

## WHITE PAPER **To a Social Europe with Justice and Solidarity**

Foreword: Life begins at forty

In the 1960s, after decolonisation, it was the turn of worker issues to internationalise. Workers in Africa, Asia and Latin America felt the existing internationals no longer met their needs. Groups of lay activists sprang up. Some of these created their own social movements, while others developed interaction with other organisations.

In 1966, in Rome, the WMCW was founded and appointed its first Executive Council. The WMCW succeeded in bringing together organisations of both types to create a small-scale international movement. Its seminars, held every four years, were and continue to be a meeting place for activists offering them an opportunity to discuss society and their Christian vision of it in an international context.

At the WMCW's General Assembly in Quebec (Canada) the subject under discussion was "Decent Work in a New Society – Ways of Hope." All the movements worked on the subject and came up with responses. The member movements of the European Coordination (EMCW) chose to focus particularly on the question of social protection in an expanding European Union. Half of our movements are young movements and have corresponding movement status with the international movement.

Twenty-eight movements from seventeen countries have been examining the issue of social security. Never before have we had a training action what was this global or this relevant. It has proved to be a real treasure-trove of information. It has been the beginning of reflection and awareness raising on the subject of social security in Europe. We now need all our movements and political, social and religious leaders to work on possible actions stemming from this examination of social protection systems.

What makes this White Paper so special is the fact that these twenty-eight movements have contributed to it – twenty-eight movements with different histories and cultures. However, that is also its weakness. The diversity is so great that it can easily be misused to confuse the debate. There is no unified vision.

The WMCW is submitting this white paper in the sure knowledge that all the movements have encouraged thorough debate and done a remarkable job. Political, social and religious leaders now have an opportunity to formulate their responses and dialogue with our movements to preserve the solidarity that underpins social protection in Europe.

This White Paper has been produced using the "See, Judge, Act" method.

Part One: Description of the social security situation in Europe in all its diversity.

Part Two: The social doctrine of the Church and the European Social Charter.  
Exemples of the movements

Part Three: The decision made at the seminar in Brno (Czech Republic) in January 2005  
(*Actions of different movements and countries and the question of creating awareness of social security issues in the EU.*)

## *Part One: Visions of Social Security*

- Unity in Diversity

European social security systems are highly diverse. The systems have been developed in response to needs and policies that differ from country to country. The results may be extremely good, or extremely bad.

### Differing points of view

- Social security seen as an individual right.
- Social security based on the family unit, the father as head of household and the mother supplementing the family income.
- Employment-based social security.

### Differing systems

- Compulsory or market-dependent?
- Linkage to income levels (means-tested?)
- One system covering all sectors, or sectoral systems?

### Differences in emphasis

- Health insurance system under strain
- Unemployment benefit system under strain
- Pension systems under strain

### Europe and regional particularities

- European unification accelerating regionalisation
- Social security systems are already regionalised to a large degree.

### Conclusion

Social security systems in Europe are highly diverse. They have been designed and adapted to meet regional and local needs.

- The challenge of social security

What are the major challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century? The 20<sup>th</sup> century objective of social security for Europe has been badly undermined. Globalisation, relocations and trade have put social security systems under a lot of strain.

We have fought hard for our rights and we want to keep them. Everyone involved in the discussion agrees: we want to preserve social protection, but what is the most appropriate system, and for how long? Other matters up for discussion include the financing of the system. These are burning issues in all European countries. Everywhere relations between workers, employers and social security authorities are fraught with tension. Although Europe is united, significant differences remain between the regions. Approaches to social safety differ a great deal. Our united Europe suddenly looks a lot less united.

## Conclusion

Our movements' proposals are not all the same. However, we all share the same desire to build a just society for all Europe's citizens.

Five major challenges for social security systems crop up again and again. They are therefore not local but European challenges.

1. Solidarity is giving way to individualism. Solidarity between all the groups making up our societies is in danger of disappearing.
2. Unemployment rates are on the increase in all EU countries. Paying unemployment benefits may soon become a problem.
3. People are living longer, and companies need fewer and fewer workers. For example, the activity rate in France is 43.9%.
4. Maintaining the principle of equality between all workers, male and female, full-time and part-time workers.
5. Immigration is making the situation more complex.

- Myths about social security

After the international seminar in Quebec in 2004, the movements started or intensified their work on the subject of social security. Local groups discussed the matter. They gathered information, analysed the facts and asked questions. They questioned local politicians about their intentions and about ways of ensuring social protection for all.

