

PESSIS PROJECT



PESSIS FINAL CONFERENCE REPORT

22ND JUNE 2012

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE
RUE VAN MAERLANT 2



European Economic and Social Committee

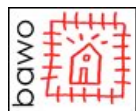
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INTRODUCTION

How is social dialogue organised in different EU member states? And what is the role played by employers in the social services sector?

These are the questions addressed by the project *Promoting employers' social services organisations in social dialogue (PESSIS)* which started in December 2011, running until September 2012. The project, funded by the European Programme *Industrial relations and Social dialogue*, has been developed by a broad partnership of European¹ and national² organisations representing social and health services providers in close cooperation with the European trade union confederation (EPSU).

PESSIS is the first step in a process whose ultimate goal is to set up a sectoral committee in European social dialogue representing employers and workers in the not for profit social services sector. The necessary element which would make it possible is the establishment of a platform at European level representing employers in the sector with members in a significant number of EU member states.

The project aims at a better understanding of how social dialogue is organised and structured (or not) in the social sector in Europe. The objective is contributing to the development and promotion of social dialogue in the social service sector including not for profit employers as key actors.

To achieve this, a mapping exercise has been done across 11 European countries (Austria, Belgium, Germany, Greece, Finland, France, Ireland, The Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain, UK).

The Conference presented the **European Summary Report** on social dialogue and collective bargaining in the social services sector, combining the 11 national reports, next to some political recommendations.

¹ CEDAG, Caritas Europa, Eurodiaconia, the European Platform for Rehabilitation (EPR), European Federation of National Organizations Working with the Homeless (FEANTSA), the European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD), SOLIDAR, Workability Europe and the European Federation of Public Service Union (EPSU).

² Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Wohnungslosenhilfe (BAWO)-Austria, Scottish Council for Single Homeless (SCSH)-UK, Cáritas Española, Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI), Union des Entreprises à Profit Social (UNIPSO)-Belgium, Arbeiterwohlfahrt Bundesverband(AWO)-Germany, Luovi Vocational College-Finland, University Rehabilitation Institute Republic of Slovenia (URI), Panagia Eleousa-Greece; Dutch Association of Healthcare Providers for People with Disabilities (VGN); As observers: Centre de la Gabrielle-France.



OPENING SESSION



The Conference was opened by **Xavier Verboden**, member of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC). During his intervention he described the role of the EESC in strengthening the democratic legitimacy and effectiveness of the European Union by enabling civil society organisations from the Member States to express their views at European level. The (EESC) is a consultative body that gives representatives of Europe's socio-occupational interest groups, and others, a formal platform to express their points of views on EU issues.

This Committee fulfills three key missions:

- helping to ensure that European policies and legislation tie in better with economic, social and civic circumstances on the ground dialogue to secure consensus serving the general interest;
- acting as an institutional forum representing, informing, expressing the views of and securing dialogue with organised civil society;
- promoting the values on which European integration is founded and advancing, in Europe and across the world the cause of democracy and participatory democracy, as well as the role of civil society organisations.

Mr. Verboden expressed the interest of the EESC in the process started with PESSIS and underlined the importance of social dialogue in a democratic system.

Luk Zelderloo, EASPD Secretary General, made an intervention about the long-term objectives of the project and about the key issues on employment in the social services sector. He started with an example from Belgium, where some figures recently launched show the social services, health and cultural sector employs around 78.2% of the workforce, 75% of this workforce is employed by not-for-profit organizations and 89% is female. A shortage of staff in the sector will be a bigger problem in the years to come.

Whereas 11 percent of the workforce is employed in the social services sector, there is not a specific social dialogue structure of committees. As European level Social Dialogue is a building block of the European social model, social cohesion should be promoted through the construction of a European Social Dialogue, including social services sector in a specific social dialogue committee.

Mathias Maucher, part of the EPSU policy staff as officer on health and social services, talked about the role of EPSU in the project and about the possible next steps.

