

# ENSA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

## Brussels, 16 february 2006

### *Minutes*

#### **1. Welcome by Mr. Gianlorenzo Martini, Veneto Region Brussels office director**

ENSA was born thanks to the strong will of its members who decided to work together auto-financing the network. ENSA main strength is its concrete approach. The local experiences on the ground represent an added value, based on them project ideas are implemented. ENSA wants to foster the relationship between the partners and extend the participation to new ones. It wants to become a "direct interlocutor" with the European Commission.

#### **2. Welcome by Mr. Antonio De Poli, Veneto Region Minister of Social policies**

ENSA is aiming at becoming a "concrete interlocutor" in order to answer the necessities of the people with special needs, people with disabilities, and people with mental problems. Each country, and partner has different priorities but working together can help us to achieve, step by step, these priorities. ENSA partners should work on finding other partners, to enlarge the network and become a permanent structure. ENSA is still in a preliminary phase, it has to move forward to make lobby, and get power in the decision making process.

#### **3. Priorities of the European Union in the field of social policies - Presentation of PROGRESS 2007-2013 by Mr. Luca Pirozzi, European Commission- Full version of speech in attach.**

The *Social Agenda 2005-2010* is a tool to achieve the Lisbon Agenda. It focuses on

- moving towards full employment, creating a European labour market and answering the new challenges managing the process of restructuring through the social dialogue;
- moving towards a more cohesive society, giving equal opportunities for all, supporting Member States in reforming pension and health care, tackling poverty and discrimination.

At the Council meeting last spring, they discussed about the so called "*new Lisbon*". They realised that there was not enough political commitment by the Member States in the implementation of the Lisbon strategy and they called for a stronger mobilisation of resources and political will and also for a greater focus on growth and jobs. The Open Method of coordination is a useful tool that can be used to reach the Lisbon objectives and implement the social agenda.

PROCESS is aimed at simplifying instruments both in legal and management terms, streamlining the budget structure, simplifying the decision making process and getting better synergies.

The European Commission support should take into account the strong link between different policies and a broader approach is also needed in the choice of eligible networks to be funded.

There are some obstacles in the adoption of the document due to a disagreement between the Council and the European Parliament which could lead at a conciliation procedure with an extension of the timetable.

#### **4. Guest of Honor, Mr. Stefano Schena, President of the European Platform for rehabilitation (EPR)- Full version of speech in attach**

The European Platform of rehabilitation was born in 1992 as network of organizations to support handicapped people. It is auto financed and has a permanent office in Brussels. EPR is facing some difficulties in getting partners from the new Member States because they cannot afford the fees. The Platform has 3 pillars of activity: professional development, research and innovation and public affairs. EPR & ENSA may have a fruitful cooperation and a formal partnership: ENSA may support

EPR in the process of enlargement and EPR may assist ENSA in concrete activities at local level. ENSA could also take part in the EQRM awarding committee and is officially **invited to EPR Annual General Seminar in Oslo on the 28-29 September.**

**5. ENSA past -present and future. Presentation for the new Members by Ms. Elena Curtopassi. Full version of the speech in attach**

Presentation of the status of the network, partnership, structure, objectives, membership conditions, activities and main projects submitted for each thematic network.

**6.Reports on 2005 activities by the leaders of the thematic network**

**a) Presentation of the child network by Mr. Andrea Ferrari, Regione Autonoma Valle D'Aosta. Department of social policies- see full version of speech in attach.**

**b) Presentation of the Elderly network by Mr. Vincent O' Connell, Surrey County Council  
Presentation attached.**

Background of the thematic network and presentation of the activities ( meeting on bilateral base, develop projects suitable for submission for fundng, study visits)-

**c) Presentation of the Disabled network by Mr. Federico Alonso, Fundacion Andalusia Servicios Sociales- Full version of the speech in attach**

Presentation of the activities carried out from 2003 till 2005 and next steps.

**d) Presentation of the Youth Network by Mr. Joe Francis, University of Edinburgh  
Activities 2005: Full version of the presentation in attach.**

ENSA is very active in participating in EU bids. It made a good job in dissemination of information but these actions can be improved.