They wrote reports. Some of them even visited hospitals and institutions to help form an opinion.

But we also found ourselves confronted with a number of myths about social security. Why are these beliefs so stubborn? They are often the result of ill-will (negativity) or ignorance about the subject.

The Swiss movements provided us with some examples of such myths.

Jean-Pierre Fragnière is an expert on social security. It is worth remembering that more is spent on social security than on all other forms of public spending combined. Mr Fragnière has provided us with some examples of the type of clichés about social security that are used to restrict its development.

Abuse of the system. The unemployed are just lazy scroungers exploiting the system.

Ants and grasshoppers. We've all heard stories about people on benefit who have swanky cars or spend their days watching television. More recently there have been stories of people demanding medicines or insurance payments simply because they feel that paying contributions gives them a right to them.

Spreading too little too far. "Isn't it scandalous that millionaires should be able to draw state pensions? Should families who treat themselves to every luxury in the book still be entitled to child allowance?"

Killing the goose that lays the golden eggs. “Developing too good a social security system is courting economic disaster. Swiss exports are too expensive. Soon the public treasury will run dry and social security will be a thing of the past.”

Encouraging debauchery. “As regularly as clockwork, the social security system is accused of being a bed of vice. Should everyone have a right to aid? Ought illegal immigrants to have a right to health care? What about AIDs patents and drug addicts?”

From its inception, social security has been the target of suspicion; it has had to work hard to win trust and support. The disasters predicted have not occurred; the level of fraud is actually very low. Any attempt to rethink social security systems will always have to confront these arguments.

But these myths are thought provoking. In the words of the Luxemburg movement,

“We believe we need to think about “Europeanising” the social security system. This need stems from the liberalisation of the right of establishment and the free circulation of workers. If we cannot achieve some degree of harmonisation of the different regimes and categories in different countries, no-one will be able to master the technicalities of European social security in twenty years’ time.”

Examples: 1 <sup>st</sup> part: organisation of the social security
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### 1. Luxembourg

The general inspection of the social security, under the auspices of the Ministry of Social Security, assures the design and the control of the system.

It should be noticed that in Luxembourg the amounts are calculated on the basis of a value that was laid down originally in 1948. The contributions are paid to the Joint Centre of the Social Security. The two main financing sources of the compulsory systems of the social security are the social insurance and the contributions of the governments.

### 2. Czech Republic

#### 3b. Spain

These systems with a public character include economic provisions in the case of retirement, temporary or permanent disability, maternity, the taking into care of a child an unemployment. In parallel also public services are delivered, such as health services and several kinds of services to elderly persons, the disabled and the socially excluded. At the same time, the experience has left its mark on the financial structures adapted to its needs, with different combinations of social contributions and taxes.

The Spanish experience in this area was different from that of the other countries of the Community, as well as the dimension is concerned as the speed of the implementation. The possibility of the Spanish civilians to reach a level of welfare ... (?) and even, at this moment, even if quite dignified levels of protection has been reached, they should still raise to reach the ones that exist in the more developed countries of the European Union.

Even if all the different services are important, we have to note that as well as in terms of the amount in money as in terms of the number of beneficiaries the pension system, the health system and the unemployment services.

#### 4b. Belgium

Our country knows one of the best systems of social security. Shortly after the second world war a system has been constructed in which employers and employees obtained a high level of social protection for the whole of the Belgian population on the basis of the principles of solidarity and security.

The concept that we feel very strong about is solidarity. Solidarity between:

- ☞ The working and the unemployed;
- ☞ Young and old;
- ☞ Healthy and patients;
- ☞ Families without and with children.
- ☞ ...

This solidarity is guaranteed because:

- ☞ Everybody, at least within the active population, has to pay contributions based on his salary;
- ☞ Everyone is obliged to pay for all sectors;
- ☞ The trade unions, the national health services and the employers' organisations all together decide upon the different aspects of the system.

Specifically, the social security ensures the following:

- ☞ In the case of loss of wage (unemployment, pension, disability), you may receive a replacement income;
- ☞ If you have to bear certain "social burdens" ( raising of children, medical costs,...), you may receive an supplementary income.

The social security is thus the system of contributions and allowances that redistributes resources and covers social risks.

#### France

The social security is based on the principle of national solidarity, this means that it is the active population who contribute on the basis of their salaries and incomes to finance the different needs.