EPSU is the recognised EU social partner for sectors HSS and LRG; members representing workers in field of social services and social work in general, but also in the social economy/not-for-profit sector. He stated the interest of EPSU to increase coverage by collective bargaining and collective

agreements and to better organise and represent workforce in social services sector: one of the priorities and organisational development objectives of EPSU

Thanks to the PESSIS project there are more information available on social dialogue structures (in bipartite and tripartite arrangements); relevant actors involved in social dialogue, its coverage and representativity and the aspects covered by collective agreements and models of good practice.

There is need to deepen the knowledge on the following issues:

- How social dialogue functions
- Which are the views of social partners at different levels: what needs to be changed/improved to make it more effective? (on issues, levels and representativity)
- Lines of conflicts and the reasons for it
- Identification of more models of good practice and thire preconditions f

EPSU considers important knowing more about the expectations of national stakeholders in view of possible steps at EU level to support a bottom-up approach closer to their needs and priorities. Stakeholders should also have the possibility to define topics of interest/priorities. Finally, it is crucial to identify the potential and limits of such an “extension”/”upgrading” of sectoral social dialogue to discuss the resources available.

Heather Roy, Eurodiaconia Secretary General talked about the starting point of the project. She highlighted how it goes beyond social dialogue and present in the opening sentences of the Summary Report conclusion, stating *“the Social Services sector is a rapidly growing sector in terms of employment and value, as measured in both social and economic terms”*. This needs to be more widely recognised at national and European levels. The starting point is, thus, the need for better recognition of the Social Services Sector as a whole.

The second point that she made was about the austerity cuts, their consequences on service provision and how social services can represent a solution to the crisis. She explained that the current context is not in favour of investing in social and health care services but in favour of fiscal consolidation (or austerity), carried out without any regard for the social impact on services and service users. Now, when many social services are needed more than ever, we are faced with ridiculous challenges in trying to ensure an accessible and quality service. This is all the more evident when we consider employment in the sector. Social services sector can represent a strategic solution to the growing needs for care and for employment but to do this we have to have a serious dialogue at European and national level on the fundamental issues of working conditions, training and retraining, the gender gap, mobility, informal and undeclared care work, low wages, recruitment and structural investment.

Jean-Paul Tricart, Head of the Social Dialogue, Industrial Relations Unit of DG Employment and Social Inclusion talked about how European Social Dialogue in the social services sector can be developed.

He expressed the interest of the Commission in what can be done in the social services sector with concerning European Social Dialogue. The EU social structure for a social dialogue is a form of cooperation between national social partners’ organisations.

The challenge is finding the best ways to work in this direction. European social dialogue has to be a voluntary bottom-up process process, in the hands of the social actors themselves; starting at a

national level. If a European Social Dialogue wants to be achieved a sufficient number of employers in the social services sector has to be willing to engage in an EU social dialogue.

To do that, some obstacles have to be overcome:

Employers: employer should understand that they share common grounds with sectors close to them; it is also difficult to convince employers about the benefits of working together. Social dialogue has to be instituted first at the national level, this is a precondition of social dialogue at European level; so the first step is should be setting up efficient social dialogue structures at the national level.

Bottom-up Process: starting from national level, partnerships have to be built, bringing together organisations which define the identity of the sector; social sector is very close to the health and education sectors.

The process: employers have to discuss with unions in order to define what the best way is to organize social dialogue in the social services sector, considering the different situations at the national level, and experiences at the EU level. There is no clear view at this stage about this the building process. The difficulty is that it is a sector where public authorities might not want to cooperate with the non-for-profit organizations.

Test phase: Of course there is the possibility to create a union for a Social Services dialogue; but it will take time there is a test phase. Two years are needed to test some arrangements, if there is flexibility and if there is the need for transparency in order to avoid that some actors feel excluded. While crating the structure, probably national actors will need to create sub-structures to increase the level of representation. This should be an inclusive process and the Commission will accompany it. The Commission will support the stakeholders in order to get a grip of the dynamics.

Data collection: Perhaps, as the project conclusions suggest, there is need for gathering more data from additional countries. Nevertheless we can see from the conclusions that dialogue is needed to find the best conditions for the provision of care.

Questions & Answers

What is the added value that the European Commission gives to social dialogue?

