

Minutes of the 8th EGE Plenary meeting

Toulouse, 9-10 July

1. Approval of the agenda

At the opening of the meeting, the agenda of the meeting was adopted.

2. Nature of the meeting: non-public

3. List of points discussed

Day 1

General update on the EGE activities

- Christiane Woopen informed that the Group has received a letter from Commissioner Moedas requesting to provide an Opinion on gene editing. The group shortly elaborated on the scope of the upcoming Opinion and raised some doubts about feasibility to finalise the Opinion by summer 2019. The members discussed the recent and upcoming developments regarding gene editing, namely, the work of the European Parliament on GMO pack and the upcoming ruling of the European Court of Justice of 25 July. Jim Dratwa suggested that other Commission services could be involved to support the preparation of the Opinion (e.g. prepare fact sheet, provide language).
- Jeroen van den Hoven informed that he participated in the first meeting of the newly set High-level Group on AI taking place on 27 June in Brussels. With regular participation in the activities of this Group and on the basis of its previous Statement, the EGE has gained a new institutional role in the EU policy setting on AI.
- The Group shortly discussed their participation in the National Ethics Committee forum in September, where they also will hold a 1,5 day Plenary meeting.
- The Group was informed that the SAPEA had decided not to pursue with the organisation of the workshop on AI previously envisaged to take place in October.

Discussions on the Opinion on the Future of Work

- Some concerns were raised that some of the changes previously introduced in the text have been lost through numerous versions of the draft Opinion. Barbara Prainsack and Siobhan O'Sullivan agreed to complete the missing parts.
- The Group agreed that the discussion on the decoupling of social security from the paid employment should be further explored in the text.
- Some members pointed at the contradictions in the draft Opinion. It was agreed that Julian Kinderlerer would re-read the text for the sake of consistency.
- A discussion was raised on whether the Group should recommend amending the Charter of Human Rights. It was noted that the Charter includes elements important to this Opinion, yet their understanding might differ from the use of concepts in the Opinion (e.g. wide or narrow understanding of work). It was agreed that the reconceptualisation of the notion of work should be one of the recommendations. The social institutions are always changing, and there is currently a need for a wider debate in Member States.

- It was agreed that each rapporteur should be responsible for the content of the respective chapter, and at this stage provide the last version of the chapter.
- It was noted that the number of people not having access to employment will at least temporarily inevitably increase, and technologies would need to be seen as a catalyst, rather than a cause in this process. This moment should be used as an opportunity to reconsider social institutions around work. Contributive justice theory could suggest some alternative courses of action.
- The debate was raised on the inclusiveness of the labour market. It was noted that according to several research companies that are more diverse provide better outputs. Gender, as well as age related inequalities must be addressed in considerations about the future of work.
- The Group agreed to add arguments in favour of supporting cooperatives and other forms of the social and solidarity economy in the Opinion.

Day 2

Feedback on the working lunch of 9 July 2018

- The Group members were invited to reflect on the working lunch that was organised the previous day together with the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors, with the participation of Commissioner Moedas.
- It was discussed how the cooperation between the two groups could be further strengthened. It was agreed that the members of the EGE would be informed on the publications produced by the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors. It was suggested that in case the two groups are working on a similar topic, they would refer to the work of other group, which does not mean, however, that the conclusions would be identical.
- Some members suggested that relations between ethics and science could be an interesting topic for a workshop.
- It was also pointed out that it is important to preserve the independence of each of the groups.

