



*The binding version of this document  
is in English language*

### **Joint declaration on daytime cleaning**

#### Promotion of daytime work

Conscious of the importance and challenges to be faced and convinced of the potential of the sector, EFCI<sup>1</sup> and UNI-Europa<sup>2</sup> herewith would like to contribute to the EU Lisbon strategy for more and better jobs by addressing a series of messages to the industry clients in order to allow for increased working hours for employees during the usual working hours. The experience shows that daytime cleaning does positively affect the quality of services provided. Furthermore, from a technical point of view, the development of quiet machineries that are battery operated is nowadays so advanced that it allows for a smooth provision of cleaning services.

In this context, daytime cleaning is a term used to describe the restructuring of a contract in such way to provide for the operational requirements of the client but also to increase the proportion of hours delivered during the normal working day. Experiences in certain Member States have shown that the development towards daytime cleaning is perceived as positive on the whole for clients as well as for contractors and employees. Especially in the Scandinavian countries, daytime cleaning has been constantly increased – with the acceptance of the industry.

#### A few observations

The cleaning industry has constantly grown over the past 15 years as a direct consequence of the outsourcing of a series of activities which were formerly performed in-house. It represents, in economic and social terms, one of the largest services to business industries in the European Union. With a turnover in the EU of about 44.5 billion €, more than 94.000 contractors and a workforce of about 3 million employees the dynamism of the sector is directly translated in terms of regular job creation<sup>3</sup>.

Although the industry corresponds to fundamental needs of the society, such as cleanliness, hygiene (particularly in hospitals, food industry, schools etc.) and protection of the environment, it however remains little known. It is therefore in the interest of both employers and employees to valorise its public image, especially amongst young people.

In some countries, the cleaning industry is already now experiencing difficulties of recruitment and staff retention. It can be expected that the inevitable demographic change will increase these difficulties in the future. In the long term, this could damage joint efforts by social partners to develop the profession and to raise the level of attractiveness of the sector.

In most EU-Member States, clients generally insist that cleaning should take place outside the usual hours of occupation of their premises (particularly the case for office cleaning). As a result, the usual working hours of employees are carried out mainly in the early morning and late afternoon/early evening. In addition and as direct consequence from the fact that cleaning is a labour intensive sector, the cleaning industry is characterised by a preponderance of part-time (70%) and female employees (75%).

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<sup>1</sup> The European Federation of Cleaning Industries represents the representative employer associations in 18 Member States of the European Union

<sup>2</sup> UNI-Europa is the European trade union federation for services and communication. UNI-Europa has 320 affiliates and speaks for 7 million organised workers in the commerce, finance, telecommunication, postal, graphical, cleaning, security, business services, IT, personal services, social protection, leisure, sport, media and entertainment sectors

<sup>3</sup> Source : "The Cleaning Industry in Europe – Edition 2006" - Study on 18 Member States elaborated by the EFCI

Even though the flexibility of the time schedule constitutes one of the fundamental characteristics of all activities of the sector, the EFCI and UNI-Europa are however convinced that the increase of daytime cleaning can be mutually beneficial for clients, contractors and employees. Furthermore, it will allow for the employee to carry out more tasks than only cleaning, which will increase the employability within the sector. In addition, it will allow the employee to work more hours and therefore achieve an increase in income.

Therefore, the European social partners of the industry would like to stress the following:

I. Daytime cleaning is beneficial for clients as it leads to:

- Reduced costs, as night cleaning generally is more expensive due to additional costs on lightening the offices
- Time saving, as client will spend less time with the contractor through direct contact and easier follow-up of the work by the worker
- More consistent and reliable service through improved communication and better interaction with the end user
- Better response to clients' requirements for a clean environment during the day

II. Daytime cleaning is beneficial for contractors as it leads to:

- Better staff availability, as recruitment difficulties and staff turnover tend to decrease because day work is more attractive for workers
- Higher skilled workforce, as training and development of employees takes place during the day
- Higher productivity through increased employees' motivation

III. Daytime cleaning is beneficial for employees as it leads to:

- Better social acceptance, as it allows for a better conciliation with family life
- Higher dignity of workers, as it builds rapport and the worker feels to be part of the clients' staff through making cleaning visible
- Increased wages, as it allows for increased working hours because of better combination with other related activities
- Safer working hours

As a consequence, the EFCI and UNI-Europa agree to:

- Continue to promote their "Best Value"<sup>4</sup> guide on public procurements by calling upon the clients to base their selection procedures for service providers on the economically most advantageous tender, rather than the lowest price tender
- Invite the European Institutions to inform the European social partners about their policy with regard to daytime cleaning
- Identify suitable new forms of work organisation
- Support, where possible, initiatives to increase daytime work in negotiations with clients on working time and on the conciliation between professional and family life
- Develop, where possible, joint awareness campaigns towards clients on the need for new practices

*Original signed by*

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<sup>4</sup> See the guide on the selection of best value in public procurements of cleaning services joint elaborated by the EFCI and Uni-Europa with the financial support of the European Commission