Sectorial social dialogue has a specific recognition – there are specifics rights, support for EU-based social dialogue. There can be joint actions which are successful, some which are not sectorial agreements implement in EU directives. What is the added value? Where there is a sector which is directly affected by EU policies (fishing sector, agricultural sector...) – workers and employers can agree on certain definitions, structuration.

If the sector is recognized at the national level-should it also be recognized at the EU level?

We should Find flexible ways of accommodation such as a format at EU level to facilitate the cooperation within the member states.

OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT AND RESEARCH RESULTS

Irene Bertana EASPD Policy Officer presented the main and the specific objectives of PESSIS project to introduce the results achieved from the mapping exercise at national level.

The project started from a simple assessment: there is not structurally organised European Social Dialogue in the social services sector and very few data available on labour and social dialogue issues in this sector from the perspective of employers.

The objective of the project is thus to redress the lack of qualitative and quantitative data on labour and social dialogue issues in the sector of social services. It represents the first step of a longer term process aiming at establishing a representative platform for employers in the social services sector at European level. After this, she explained more in detail how the project has been organised, which role had the different partners and which outcomes have been delivered.

Jane Lethbridge, the European Coordinating Researcher of the project presented some conclusions coming from the mapping exercise. Here an abstract of her intervention.

There are **several systems of representativity** in the social services sector at national level but **several countries lack strong employers' organisations**, even where there is a tradition of social dialogue. In several countries, employers in the social services sector are not organised into any representative organisation. The public sector has stronger systems of representation, often required by law. The expansion of both the **for-profit and not-for-profit sectors** means that they **will have to recognise their responsibilities as employers and form strong employers' organisations to support this process**. In three of the study countries, even where there are systems of social dialogue, social services partners are not recognised in the national social dialogue process. This affects their capacity to take part in effective collective bargaining negotiations

There is some system of collective bargaining in all of the eleven countries, which covers all or part of the social services sector. **As the sector is characterised by low pay and problems with recruitment and retention, the future of the sector will depend on finding shared solutions to these problems**. As the balance of provision of social services across public, for-profit and not-for-profit sectors is changing, any new or strengthened systems of representation will have to include employers and employees from all sectors. This research shows that there is existing good practice in several European countries that could be used more widely. A EU level social dialogue committee would provide a means of facilitating this as well as working on some of the key problems facing the sector.

Some countries, such as Belgium and France, **with well-developed social dialogue systems were cautious about whether an EU social dialogue committee would give value to their national social dialogue arrangements**. Agreeing on common values would be an important basis for future European cooperation. An indication of the importance of language and shared values can be seen in the experience of Ireland, where social partners felt that social and civil dialogue should be separated from social partnership so that dialogue can continue between employers and employees.

A greater understanding of existing systems of social dialogue in this sector as well as good practices across the sector would increase the knowledge base on social dialogue. This would help to show the similarities between countries even though social services are characterised by local provision.

ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE SYSTEMS AND MODELS OF GOOD PRACTICES**Elise Lay, François Daue - Analysis of Social Dialogue in Belgium**

Social dialogue is today well institutionalized in Belgium. It functions on a 3 tier basis with 3 closely connected levels (Company level, sectorial level and inter-professional level). This system of social dialogue in 3 levels exists also within the public sector where the social profit sector employers are involved. The social profit sector has nonetheless a specificity due to its funding. Most of this sector's rely to a great or less extent on "public purse", so in some cases the consultation becomes then "tripartite", including workers, employers and public authorities.

To determine the main key questions in the field of social dialogue was Focus Group meeting organized on 27 March 2012 with 15 social dialogue stakeholders of the social profit sector. The most important conclusions expressed by this focus group are diverse.

First came the evolutions over the last ten years within the sector: the way of working has changed, starting in reactive way from the trade unions with requests about wages or working's conditions. Since a few years the employers are more and more proactive and develop also their priorities.

The focus was then put on the main issues at the national level: there is a multiplication and complexity of points of decisions or of dialogue and consultation venues; the complexity of legislation generates problems mainly for small associations, or still the institutional reform that led to the evolution from a federal towards a regional model with the necessity to reinvent the social dialogue.