Cooperation between ENSA partners should be fostered in order to allow the network to play an important role in the decision making process trough the Open Method of Coordination.

**7. Presentation by Mr. Pierluigi D'Elia, Italian Permanent Representation  
The presentation will be sent to you in short delay.**

**8. Presentation of the new thematic network on social inclusion by Mr. John Halloran, European Social Network  
Presentation will be sent to you in short delay.**

**9. Proposals for the immigration policies. Presentation by Mr. Tiziano Barone, Veneto Lavoro  
New subnetwork proposal on inclusion and immigration policies**

Presentation by **Mr. Tiziano Barone – Veneto Lavoro**

Summary – (full version in Italian)

**Introduction.**

There is a link between social inclusion policies and immigration policies ; the purpose of this intervention is to present some remarks about the necessity of connecting these policies.

This bond will allow to plan more easily actions of social inclusion adressed to population of the third countries.

**Remarks about the situation of immigrants on the labour market**

In the annual report of immigration and integration of the EU (2004) the situation of the immigrants at European level was presented. In 2002 3,6 % of the employment rate of the EU was represented by citizens coming from 1/3 countries, these same citizens contributed between 1997 and 2002 to 22% of the employment growth.

In the Veneto region workers coming from third countries represent 20 to 25 % of the new annual employed. One new worker out of five comes from third countries.

The manpower coming from 1/3 countries represents a big reserve in order to cope with the demand of qualified and non qualified workers.

Among the citizens of the third countries there is a lack of use of the employment potential. The employment rate in the third countries is considerably lower than in the EU, with a worse situation regarding women.

The unemployment rate of 1/3 countries citizens is the double compared to most EU countries.

### **Remarks about national integration policies**

The social policies must face the consequence of migrations.

The lack of employment is the first obstacle to integration. Solving this problem has become the priority of national policies.

Other important obstacles are : language problems, difficulties of acknowledgement of professional competences and qualifications.

As a consequence: improving language skills and the level of education are the biggest challenges to face.

Specific efforts are made to improve orientation and professional advice directed to the migrants. Member States insist upon civic education with information to provide on rights and duties, including equal opportunities and social values of the guest country.

Furthermore the capacity of migrants to become entrepreneur has been acknowledged.

Regarding social integration the Member States note the specific risk of poverty and social inclusion the immigration population have to face.

Specific importance has to be given to housing policies and to solving segregation and racism problems together with urban degradation of the areas where the immigrant population is overwhelming.

### **Remarks about admission policies**

A general tendency to focus migration policies on employment is affirmed. A flexible admission system able to attract selected manpower can contribute to the development of the labour market. Future professional skills needed must be underlined together with potential lacks of human resources in specific sectors.

Reference is made to the principle of "EU preference"

### **Remarks about the coordination of EU policies and the exchange of experiences**

- National contact Units for Integration
- European strategy for employment and social integration
- Cooperation on education at EU level
- Better information on migration phenomenon

### **Remarks on the role of the Regions**

The experience of the Veneto Region has put migration for professional reasons as the initial reference for all actions favoring migration flows.

In 2003 through the Regional Agency Veneto Lavoro, a series of interventions to experiment models of “governance” of migration flows have been carried out based on the application of “right of preemption” set out by the Italian law.

It means involving companies (with a labour demand not satisfied locally) in the implementation of training and selection sessions for the potential workers in the 1/3 countries.

For the 1/3 country workers participating in the language and professional training courses plus the assessment of skills, special assistance is provided at Regional level (housing, language...).

Through this project around 1000 workers have come, the majority of which obtained a working permit.

The Region has developed a network of institutional relations with the 1/3 countries in order to be aware of the employment offers and to implement common instruments. These actions explore the integration between the mobility of companies and workers and start interventions of return (of immigrants).

