



## Eurofedop seminar

**“Mobility and migration in the public service.  
Better service to the public?”**

**Edinburgh (Scotland), 02-03.10.2014**

Article 45 of the TFEU (Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union) states that “Freedom of movement for workers shall be secured within the Union” (art. 45.1). Nevertheless, article 45 also states that “The provisions of this Article shall not apply to employment in the public service” (art. 45.4). In the course of the seminar, the participants studied the extent to which migrants from other EU member states as well as non-EU countries are employed in public services of a member state and if there is a need for employment of migrants in public services.

The participants, members of Eurofedop, agreed that there is such a need but noticed differences between sectors. Differences for example according to workers’ qualifications. Important inflows from Central and Eastern European countries to Western European countries have been noticed in the health care sector where migrants are often employed in jobs below their qualifications. On the other hand, cooperation between civil servants from different countries at higher level was recognised as ever more important in the security sector, within the framework of institutions such as Europol and Frontex.



For the first time, Eurofedop decided to work with working groups during this seminar.

The members could all agree with the principle of free movement of workers within the UE, also in public services, but noticed that there is a difference between jobs in the administration and jobs linked with the exercise of a member state’s sovereignty.

The problem is often also of a financial nature. Countries do not have the money to pay workers and, therefore, those workers migrate.

It was also underlined that migration can be hugely stressful, both for those who migrate and those who stay at home (relatives, friends). Trade unions also have a task in dealing with the emotional effects of migration.

Reference was also made to problems related to re-immigration. The example was given of Romanians having worked for 20 years in Spain, who decided to return to their home country where they were confronted with social security regulations of not the same level as social security regulations existing in Spain. Social security is a national matter but some members raised the question of having more EU standards.

Countries at the East and South of Europe which are confronted with mass immigration flows and the problems connected with this, need to be given help and support.

The members are of the view that the Schengen system does work. Nevertheless, they recognised problems related to insufficient staff numbers, lack of equipment to deal effectively with security problems. Security is a matter to be dealt with at national level, but also involves cooperation at international level.



The problem of welfare tourism exists, but maybe it is in the first place an emotional problem. An appeal was made to the European Commission to work at this.

Most of the countries are confronted with shortages of health care professionals. Less nurses and less doctors mean less care. Young health care professionals migrate for enjoying better salaries, better working conditions abroad. In some countries, such as Spain, there are enough nurses, but due to government cuts in health care expenses, nurses are unemployed. Governments develop projects for the promotion of care at home, prevention policies, campaigns to promote healthy living, ...



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The working group experiment has been judged favourably. The exchange of mutual information is important for members of Eurofedop.

Regarding the central question asked during this seminar, whether mobility and migration in the public service lead to a better service to the public, the members agreed that, overall, this should be the case.

A speaker from Ireland gave the example of police services in his country, where the introduction of non-nationals in the police forces was very successful. Not only this allowed to improve the contacts with people from the same (non-national) origin, it was also beneficial for the trust those people have in the Irish police forces.

Another speaker made an appeal for more permanent contracts in public services. He stated that the outsourcing of jobs in public services is a worrying evolution. Jobs in public services need to be made more attractive and the guarantee of stable employment could be a reason not to move. Moreover, there is a need for training local civil servants to deal with immigration. To an important extent, the burden of immigration has to be carried by local authorities. A proper management of immigration through well-trained civil servants at local level was called a condition for ensuring that mobility has a positive impact on local public services.