The main issues at the European level came finally with the need to recognize the social profit sector and its specificities.

Claudia Carrasco - Analysis of Social Dialogue in Spain

The Social Services Sector in Spain is currently provided by private employers, mostly non for profit, with the exception of elderly people operators, which are mainly (66%) profit companies. The public sector acts as the main source of funding in this sector and the high rate of not for profit organisation explains the underrepresentation of the sector in social dialogue.

The three main actors involved are the government (or the relevant public administration), employers organizations and unions.

Social dialogue in Spain is done through traditional employers organizations, CEOE and CEPYME, representing profit companies of all economic sectors, in which non-profit organizations have no place, and the main trade unions ugt and ccoo, in which the membership of workers from the subsector of social intervention action, for example, is low. In both elderly care and services for persons with disabilities, the workers are more unionized.

The main subjects discussed are around working conditions, so an important part of the third sector, as non-profit employers, is excluded from the possibility of participating in this type of negotiation.

One way to give to not-for-profit actors a voice has emerged with the initiative called "Third Sector Platform" composed by NGO Social Action Platform, the European Anti Poverty Network Spain, Volunteering Platform of Spain CERMI, Caritas, Red Cross and ONCE Foundation, representing about 30,000 non-profit organizations.



The platform acts as a space of dialogue (civil dialogue) focusing on the legislative framework around the collectives they give service to and the funding of the sector.

No collective agreement at state level is being signed yet, although it is, currently, under negotiation. The collective agreements already signed are: Catalonia at regional level and Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia, in the Basque Country at provincial level.

These provincial level agreements have been defined as the best by all the stakeholders and key informants in this research.

These agreements can be indicated as are examples of good practices for the following reasons:

1. All actors involved have had a particular interest in regulating the social action and intervention sector at a labour level:
2. The dialogue between the different stakeholders began before the opening of the formal negotiating table and continued once the agreement was closed.
3. To begin with, the focus has been on the need to reach an initial agreement to establish some common rules not on the search of the best possible deals.

The current situation is that of uncertainty, in both, the collective bargaining, because of the changes that the last reform of the labour market has brought in a hierarchical level, and, now, in the funding area of the sector, because more cuts are expected.

Maïa Fansten - Analysis of Social Dialogue in France

I. Nature and structure of social services sector in France,

The social sector is a very difficult boundary to set as it is subject to different levels of definition and different types of terminology. The first step in identifying the 'social' in France is that which we call the social economy (SSE) referring to a procedure which places human beings at the centre of the economy. Organisations part of the SSE respect the following principles: freedom of membership, limited profitability, independence regarding public authorities and the collective or social use of the project the democratic handling according to the principle "one person, one voice". These principles relate to the values which distinguish the social and united economy from the conventional market economy, as seen above.

Concerning representativity, France has a structured but fragmented representation. Collective agreements have a strong structure but they are fragmented between and inside branches. A lot of discussion has been going on for years about unifying agreements.

An important point regarding social dialogue within the social sector in France is the major influence of public authorities. In terms of both regulation and funding, as there was funding of the proposal and funding of the request – in a cost-reduction context – which did not fail to impact the branch policies and to incite, as we will see, re-examination of collective conventions.

These are the main issues and challenges

- Growing needs and opportunity financial and social difficulties and increasing competition
- Need for better recognition, promotion and protection of the sector through values
- Improve working conditions, pay and quality
- Promote and guarantee common values: work for more recognition of the sector

Christian Perl, Analysis of Social Dialogue in Austria

The health and social service sector in Austria is a future industry with a high growth rate and excellent job perspectives. Both, the employment rate and the contribution to the national accounts increase above average. There is a great need for additional skilled labor. In 2011 385.400 employees in Austria defined themselves as working in the public, for-profit or not-for-profit health and social service sector (Statistik Austria, 2012a, p.33). Gruber (2012) president of the largest Austrian employers' association in the social service sector "Sozialwirtschaft Österreich" quantifies the average compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of employment in the sector (2004 – 2010) with 3,35 %. This rate is therefore 2 percentage points higher than the average CAGR of all the sectors together in the same period that amounts to 1,32 %

In Austria the social dialogue is clearly structured by the social partnership and carried out by a few competent associations. There is a high density of collective agreements. This leads, on the one hand to a high level of income security and on the other hand to equal competition conditions in the sector.