Discussions on the Opinion on the Future of Work (continued)

- First, the Group addressed the chapter on governance and human rights. It was suggested that the starting point would be the European Pillar of Social Rights – that would be supported and further developed to make it more concrete. Employment relations might not be enough to protect the human rights of all groups (those in employment, those in transition between employment, those who are out of employment).
- It was reminded that the recommendations should be clear and applicable, as they will be translated and used by many actors. There should be a balance between very concrete recommendations and those on fundamentally changing structures.
- It is important to make the distinction between paid employment and work in the Opinion. The Commission should recognise in every policy field that work is not just paid employment and set up mechanisms to debate this with Member States.
- The Group agreed that in the Opinion they would describe different scenarios of applying living wage/universal basic income, but would not provide a concrete way forward.
- A debate was held on different elements of the distribution of wealth: the living wage, minimal income, fiscal systems, ownership of property, etc. It was stated that

redistribution should be done according to ethical principles, such as solidarity and justice.

- It was stressed that dignified life of each individual should be an end-goal. And it would be the collective responsibility to assure that.
- As well, intra-EU inequalities should be addressed in the recommendations. Eugenijus Gefenas to draft it.
- It was noted that in the new settings in the labour market women are still disadvantaged. Siobhán O'Sullivan to write a recommendation on it, as well as supporting text in the Opinion.
- 'Work in home' is no longer a valid statement. Unpaid work such as care for children or elderly should be properly acknowledged and compensated. The Group then engaged in a debate on the value of work.
- The group turned to the definition of work that is used in the beginning of the Opinion. Some members pointed out that 'giving contribution to society' might be too vague formulation. It was decided that the definition of work is needed but it does not need to be closed.
- The group agreed that work should be understood in a broad way and social security should be decoupled from paid employment.
- The group set the planning of the way forward – see 'Next steps'.
- It was suggested that aspects related to education and training would be addressed in one recommendation. It would be beneficial to make a reference to already existing EU policies on education, training, life-long learning.
- One of the recommendations should be addressed to the social partners whose role will evolve and who can provide a support for other in transition.
- A decoupling between individual and societal responsibility must be addressed in the Opinion. Namely, in terms of preparation people in the digital age. Barbara to draft a section on it.
- Entrepreneurs' needs should be addressed too. A section on adaptive entrepreneurship should be added.
- It was agreed that in this Opinion 'workers' entails both employees and employers.
- A section on inclusive technologies should be developed.
- There was a consensus to keep the recommendations section rather short, by structuring the recommendations in few larger sets. They should be clear, concise and understood without any supporting text.

Opinion on gene editing

- The Group shortly discussed the first steps to start working on gene editing. Potential speakers for hearing were preliminary identified. It was suggested to start collecting literature on the next topic.

4. Next steps

Action	Responsible	Deadline
Prepare the recommendations document, with the structure and the ideas to be sent to the members for revision	C. Woopen, J. Dratwa	16/07/2018
Complete the missing parts	B. Prainsack, S. O'Sullivan	16/07/2018
Insert a section on case law	H. Nys	27/07/2018
Comment on recommendations; formulate the ones that are missing + provide supporting text to the rapporteurs	All EGE members	27/07/2018
Send the last content edits of the draft opinion to the rapporteurs	All EGE members	27/07/2018
Update & provide a clean version of each respective chapter; send it to Julian and the Secretariat	All Rapporteurs	01/08/2018
Do the re-reading and check the consistency of the draft opinion	J. Kinderlerer	06/08/2018
Send the consolidated draft Opinion	Secretariat	07/08/2018
Provide track changes for the last round of further changes	All EGE members	29/08/2018

5. Next meeting

17-18 September, Vienna.

6. List of participants

Present: Prof. Emmanuel Agius, Prof. Anne Cambon-Thomsen, Prof. Ana Sofia Carvalho, Prof. Carlos Maria Romeo Casabona, Prof. Eugenijus Gefenas, Prof. Julian Kinderlerer, Prof. Andreas Kurtz, Prof. Barbara Prainsack, Dr. Siobhán O'Sullivan, Prof. Nils-Eric Sahlin, Prof. Marcel Jeroen van den Hoven, Prof. Christiane Woopen

Excused: Prof. Jonathan Montgomery, Prof. Laura Palazzani, Prof. Herman Nys

European Commission: Johannes Klumpers, Jim Dratwa, Maija Locane