work was one of the main components determining the quality of private security sector services.

- 3.4. On a technological level, the private security sector has undergone some important changes: on the one hand substitution technologies (cameras, etc.), and on the other logistical support technologies which provide a reduction in workload and improved health, safety and security (IT or communications for example). The introduction of these new technologies is enabling the sector to provide clients with a greater diversity and higher quality of services. The corollary of this is that a higher level of qualifications is required to ensure job security, job creation, a safer environment and better working conditions for the security personnel.

4. Programme of Action

- 4.1. Although the characteristics outlined in paragraph 3.1 vary a great deal from one European country to another, CoESS and UNI-Europa believe that it is time to draw up an inventory of the problems which are posed, with an in-depth analysis of their causes and consequences, and to search methodically for answers which will enable us to improve living and working conditions and to modernise the organisation of work. For CoESS and UNI-Europa, it is already clear that some of the approaches which could be explored include continuous training, the duration of working time, the reduction of excessive working time, the reduction of overtime, half-time or part-time work, career breaks etc.
- 4.2. CoESS and UNI-Europa are convinced of the need to introduce innovative solutions through consultation between the social partners, so as to modernise the organisation of work in enterprises in order to improve professionalism, technological developments, the quality of services and the level of client satisfaction on the one hand and employees quality of life and working conditions, job security and development, regularity and level of income, training levels and systems for the reduction of professional risks on the other.
- 4.3. Occupational training has been identified by the social partners as one of the key areas in responding to the challenges of these new demands. The social partners believe that a dialogue should be instigated with the relevant authorities at national and European level in order to determine ways of encouraging and assisting enterprises to invest in training including through governmental support.
- 4.4. The social partners also undertake to analyse, as a matter of priority, the national and European regulatory framework for the organisation of work. On the basis of this analysis they will then submit practical proposals to Member States and the European institutions in order to amend the legislation and regulations to make them compatible with modernising the organisation of work.

5. The aim: a European frame of reference

- 5.1. The European social partners in the private security sector are ready to make changes whilst preserving the necessary balance between the economic and social dimension. Their mission is to work together to establish a frame of reference for action at European level, which can be recommended for practical implementation to the social partners and national and enterprise level.