In the health - and social services sector it came quite late to the unification of the previously highly fragmented sector though. In 1997 the professional association of employees, the BAGS, today "Sozialwirtschaft Österreich" was founded. It took until 2003, until the first collective agreement contract was introduced. That shows the complexity of the unification. Topics within the first collective agreement were; appropriate wage structures, flexible working hours in connection with a reduction of working hours to 38hours/week. Furthermore the collective agreement includes mechanisms for "burn-out phenomenon" and enhanced protection for part-time employees.

Important topics in the social dialogue today are: salaries, staff shortages with at the same time rising cost pressures and an improvement of working conditions. The interview partners mentioned; education, aging workforce, health and safety in the workplace, ethnic recruitment and protection of the social sector as key issues for the social dialogue at the European level.

Questions & Answers

Have all the data being collected at national level in all countries or sometimes has it been supranational?

Jane Lethbridge: data was collected at national level, but it depends from the structure of the countries that can be divided in different regions.

Does the difficulties in the growth of social services and the budgetary constraints of public authority are an obstacle to the discussion and dialogue?

Jane Lethbridge: About solvency of vulnerable people, it's important for the state to intervene, at a certain point people won't be solvable at all; the state should intervene to protect vulnerable people. State is a major player in social services, we should start talking more and more about tripartite dialogue and this is a specificity of our sector.

Elise Lay: An important conclusion of the focus group is preserving the social sector from *commodisation (=marchandisation)* of social profit sector as another sector, which is a trend in the European Community. Penetration of for profit market is a risk.

Does a public employer can be seen as any other employer?



Jane Lethbridge: It depends on what you mean by ordinary employer, UK public sector employer is an employer, in many ways you could argue that it's not an ordinary employer, but it can play an important role in collective bargaining, but need for legislation.

What is the Background of social sector in Spain?

Claudia Carrasco/Jane Lethbridge: No third sector law right now, but it's in the agenda in order to give a recognition to the sector. In Belgium education is included in not-for-profit sector / Belgium public employers are represented.

Is the sector of education included in the research? Is it part of not-for-profit in your opinion?

Jane Lethbridge: No, it was not included.

Is there any evidence that the way of organizing social dialogue has an impact on working conditions and wages and the quality of the services delivers?

Jane Lethbridge: You could take examples of countries like The Netherlands, where there's a tradition of social dialogue and there are indeed good working conditions, but there is no evidence. Some collective bargaining has brought to good working conditions, but it takes time.

Is there evidence that a lousy way of organising social dialogue has an impact in worsening working condition?

Jane Lethbridge: Yes, no social dialogue, no good working conditions.

Question to other countries representatives - did some information are missed at this stage?

Aliki Mouriki, Greece: In the Greek industrial relation system there have been many distortions in the past. Extreme fragmentation, concentration on wages issues compromised the sector. Financial crisis and the two bailouts agreements make not thing easy. Cut of public spending, residual welfare state even more residual created a Gap in provision of social services. Cut in wages of 20% and 40%, crisis window of opportunities.

CAOP The Netherlands: issues specific for the Netherlands, 100% coverage for employers. Social partners are united also in labor market funds. Professional development of employees, how to make best quality of care. The Netherlands are eager to share good practices on every level.

Germany: very different; very fragmented. This fragmented atomized situation, has consequences on working conditions and wages. That makes this sector less competitive than others. Challenge for sustainable future. Interested in learning how in Austria and the Netherlands I t was possible to organize such a system.

Scotland: Lack of data. Need of work on specific indication on social dialogue in the social services sector. There should be a distinction between public and private sector. Public: service provider Broad understanding of soc dialogue is; private providers need to become a target group in raising awareness on good practices of bargaining.

Urban Boljka, Slovenia: stakeholders did not understand social dialogue as an elite. Social council main organ of social dialogue in Slovenia, broader influence in policy making.

