



ESIP CONFERENCE 2007

Luxembourg, 29 November 2007

Financing Social Security – a European Union perspective

Welcome address Franz Terwey

**Check against delivery
Seul le texte prononcé fait foi
Es gilt das gesprochene Wort**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have great pleasure in welcoming you all today on behalf of the European Social Insurance Platform to this conference which is organised under the presidency of the Association luxembourgeoise des organismes de sécurité sociale (ALOSS), ESIP's member organisation in Luxembourg. This is the fourth time that the ESIP organises a European conference of this kind, and we are very happy to see that so many representatives from the EU Institutions, from the Member States and from the national social protection systems have accepted our invitation.

I also would like to thank the ALOSS for giving us the opportunity to benefit from this wonderful venue here at the Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce, and we are particularly grateful to Mr Fernand Lepage, the President of this ALOSS, and his colleagues for their kind and constructive help in the preparation of this event. Likewise, our thanks go to the President of the Chamber of Commerce and his colleagues for the hospitality and the support they have given us.

Ladies and gentlemen, this year's conference has the title "Financing social security – a European perspective". Why did we choose this topic? We found that the multiple challenges arising from the **Lisbon strategy** and the recent discussions on the development of the "**social reality**" across Europe create a need for appropriate policy responses in all social security sectors. Furthermore, **globalisation, demographic and societal changes** as well as the new European approach of combining flexibility and security in our social systems ("**flexicurity**") have to be taken into consideration, particularly with a view to pension arrangements but also as regards healthcare and long-term care. Finally, the question must be raised if **transnational migration** can influence the planning and organisation of social security finances.

The analysis of the various national reactions to all these challenges will help us to identify a basis for achieving sustainable solutions for financing social security while maintaining the principles of the **European Social Model** – equity, solidarity, universal access and quality of the social services we provide for our citizens. We want to highlight the role that social security organisations can play as facilitators of mobility in Europe. This conference will give us the opportunity to illustrate the added value that our national organisations can offer to the European Worker, the European Patient, the European Pensioner and the European families.

The programme of our conference foresees that following the welcome address by Fernand Lepage we will hear an introductory report on the topic of the day, which will be presented by Mr Mars Di Bartolomeo, the Luxembourg Minister of Health and Social Security. Thank you, Mr Di Bartolomeo for being with us today and for speaking to us. We feel very honoured by your presence and are looking forward to receiving your messages.

We will then hear the European Commission's view on the financing of social security, presented by Mr Georg Fischer, head of unit at the Directorate General Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. Thank you, Mr Fischer, for having accepted our invitation to speak to us today. Then, our final intervention before lunch will be from Mr Alain Euzeby, Professor at the Institute of French Political Studies in Grenoble, who will give us an academic view of social financing as a pillar of the European Social Model. We look forward to hearing from you, Prof. Euzeby. Prof. Euzeby's talk will be followed by an open discussion on all the morning's presentations.

After lunch, we foresee an interesting debate which will look at the issue of financing social security from the employees' and the employers' points of view. For this, we are pleased to welcome Mme Gabrielle Clotuche, Senior Advisor to the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), who will speak on behalf of the employees and Mr Pierre Bley, Secretary General of the Luxemburg Employers' Association, who will speak for the employers. We thank both speakers and look forward to a good tempered but lively debate!

Finally, after the coffee break, it will be the turn of our members to present the national issues. Firstly, we will listen to Mr Derek Coulthard from the International Pension Centre in the UK, who will talk about the effects of migration on planning and financing social security and specifically, pensions. He will be followed by Mr Guillaume Filhon of the Caisse Nationale d'Assurance Vieillesse (CNAV) in France, who will focus on the sustainability of pension systems and the importance of solidarity between generations. And finally we will hear from Mr Adam Niedzielski, Financial Director of the Social Insurance Institution in Poland, ZUS. He will present the issues for financing social security in transitions countries.

Following a final discussion, we will call on Mme Marie Jouffe, Deputy Director of ESIP, to present her conclusions of today's proceedings. Thank you, Marie for this exercise.

Ladies and Gentlemen, since its creation in 1996 the ESIP has grown in its membership as well as in competence and strength. Now, in 2007, we are proud to bring together some 34 national social security organisations from 14 EU Member States and Switzerland. I am told that we have social security representatives from 18 Member States in our audience today which makes me hope that our Conference today could persuade some of those to join our organisation in the near future. Our continued development seems to confirm that we are moving in the right direction, and I am confident that despite our diverse backgrounds, structures and traditions, we will continue to be a vibrant, dynamic European stakeholder and a constructive partner in the important discussions on social security that will be carried out in the years to come.

So it only remains for me to express my thanks once again to our speakers. I am sure they will provide us with some good advice and a solid basis for our work today and in the future.

I wish our Conference every success.