The "social protection" in the field of health and pensions are made up of three levels:

- ☞ A compulsory level for all;
- ☞ A complementary compulsory level depending on ones occupation;
- ☞ An individual level that may be taken care of by private insurances.

#### Italy (South Tirol)

The main points of the social security in the region of South Tirol are:

- ☞ Support of families;
- ☞ The additional pension insurance;
- ☞ Support of the invalid.

## Germany

In Germany the social security rests on three pillars:

- ☞ Insurances, covered by the contributions of the employees;
- ☞ Medical care, covered by taxes;
- ☞ The precautionary system, also covered by taxes.

## Switzerland

The social security in Switzerland consists of a whole safety net of social insurances of which the financing is assured in many ways. The social security system comprises the nine branches of social insurances, to which it would be proper to add the social assistance.

*Part Two. Social security in the light of the social doctrine of the Church, the European Social Charter and examples of the movements*

### I. The social doctrine of the Church

#### Ten principles from the Church's social teachings

Church's social doctrine rests on ten fundamental principles

#### **1. The principle of the dignity of the human person**

*All human beings are created in God's image and redeemed through Jesus Christ. As such they are beyond price and worthy of respect as members of the human family.*

This principle underlies the whole of Catholic social doctrine.

Every person, regardless of gender, age, nationality, religion, sexual preference, employment status, wealth, health, intelligence, success or any other characteristic, deserves respect. It is not what you do or what you have that gives you a right to respect, your dignity derives from the simple fact that you are a human being. Because of this dignity, Catholic doctrine never regards human beings as a means, but always as an end.

The human person is the starting point for all aspects of Catholic social doctrine, but it does not end there. Individual people are instilled with dignity, but individualism has no place in Catholic social thinking. The principle of human dignity bestows the right to be part of a community, the human family.

#### **2. The principle of respect for human life**

“Each person, from the moment of his conception until his natural death, has an inherent dignity and a right to life corresponding to that dignity.”

All human life is precious and therefore worthy of protection and respect, whether in the early or the late stages of life. Human life is very vulnerable. Catholic tradition sees the sanctity of human life as part of its overall moral vision of a good and just society.

### **3. The principle of association**

*“Our tradition says not only that human beings are sacred but also that they have a social role. The way we organise our society – in economic, political and legal terms – has a direct impact on human dignity and individuals’ ability to grow as part of a community.*”

The family is the linchpin of society. The stability of the family must always be protected and never devalued. Through relationships with others – within the family and through other institutions that foster growth, protect dignity and promote the common good – human beings reach fulfilment.

### **4. The principle of participation**

“We believe people have the right and the duty to participate in society, together pursuing the common good and the well-being of all, particularly the poor and the vulnerable.”

The goods made available to people by social institutions of all kinds cannot be obtained without participation. The human person has the right not to be deprived of participation in these institutions, which are necessary for human development/fulfilment.

This principle is particularly relevant to working conditions. “Work is more than a means of earning a living. It is a form of permanent participation in God’s act of Creation. While the dignity of work must be respected, so must the fundamental rights which are workers’ prerogative – the right to productive work, the right to fair and decent wages, the right to organise and belong to unions, the right to private property and the right to take economic (entrepreneurial) initiatives.

### **5. The principle of special protection for the poor and the vulnerable**

We believe that we approach Christ when we approach people in need. The parable of the Last Judgement plays an important role in Christian tradition. From the very beginning the Church has taught that we will be judged according to what we have chosen to do (or not to do) for the hungry, the thirsty, the sick, the homeless and those in prison. Today the Church describes this principle as the “preferential option for the poor.”

Why this preferential love for the poor? Why put poor people’s needs first? Because it is vital for the common good, the good of society as a whole. The opposite of rich and powerful is poor and powerless. If we are to achieve the common good, we must afford protection first and foremost to those suffering from powerlessness and from the consequences of this deprivation/lack. Otherwise the equilibrium which is necessary to preserve the fabric of society would be upset, and this would be detrimental to all.

### **6. The principle of solidarity**

“Catholic social doctrine declares that we are all responsible for our brothers and sisters wherever they are. We are all part of one human family. Learning to practice the virtue of solidarity means learning to “love our neighbour on a global scale in an interdependent world.”

The principle of solidarity leads us to make choices to promote and protect the common good.

Solidarity requires us not to restrict our aid to cases of personal or individual misfortune. Social problems are expressions of a need for fairer social structures. For this reason, the Church requires our unceasing engagement, not only in the form of acts of charity but also in the pursuit of social justice.