Jorge Nuño Mayer: PESSIS project should be social dialogue at European sector. Unified structure between not for profit and profit providers is a real challenge for the social dialogue at the European level.

Christian Perl: no evidence to unify the sector, representatives of employer more the unify and more of negotiation with public authorities to represent the interest of the sector emancipation of the third sector better position in the health and social sector, in Austria there is a collective agreement valid for profit and not for profit sector there is collaboration.

Maïa Fansten: in France the collaboration of not for profit and profit sector could work but it's is a big challenge, there was a theoretically this possibility but they belong to specific different value, they way they consider their work is very important.

PANEL DEBATE

Luk Zelderloo: The EC intervention on employer sector of social sector is to organize their work together, we will discuss on how to proceed looking the situation of today, starting from the recommendations delivered with the European Summa Report, which are:

RECOMMENDATIONS at EU level

1. Poor working conditions, shortage and retention of staff, lack of training opportunities, needs of women workers, and working time are all issues that face the social services sector in many European countries. **This wide range of common problems facing all national social services sectors should be addressed through the development of social dialogue at European level.**
2. Social dialogue in the social services sector is not organised at European Union (EU) level or sectoral level. **The European Commission should support the development of social dialogue instruments for the social services sector at EU level.** 3
3. Further data is needed to further understand how social dialogue is organised in the social services sector in the eleven PESSIS study countries and other European countries, especially in Central and Eastern Europe. **The European Commission should commission follow-up research to further understand how social dialogue is organised across Europe, to identify models of good practice and to understand the full economic and social contribution of the sector.**
4. The not-for-profit sector is expanding fast and becoming a significant employer in all countries. **New opportunities to promote reflection within the sector in order to identify employer responsibilities and ways of meeting them should be facilitated across Europe.**
5. The European social services sector is diverse often with a lack of representation. **Employers and employees must recognise the role of actors at EU level to support social dialogue in the social services sector. More work to support the development of representativity for employers, through workshops and seminars, is needed at EU level.**
6. Existing social dialogue in the social services sector needs to be better understood and more widely recognised. **Use the Danish and Irish EU Presidencies to promote the PESSIS project conclusions and recommendations.**



RECOMMENDATIONS at National level

7. Social partners in the social services sector need to develop a shared language for negotiations between employers and employees. Support the creation of new social dialogue pilot projects to bring social partners together to create an effective social dialogue between employees and employers in the social services sector.

8. Additional research is required to explore new ways of developing social services delivery, drawing on new technologies as well as preserving sensitive local delivery. National governments and other stakeholders should commission research to explore how social services delivery could be restructured, using new technologies and new forms of organisation at local, regional and national levels.

Penny Clarke, EPSU

We reflect more on how is the project book produced by ILO on adjustment role of the public sector the relationship between nonprofit and profit sector, starting points on they see things negative impact of quantity cuts happening in many EU countries at long middle and short term. Cuts in the public sector is easier and the nonprofit sector too even in countries like Germany who should be an example for the others but is creating a low paid economy in social sector and this have impact on training innovation and so on. So which kind of society we want to build? How you can develop your public sector and many countries started to do significant progress in that. This conference emphasizes many of this adjustment that are in force. Which is the aim for the public bodies regarding the future social sector? The danger is that is would became part of the private sector or just charity.

Jorge Nuno Mayer - Caritas Europa

Social dialogue is clearly needed - how to make it work? Key issue: representativeness, from the employers' side there is a lack of understanding of the sector. Non-for-profit org have been trying to approach the employers' organizations. A very fragmented sector – the issue of the recognition of the sector – what is refraining this sector from being more organized from the employers' side? How many of our employees are members of trade unions?

Reinventing social dialogue? The current situation does not allow too much time for reorganization. What are the good practices? How do we transmit these practices towards other countries in Europe?

Jan Spooren – Social services Europe

We have to find arguments how to sell the concept of social dialogue in the sector.

