

Minutes of kick-off meeting – 16 February 2009

Hosted by the Austrian Chamber of Labour (Arbeiterkammer, AK)

Meeting venue: AK, Prinz Eugen Str. 20-22, 1040 Vienna

Participants: Elisabeth Beer (AK), Eva Angerler (NeSoVe), Mike Baab (DIHR), Claire O'Brien (DIHR), Tom Sorell (UoB), Walter Suntinger (HRCV), Georg Krizmanics (BIM), Barbara Linder (BIM), Karin Lukas (BIM), Manfred Nowak (BIM), Astrid Steinkellner (BIM)

1) Website

Together with the LARRGE Guide, the website will represent a main project output. It will function as the **primary source of information** that can be consulted according to the user's specific needs.

2) Project objectives

The team agrees to define the **scope of work related human rights** according to international standards (ILO, OECD, international human rights law) and to focus on issues concerning European companies acting inside and outside the European Union.

The project will take into consideration the interplay between domestic and external standards and the impact of companies on local communities. In addition, the results will respond as much as possible to the challenges companies are facing due to the current **economic crisis**. This means that company obligations will be seen in a wider work-related context, including newly emerged or increasing phenomena (e.g. redundancies, unemployment).

The LARRGE Guide will highlight strengths and weaknesses of CSR tools in the area of employment with a special focus on the implementation of CSR strategies, and fill the social pillar of CSR with a **human rights based approach to decent work**.

The analysis of participation- and complaints mechanisms will constitute a benchmark, as to which extent the human rights based approach can complement or even extend a labour rights approach.

To get a picture of the current company perspective concerning CSR, and to ensure the inclusion of **business needs** throughout the project, the team will get in touch with companies early before the working conference and identify their main challenges and concerns under the current economic circumstances. An in-depth analysis of the companies' perspectives will specifically be gained from an online survey. The whole project is characterised by close **cooperation with companies**. The overall benefit of this process will consist in working towards a common language and mutual understanding between the business and the human rights sector (e.g. companies might not perceive a problem as a human rights concern).



As an incentive for participation, companies will be offered to be mentioned as supporting organisations on the website and in the LARRGE Guide.

3) LARRGE Guide of instruments

Two possible structures for the online version of the Guide, one classifying CSR-instruments according to the *size of the company*, and the other one according to the *sector of economic activity* are introduced. Since the differentiation between SMEs and TNCs/MNCs appears vague, and companies tend to identify themselves more with their sector of activity, the team agrees on the second classification for the online version. The printed version will have to show a dissimilar structure so as to avoid continuous repetitions of CSR tool descriptions.

4) Role and contribution of supporting partners

AK, HRCV and NeSoVe will mainly contribute to the project by providing input and feedback to the project documents, as well as by co-organizing and/or participating in the project meetings and conferences.

5) Timetable and distribution of tasks

The timetable is agreed as proposed by BIM.

BIM will elaborate a clear definition of the scope of work related human rights and list the human rights issues covered. On the basis of this matrix, UoB will develop a framework for analysis of CSR tools, which will correspond with the online questionnaires prepared by DIHR.

The interview outlines for tool developing institutions and other selected interviewees at the working conference will reflect the findings of the research undertaken until then.

6) Other issues

The project partners discuss and clarify organisational and financial matters regarding procedures and other related issues of the collaborative work of the project consortium (contractual agreements, reimbursement procedures etc.).

7) Next steps

1. Elaboration of a matrix on the scope of work-related human rights
2. Elaboration of a framework for analysis
3. Elaboration of questionnaires for companies and other stakeholders
4. Awareness raising activities after the launch of the website
5. Preparations for working conference

