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## Social summit in Gothenburg

Gothenburg (Sweden), 16-17.11.2017

***“Signing the European Pillar of Social Rights is the starting moment to implement it”***



At the EU Summit on 14/12/2017, the EU leaders agreed to put people first, to further develop the social dimension of the Union to promote and implement the European Pillar of Social Rights.

Eurofedop had already determined its position at its seminar on 8-9/06/2017 in Ghent, where Tom Vandenkendelaere spoke as delegate-negotiator of the European Parliament. The ambition of the Social Pillar should be, as Jean Claude Juncker said, of triple A. It is and remains an ambitious project for upward convergence. There is no ambiguity between economic and social progress. We saw it in Ghent as another step forward in the realisation of a social market economy.

At the seminar in Ghent, we also had a discussion on some of the 20 principles which the Commission worked out with regard to the social pillar and which were dealt with more in detail at the above-mentioned summit in Gothenburg. The presence of Othmar Karas at our Daily Management Board in Vienna on 11 December gave us the opportunity to further discuss this subject with the MEP from Austria and bring our position up to date.

As Eurofedop we underline with regard to Chapter I (Equal opportunities and access to the labour market), that employees of public services must be given the opportunity to fully participate in successful transitions in the labour market through lifelong learning. In most public services, equality of treatment is regulated through statutory provisions. But as regards terms and conditions of employment and career progression, we share the view as expressed in point 2 of Chapter I. Public services must be given the means and opportunities to individually assess and offer services to the long-term unemployed.

In Chapter II (Fair working conditions) point 8, about social dialogue and the involvement of workers, the conclusion is made for supporting the social partners' increased capacity to promote social dialogue. We wish to underline that here the Commission should take itself the initiative of supporting the involvement of ALL the social partners if this is not respected.



With regard to point 9 and 10, we ask that special attention should be given to improving the balance between work and private life. High level of protection of workers' health and safety at work particularly concerns the staff of local authorities, as well as public services which work 24 hours/day.

Point 12 of Chapter III (Social protection and inclusion) rightfully deals with the need for social protection. With the introduction of contractual and temporary employees in

public services, an adequate social protection system is often missing in those public services.

And as mentioned in point 15, here too it is necessary to ask for appropriate attention to be given to the need for ensuring an adequate pensions income for everyone, including the self-employed.

When everyone has the right to preventive and curative health care of good quality, it is urgently required that a separate European agenda is decided on research on health services and health service systems.

Finally, we refer to point 20, which states that everyone has the right to access to essential services of good quality. Here as public services we are the service provider par excellence and also want to remain so in the future. We are a social organisation and support the access to such services for those in need.

Allow me to end this review by referring once more to the statement at the beginning of this text. Signing the decision taken at the summit is the starting moment to implement it.

Eurofedop is ready to give follow-up to the social pillar as far as public services are concerned, in clear agreement with the European Parliament (Vandenkendelaere, Karas, Lenaers and others ...) and with the help of the study centre EZA.

We are looking forward to the first meeting of Ministers and Members of the Council in March 2018, with the prospect of having a second one in June, as President Juncker announced on 15 December 2017, where all conclusive decisions will be taken with regard to matters in the social field.

We cannot wait for 2018 to start.