### **7. The principle of stewardship**

“Catholic tradition emphasises that we show our respect for our Creator through our stewardship of Creation.”

Stewards are managers, not owners. At a time when awareness of our physical environment is growing, our tradition calls on us to feel morally responsible for protecting the environment – arable land, grassland, woodlands, air, water, minerals and other natural resources. The principle of responsible stewardship also applies to our health and the use of our natural talents and possessions.

### **8. The principle of subsidiarity**

This principle mainly relates to “the responsibilities and limits of governments and the key role of voluntary organisations.”

The principle of subsidiarity imposes necessary restrictions on the power of governments by insisting that the higher level of an organisation should not carry out actions that can be conducted more effectively and efficiently at a lower level by people and or groups who are closer to the problems. Oppressive governments always violate the principle of solidarity. Over-active governments sometimes do the same.

On the other hand individuals sometimes feel powerless in the face of particularly discouraging social problems such as unemployment, people sleeping in doorways or begging on street corners. As these are societal problems, individuals and groups cannot solve them alone. While respecting the principle of solidarity, governments must use their tax revenues to help individuals, communities and nations to resolve such problems. Thus by paying our taxes we are also contributing to creating social justice.

### **9. The principle that all human beings are equal**

The equality of all human beings stems from their inherent dignity. Though differences in talents are part of God’s plan, social and cultural discrimination affecting fundamental rights are incompatible with God’s design.

Treating our fellows equally is a form of justice, traditionally expressed as giving everyone their due. Underlying this notion of equality is the simple principle of justice. One of the earliest feelings to develop in children as they grow up is the feeling of what is “fair” and what is not.

### **10. The principle of the common good**

“The common good means social conditions allowing people to achieve their full potential and realise their human dignity.”

Preconditions for the social conditions the Church is thinking of here include “the respect of the human person,” the “well-being and social development of the group,” and the preservation of peace and security by the public authorities. Today, in a situation of global interdependence, the principle of the common good requires the existence of international structures to promote the equitable development of people and families irrespective of where in the world they live.

The exact definition of the notion of the common good will always be subject to discussion. An absence of sensitivity to the common good denotes a degree of decadence in a society. When people’s sense of community declines, concern for the common good declines too. A good sense of community is an antidote to unbridled individualism, which, like selfishness in personal relationships, can destroy the harmony, balance and peace of groups, neighbourhoods, regions and nations.

Those are the ten principles. It is very satisfying to trace back these Catholic social teachings to the essence of the faith. In doing so we affirm that our belief is the root of our action. For Christians truths are not only something to believe in, but something to put into practice. Our plans are set on these ten foundation stones: -

- The dignity of the human person
- Respect for human life
- Association
- Participation
- The preferential option for the poor
- Solidarity
- Governance
- Subsidiarity
- Equality
- The common good

## **II. The European Social Charter**

The governments signatory hereto, being members of the Council of Europe,

Considering that the aim of the Council of Europe is the achievement of greater unity between its members for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles which are their common heritage and of facilitating their economic and social progress, in particular by the maintenance and further realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms;

Considering that in the [Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms](#) signed at Rome on 4 November 1950, and the Protocols thereto, the member States of the Council of Europe agreed to secure to their populations the civil and political rights and freedoms therein specified;

Considering that in the [European Social Charter](#) opened for signature in Turin on 18 October 1961 and the Protocols thereto, the member States of the Council of Europe

agreed to secure to their populations the social rights specified therein in order to improve their standard of living and their social well-being;

Recalling that the Ministerial Conference on Human Rights held in Rome on 5 November 1990 stressed the need, on the one hand, to preserve the indivisible nature of all human rights, be they civil, political, economic, social or cultural and, on the other hand, to give the European Social Charter fresh impetus;

Resolved, as was decided during the Ministerial Conference held in Turin on 21 and 22 October 1991, to update and adapt the substantive contents of the Charter in order to take account in particular of the fundamental social changes which have occurred since the text was adopted;

Recognising the advantage of embodying in a Revised Charter, designed progressively to take the place of the European Social Charter, the rights guaranteed by the Charter as amended, the rights guaranteed by the Additional Protocol of 1988 and to add new rights,

Have agreed as follows: .....