In the framework of a project Interreg 3C south called “City to city” with the participation of Region Calabria, Sicilia, and a vast European partnership (Germany, Lithuania, Spain, Sweden ) a specific Center is presently set out to deal with the subject of immigration and social integration in favor of the Regions.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

- Central role of immigration in the economic and social development of the EU.
- In the framework of the ageing population and the reduction of the working age population the increase of migration flows is important and necessary to answer the needs of an enlarged EU. So admission and integration policies are bound to cooperate.
- Integration on the labour market: at national level strong action is needed to single out the lacks of competences and man power to guarantee a better participation of the immigrants into the Labour market.
- Integration of the new comers: major difficulties- understanding norms /values of society and language problems.
  - Admission of migrants for economic reasons is the milestone of immigration policies and must be faced at EU level with transparency, less bureaucracy and considering the interests of the country of origin and the country of admission.
  - Importance to combine policies that are attracting migrants for economic reasons with possible negative effects in the country of origin.

### **At local level**

The forecasts of migration flows and the management of mobility in their practical aspects are the competence of the Regions. Integration policies, working and training policies are also within the competences of the Regions. Migration policies at national level must collaborate more with the Regions.

The apparent rigid control of admissions has fomented a flourishing industry specialized in irregular admissions.

Usual clandestine admissions are not the only cause of the increase of irregular workers, regular admissions for “other reasons” are transformed in irregular presences waiting to be regularized.

The proposal of governance of migration flows can be based on an actual role of the Regions and the social actors in the provisions and in the management of planned migration flows.

Interventions are required in order to forecast and build up legal canals of immigration based on selection and training of non EU manpower with positive outcomes for the companies.

The model is based on matching the local labour demands (country of origin) with the guarantee of jobs offers (country of admission). This action needs an exchange between Regions and countries of origin in order to answer the labour needs.

Necessity to think about mechanisms and incentives for the return of immigrants that could be helpful for the delocalisation of companies.

For all these reasons it is essential to integrate migration policies and social policies taking into account working and training policies.

For these points the Veneto Region suggests to enlarge the field of the ENSA network to immigration.

## **10. ENSA web site**

An ENSA web site is now available to you so that you can send us the relevant information you wish to add on the Veneto Region Brussels Office web site.

<http://www.regione.veneto.it/bruxelles/ensa>

We kindly ask you to send us a **general profile** of your Region- 15 lines max focused on social policies to be put under the chapter “presentation of members” (deadline April 10)

-**Thematic networks:** we kindly ask the general coordinators to send us the relevant information they consider useful to have on the web (deadline April 10)

-**Contact details:**

We understood the local coordinators prefer not to have their contact details on the web so unless specific instructions from you we will not put them.

-**Calendar of meetings:**

Could each local coordinator send us the dates of the next planned meetings (deadline April 10)

-**Publications/Documents:**

If you have any article or document you wish us to put on the web please send it to us (deadline April 10)

-Minutes and presentations of the General assembly meeting and information from the thematic networks will be made available on the web site.

## **11. ENSA logo**

The partners did not like the logo we suggested. We hereby are attaching a little modification of the same one in case it seems better. We will in any case be very happy to receive your suggestions until April 10th so that we can take a decision together. Otherwise we could ask a professional who would be able to send you 3 proposals but that would have a cost.

## **12. ENSA next General assembly**

Edinburgh and Andalusia will let the partners know about their availability to host the event. If no one volunteers the Veneto Region could organise it another time in Brussels.

### **13. New network on social inclusion**

With the agreement of its members a new subnetwork has been set up under the coordination of the Veneto Region.

The aims of the network will be focused on

- the Lisbon agenda
- immigration and integration
- the connection between ENSA and existing networks

See proposal in attach.

### **14. Closing remarks by Mr. Claudio Beltrame, Veneto Region Social Services Director.**

Social policies are more and more interconnected with other policies and a broader approach is needed. Cooperation is useful for a better guarantee of social rights.

ENSA made a good job till now. It has to follow this path and move forward: it should increase the number of partners and aim at becoming a permanent structure, a counterpart for the European Commission, playing a more active role in the decision making process.