A lot has to be done for modernising the sector, you can only innovate if you have well-qualified staff and If the staff is the most critical factor, social dialogue is then the answer to the 'crisis'

If we open the social dialogue, this should reinforce the recognition of the specificity of the social services sector. If you organize yourself, this should be done in a broad way, this said by Tricart, however this is quite 'tricky' for the social services sector. A new working document in the

Commission, part of the Employment package issued in April talks about household assistance: putting cleaning and care put in the same category; this is a danger of generalization.

In the public procurement directive proposal the specificity of social services is recognized, this can recognition can be moved to the social dialogue area; we should talk with the tender authorities to include their quality requirements: quality of staff, including quality of staff

In the list of recommendations a recommendation to us is missing! A lot of job should be done towards our networks in the social services, it should start from there.

Jane Lethbridge - PSIRU

The European Coordinating Researcher made her intervention focusing on three suggestions:

1. Linking the research to the economic point of view: austerity policy and public procurement policy
2. The role of the state: next stage in the research about the role of the state whether of founder of social services and what role we expect from public sector employer
3. Individualization of care at home: when considering improving the working conditions in the sector with professionalization there might be conflict with the workers in the sector. Analyse the development of the process and how to maintain it.

Questions & final debate

Freek Spinnewijn: We have to work better together at national level on social dialogue in order to promote it. In some countries social dialogue is divided in different sectors but at the European level it shouldn't be mixed. In some countries (e.g. Germany) big players don't want to work together. Social dialogue has to reflect what is happening at national level has to be a bottom up process but as the role of social services is also important in issues where they don't have direct impact at national level can we not go for something in between? Like a softer kind of social dialogue. The commission bottom up work suggestion starting from the national level is a rule or a wish?

Penny Clark: The Commission wants to know how the social services are representatives and if are representatives enough. Social dialogue unions and employer have to work together. The process should be bottom-up, top-down and sideways. We have to find a common agenda including the role of the state; the problem is the rapidity of the changes. Austria report is an example, not only social dialogue is changing, but also the sector in itself.

Urban Boljka (Slovenia): How would you bring the state in? Would you copy the tripartite at EU level?

Elise Lay: in Belgium the employer are represented, at National level there is a tripartite dialogue about specific agreement that apply to non profit sector, it is a negotiation between employer and employee but there is no will to switch it EU level.

Joseph Hilbert (Germany): PESSIS was launched by stakeholders bur work was made by researcher, in Germany I interviewed many stakeholders and many asked for a modernization of social dialogue but nobody know an institution who can do it we need someone who can do it. Another issue that



came out was whether or not modernization will work, but it sure that the workforce has to be modernized.

Luk Zelderloo: The follow up project will come we have to extend the research to a higher number of countries. We should involve also the trade union as social dialogue is a dialogue between employer and employee.

Jorge Nuño Mayer: We have to take in account complexity, how to we create frames of discussion there should be a real collaboration of employers and employees, taking in to account differences, at EU level having the view of good practices would be inspiring at national level.

CONCLUSION

The conference concluded by agreeing that setting up the instruments for social dialogue for social services employers should be handled at EU level. The conference acknowledged that the PESSIS research has provided important insights into existing social dialogue structures in the social services sector in 11 countries, the relevant actors, coverage and representativity. It had also provided a picture of how collective bargaining arrangements affect the social services sector. More information is needed on how social dialogue functions and the views of the social partners about how social dialogue could be changed and improved. A more critical appreciation is needed of how national stakeholders view social dialogue at EU level and how it could address their needs, in relation to available resources.

Some issues are central in the next steps of the process started with PESSIS. One of these is the recognition of the specificities of the social services sector, of the challenges that it is facing and of its future developments.

Another common remark is on one hand the difficulty in putting the employers together at national level and on the other hand the lack of interest and caution towards social dialogue at European level.

Moreover, to achieve the long term objective of building European Social Dialogue in the sector, more should be known about a broader number of countries than the ones analysed with PESSIS.

The next steps of the process started with PESSIS should then be the following:

1. Providing further national profiles of social dialogue in the social services sector;
2. Research the factors that make existing social dialogue successful in the social services sector;
3. Capacity and network building on the employers' side