### III. EXEMPLES

#### 1. Suisse.

- a) obtenir une assurance maladie plus sociale et contenir les frais de santé.... Parce que la cherté des primes charge trop le budget des familles.
- b) Régler la question des 'working poor'... parce que suite aux conditions de travail et de chômage beaucoup de personnes sont devenues malades et en fin des fins ont été aiguillées sur l'invalidité.
- c) Garantir aux requérants d'asile une aide sociale convenable .... Parce que sur le plan de l'asile des durcissements de la loi se font jour.

#### 2. France.

- a) Le vieillissement de la population, lié à un allongement de la durée de la vie et du plus faible remplacement des générations
- b) La pression des institutions internationales induit un désengagement progressif de l'état sur l'ensemble de la protection sociale. Et les portes s'ouvrent aux secteurs financiers qui cassent les solidarités en ne prenant en compte que les besoins des populations présentant peu de risque et ayant des revenus stables et confortables.
- c) La libération des échanges économiques qui met en concurrence notre système économique et social avec des pays à niveau plus faible, voire inexistant,, entraîne une baisse des rentrées des cotisations

#### 3. Spanje.

- a) las pensiones minimas suponen otro problema grave ya que son inferiores al Salario Minimo Interprofesional, siendo este unos de los mas bajos del resto de paises europeos . En Espana son muchos los jubilados que dentro de la pareja solo ha cotizado el hombre, en cuyo caso, si viven los dos , la pension ascienda a 524.10 euro si es mayor de 65 anos y si es menor de 65 anos 489.72 euro. Las pensiones minimas afectan a muchos/as trabajadores/as, pero sobre todo afectan en su totalidad a aquellos que forman parte de la REA (regimen Especial agrario) y todos los que no hayan

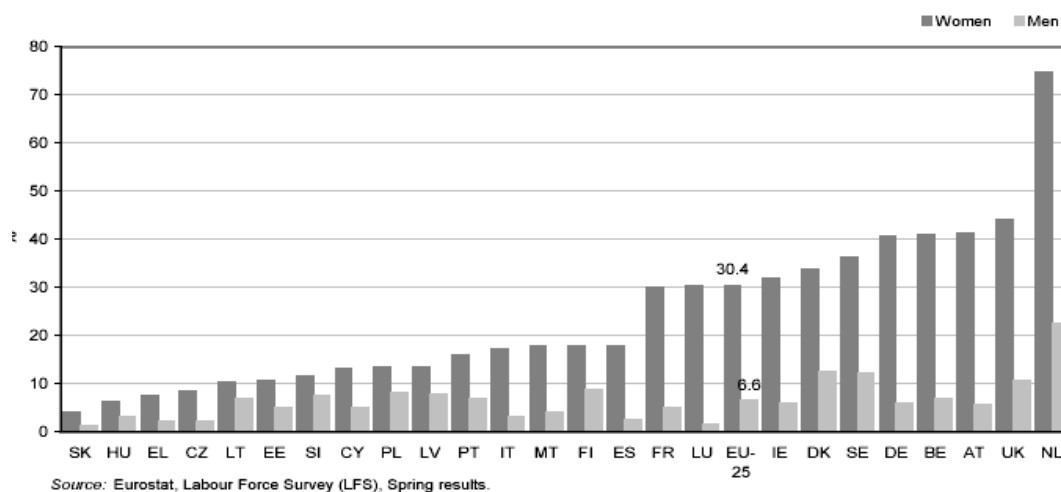
cotizado el minimo establecido por la ley de 15 anos poder tener acceso a la prestacion.

- b) El segundo problema, no menos importante, son las prestaciones por desempleo. Como ya se hizo referencia anteriormente solo tendran acceso a la proteccion por desempleo aquellos trabajadores/as que han cotizado en el sistema de Seguridad Social. Estos trabajadores/as tienen derecho a 4 meses de prestacion cuando han cotizado a la S.S. un minimo de un ano, y a dos anos de prestaciones si tienen 5 o mas anos cotizados. Una vez agotadas las prestaciones contributivas pueden tener acceso a las no contributivas que suponen 30 meses de ayudas especiales de unos 360 euro. Estas suponen la ultima cobertura a la que tiene acceso el trabajador/a espanol/a. Por otro lado para los mayores de 52 anos, que no encuentran empleo, existe una ayuda de 300 euro hasta los 61 anos, edad en la que pueden acceder a la jubilacion. En estas condiciones la prestacion por jubilacion suele ser bastante reducida aunque se hayan cotizado mas de los 15 anos minimos que exige la ley
- c) El tercer problema es el REA. En el estan incluidos todos los trabajadores/as agrarios y que Espana representan una realidad muy importante, en special en algunas comunidades como, Analucia, Extramadura, etc. El problema fundamental de este sistema es que los trabajadores/as no tienen derecho a prestaciones por desempleo, solo tienen acceso a unas ayudas en funcion de los meses trabajados en el ano. Por otro lado suele tener posibilidad de beneficiarse de las pensiones minimas. Las consecuencias son unas situaciones de precariedad generalizadas tanto en la pension de viudedad como en las pensiones minimas en estos trabajadores/as que cotizan en el REA.

#### 4. België.

- a) In Europa komt er geen eengemaakt systeem. Alleen moet elk systeem aan 2 voorwaarden voldoen: gelijke behandeling en non-discriminatie. Hier knelt het schoentje. Ook al participeren veel meer vrouwen dan vroeger aan de arbeidsmarkt, zij doen dat niet op gelijke voet met mannen. Zolang de positie van vrouwen op de arbeidsmarkt ongelijk blijft en vrouwen te kampen hebben met minder start- en doorstromingskansen dan mannen blijven vrouwen ook gediscrimineerd in de sociale zekerheid. De ongelijke verdeelde verantwoordelijkheid voor zorg en huishouden heeft een nefaste impact op de loopbaanontwikkeling van vrouwen en wordt gecombineerd met genderdiscriminatie op de arbeidsmarkt. Vrouwen hebben hierdoor minder maatschappelijk gewaardeerde jobs, lagere lonen en een kortere werktijd.

Tabel 1: % van deeltijds werkende mannen en vrouwen in de EU (2004)



- b) Een brutale afschaffing van afgeleide rechten, is uitgesloten!

Een van de grote uitdagingen in het Belgische stelsel van de sociale zekerheid is de steeds weerkerende oproep van organisaties en partijen naar een afschaffing van de **afgeleide rechten**. Wij kunnen deze drang naar individualisering echter niet zonder voorwaarden aanvaarden.

*Afgeleide rechten* zijn die rechten of uitkeringen in de sociale zekerheid waarvoor je zelf geen bijdragen hebt betaald. Zo heb je bijvoorbeeld, als thuiswerkende partner binnen het huwelijk, recht op terugbetaling voor gezondheidszorgen, of recht op een gezins- of overlevingspensioen, ook al ben je zelf niet beroepsactief en heb je dus zelf geen bijdragen gestort. Deze afgeleide rechten zijn opgebouwd via de bijdragen van de beroepsactieve echtgeno(o)t(e).

Gehuwde vrouwen die in het verleden de bewuste keuze maakten om thuis te blijven, en er toen vanuit gingen eveneens recht te hebben op ziekteverzekering en pensioen, moeten dit recht blijven behouden. Zij mogen niet het slachtoffer worden van eventuele wijzigingen. De *verworven* rechten moeten dus gewaarborgd blijven

Hoewel het tweeverdienersmodel voor jongere gezinnen vandaag veelal een evidentie is (in zeker zin, want vrouwen hebben veel minder vaak een voltijdse job), mogen we niet vergeten dat dit niet altijd het geval is geweest. Vele (bijna) pensioensgerechtigden zullen getuigen dat lange tijd het kostwinnersmodel het enige sociaal wenselijk ideaal was.

#### c) **Individualisering als maatschappelijke uitdaging**

Het is vandaag nog niet mogelijk van alle vrouwen te verwachten dat zij zelf via loonarbeid hun eigen sociale rechten opbouwen. Voor nog heel wat vrouwen bestaat er nog een ongelijkheid op 't vlak van scholingskansen én van werkgelegenheid. Er is de grotere werkloosheid onder vrouwen, hun lagere verloning voor gelijkwaardig werk en hun zwakkere promotiekansen. En zolang van vrouwen en moeders nog steeds de grootste bijdrage in het huishouden wordt verwacht, blijft de positie op de arbeidsmarkt voor vrouwen ongelijk. Ook de sociale wetgeving biedt nog onvoldoende kwalitatieve mogelijkheden voor een optimale combinatie van gezin en arbeid. Bovendien moeten kinderopvang en andere gezinsondersteunende initiatieven nog veel sterker worden uitgebouwd. Zolang al deze ongelijkheden nog bestaan, kan er geen sprake zijn van afschaffing van de afgeleide rechten.

Toch mogen we de persoonlijke verantwoordelijkheid die eenieder draagt niet ontkennen. Iedereen die dankzij verschillende maatschappelijke investeringen (kinderbijslag, onderwijs, huisvesting, mobiliteit, ...) vele kansen kreeg en deze 'kon' benutten, is die samenleving op zijn / haar beurt ook een bijdrage verschuldigd. Het is dan voor ons ook **gerechtvaardigd van mannen en vrouwen die alle kansen kregen, te verwachten dat zij in hun eigen onderhoud en inkomen kunnen voorzien**. Solidariteit binnen het gezin, maakt dan plaats voor solidariteit voor de samenleving. Pas als in de realiteit van elke dag iedereen inderdaad gelijk aan de start verschijnt, pas dan wensen wij – op termijn – te bespreken of de huidige regeling van afgeleide rechten kan worden omgebogen tot een nieuwe regeling waarin iedere persoon eigen individuele rechten opbouwt.

Ook in de toekomst zal het nodig blijven een **sociaal vangnet** te voorzien voor mensen in moeilijke situaties zoals bv.: grote gezinnen, recent alleenstaanden met kinderen, mensen met zware gezondheidsproblemen. Ook indien individuele rechten de norm worden moeten er garanties ingebouwd worden voor een volledig sociale bescherming bij het tijdelijk onderbreken van de deelname aan de arbeidsmarkt (in kader van verzoening arbeid en gezin).

## 5. Tjechië.

There are many problems, their convergence with other developed Western countries occurs as well as a loss of illusions the population had after 1989.

Received: From the point of view of social securities the most important problems are as

follows:

1) **the threat of unemployment:** in the present time the average for the whole country is slightly under 10%, but significant differences exist in the regions (somewhere the unemployment is arising up to 20%) and also between various groups of population; the social insecurity concerns also young absolvents of schools as well as people behind their supposed working efficiency zenith (45 - 50 years) who after having been sent away from their employment (in many situations without any proper shortcomings) can find a new job with great difficulties only;

2) **continual delaying of reforms of social (rents), health care and fiscal systems;**

3) **crisis of stability and existence of families** connected not only with the aforementioned problems (unsatisfactory solution of housing problems for young people, retired and poor people feel to be threatened by possible introducing deregulated hiring for their flats planned to be introduced), but also with the decreased influence of religion (the Czech Republic belongs to the most atheist countries in Europe, however in some regions a rather high religious sensitivity still exists).

## 6. Duitsland.

a) Die seit Beginn der 90er Jahre anhaltende Massenarbeitslosigkeit hat in der Finanzierung der Sozialsysteme zu Einnahmeausfällen geführt.

b) Zusätzlich beklagt die Wirtschaft wegen der hohen Beiträge (50% zahlen die Arbeit-geber für Krankheit/Pflege, Rente und Arbeitslosenversicherung) die Belastung durch die Lohnnebenkosten für den Faktor Arbeit.

c) Zunahme der Frühverrentung und steigende Lebenserwartung (demografischer Faktor) lassen die Ausgaben der Rentenversicherung steigen bei sinkenden Beiträgen. Dies bedeutet eine zusätzliche Belastung für den Staat (Zuschuss aus Steuermitteln).

## 7. Italy

The value of a “Manifesto” stands in his symbolic and updated to the present historical time character.

Promoting this “Manifesto” for the new forms of work, ACLI (Christian Associations of Italian Workers) want to contribute to answer in an efficient way to the old and new social question in the time of globalization and knowledge society .

Flexibility must become space of freedom and opportunities, not of precariousness of the work: only in this way it could be sustainable. This is the cultural and political choice the present “Manifesto” is based on.

Yesterday as today ACLI assume the workers as travelling companions, especially those who need more protection.

In representing the Italian working situation, ACLI believe that the tie with the trade union organisations everyday engaged with working people is fundamental.

The new generation of flexible workers lays down new challenges to everyone, and indicate that it is impossible to be satisfied with the revenues of the past.

A more actual and united trade union will represent a strong anchorage in a society dyed of uncertainty.

The entrance in the knowledge society means going further the work , with the work.

That means to imagine the protection and promotion of the work looking at the society: at the training rights, at the families roles and at the involvement of the communitarian networks of the Third Sector.

These will be the fundamental elements in order to imagine and build a labour society more fair, more free and solid.

Accepting the challenge without fear and daring the future.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Now that the “Manifesto” for the Welfare reform has been delivered to the government, to the civic movements and to the public opinion, what ACLI are expecting and for what they will continue to commit themselves?

The Manifesto proposes an innovative vision of the social politics, and put forward ambitious but feasible proposals. The *equity* principle underlines the importance of starting from the “weak pillar”; the *portability* principle the importance of a more and more “personalized” Welfare; the *subsidiarity* principle outlines a community Welfare able to increase the value of the municipal dimension.

Besides a conscious anthropological vision, in this proposal ACLI promote a social methodology of work that is producing good results in involvement and active citizenship.

The globalization impact on the Welfare push in evidence on one side the risk of a mercerization of the social services, and on the other side the danger of a progressive demolition of that protection system which followed the most disadvantaged people till now.

The loneliness and abandoning state in which the global citizen lives so frequently asks for an efficient answer in rebuilding the communitarian tissue and strengthen the familiar and social networks.

The Manifesto contains the effort of a Third Sector association of participating responsibly in orienting the political choices for they can be the more respectful and consonant to the rights of the families and the citizens, the foreign and Italian ones.

Listening to the urgings coming from many intermediate bodies of the civil society allowed the ACLI to express a sensitivity and a planning which go further the single associative perspective.

So ACLI expect that since the next appointments, starting from the financial law, the government and the political bodies will give answers in coherence with the indicated direction.

The commitment is that of continuing to represent a conscience both critical and constructive improving the rebirth of the community spirit and weave the thread of the civic responsibility.

### *Part Three*

#### *“Provisional” conclusions after five years’ study and seminars*

##### 1. Overview: the results of five years study and seminars

The observation phase began in **2001 in Deinze**. A seminar from 9 to 13 May dealt with the subject of changes in the world of work and the consequences for quality of life. The tried and tested “See-Judge-Act” method produced the following results :-

SEE: Ten “focus points” concerning subjects such as the environment, women’s work, the domination of politics by economics and the loss of cultural and ethical values.

JUDGE: Six “values” we stand for, ranging from solidarity and democracy to international awareness.

- ACT: - Questions about the role and place of “work” in our society.
- The challenges for our movements: connecting with young people and their mentality.
  - The challenges for our politicians, trade unions and the Church.

### 2005 Seminary in Brno (Czech Republic)

From the 26<sup>th</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup> of January 2005 the ECWM Christian Workers’ Movements met in Brno for a seminar on Social Security in Tomorrow’s Europe” (*for the first time in an East of Europe*) and passed the following resolution:

The ECWM’s priority theme for the next two years is, “Good Social Security in Europe is a right for all and is fundable”.

The White Paper should contain the following:

1. A description of the social security systems of the individual countries (country reports).
2. A description of our Christian values which serve as a basis for our reasoning and actions.
3. An assessment of social security systems and a description of minimum standards and necessary reforms. The Paper should also debunk the myths about social security in Europe.
4. A description of future funding possibilities providing just distribution. This also includes the question of how society’s wealth can be better distributed. All sources of funding should be utilised and the privatisation of public responsibilities opposed.
5. The reference to the European Social Charter should be re-established.

The movements’ actions in relation to social security should also be described.

### 2. ACTIONS in the groups of ECWM

Ondertussen zijn in verschillende landen, bij verscheidene organisaties, acties op het getouw gezet en studieweekends met dat sociale onderwerp als thema gehouden.

Enkele voorbeelden:

#### 1. Italië (ACLI)

##### CHAPTER 1 – THE PRINCIPLES

- 1.1. The primacy of the human person
- 1.2. The equity and the selective universalism
- 1.3. The centrality of the family
- 1.4. The subsidiarity
- 1.5 The municipality
- 1.6 The multiethnic and multicultural integration

#### 1. Italië (Südtirol)

In eenjaarthema voor alle leden en hun familie wordt aandacht gevraagd voor de situatie:

Vb 2004: Jeder für sich – und wer für alle???

Vb 2005: Heute Säen – morgen ernten. Die richtige  
Altervorsage

2. Duitsland

Hier werd een nationale dag georganiseerd op 23 en 24 april  
2005: Tag des Guten Leben für alle.

Daarnaast lanceert de KAB gedurende het jaar  
gezondheidscampagnes.

3. België.

De KWB in België organiseerde een campagne rond het  
geneesmiddelenbeleid.

4. In heel Europa was de vrouwenmars een oproep tot een  
gendergelijkheid.