



**Bundesministerium
für Familie, Senioren, Frauen
und Jugend**

Valency and change in welfare organizations in a merging Europe – their contribution to the development of a European Civil Society

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International Conference at the Headquarters of the European Economic and Social Committee, Rue Ravenstein 2, B-1000 Brussels, 17 December 1999

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Internationale Konferenz am Sitz des Europäischen Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschusses, Rue Ravenstein 2, B-1000 Brüssel, 17. Dezember 1999

Wertigkeit und Wandel von Wohlfahrtsverbänden in einem zusammenwachsenden Europa – ihr Beitrag zum Aufbau einer europäischen Zivilgesellschaft



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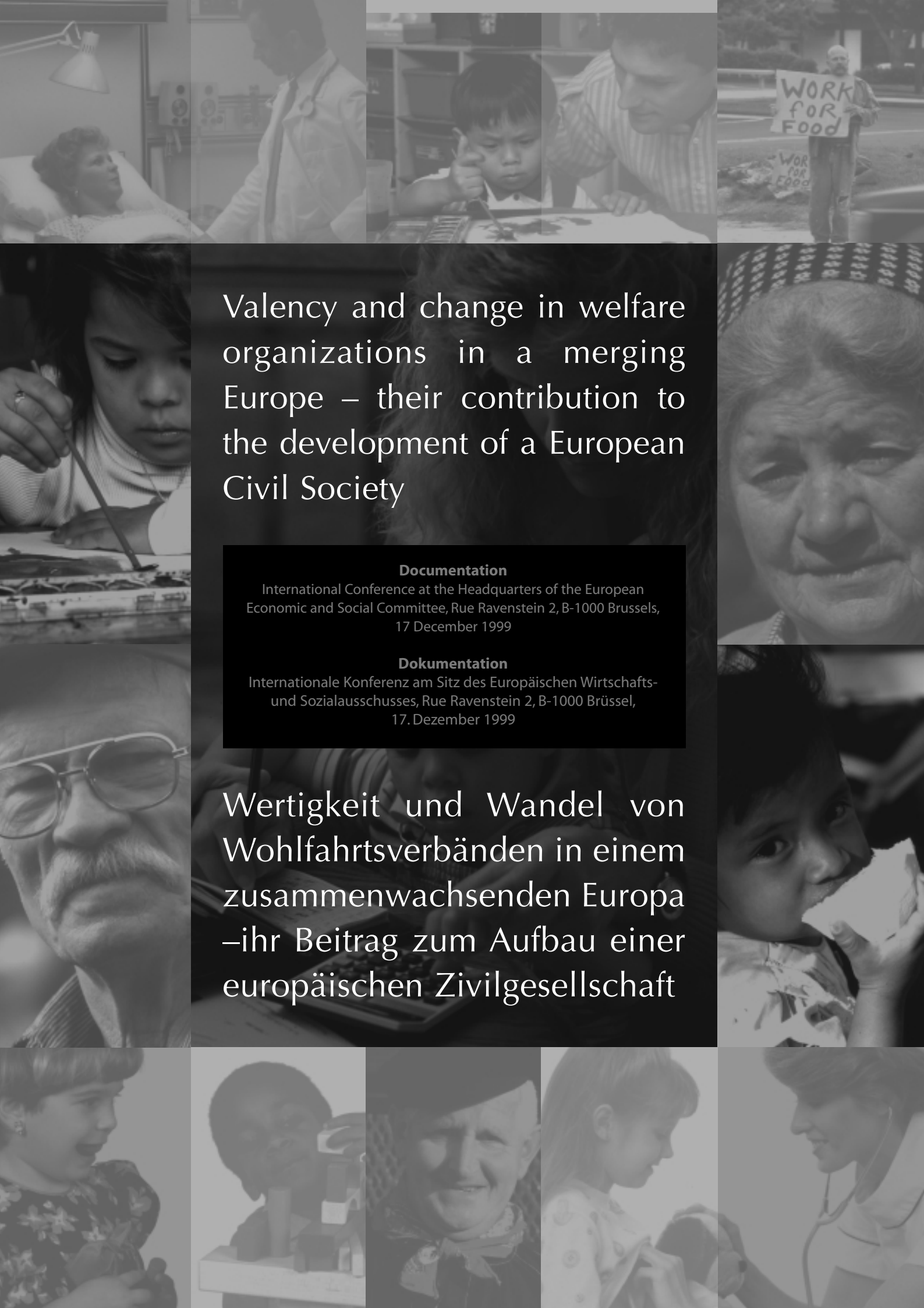
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Opening Remarks

Beatrice Rangoni Machiavelli	5
President of the European Economic and Social Committee (ESC)	
Dr. Christine Bergmann	6, 8
Federal Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth of Germany	
Anna Diamantopoulou	11
Commissioner in charge of the Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs	
Ieke van den Burg	12
Member of the European Parliament	
Klaus Halla	14
Ministerial Adviser of the Finnish Ministry of Health and Social Affairs	

Keynote Speeches

In search for a new contract – the role of voluntary organisations in rebuilding social welfare in Europe/*Auf der Suche nach einem neuen Vertrag – die Rolle von Wohlfahrtsorganisationen im Umbau der Wohlfahrtspflege in Europa*

Prof. Dr. Adalbert Evers	16, 29
University of Giessen, Director at the “Institut für Sozialforschung” in Frankfurt a.M.	

The role of welfare organisations in France

Prof. Robert Lafore	29
Director of the “Institut d’études politiques” (Institute of Political Studies), Bordeaux, France	

Statements by representatives of welfare organisations

The contribution of charitable associations to safeguarding social rights and their role in drawing up a European Charter of Basic Rights/*Der Beitrag der Verbände zur Sicherung sozialer Rechte und ihre Rolle bei der Erstellung einer europäischen Grundrechtscharta*

Soscha Gräfin zu Eulenburg	32, 33
Vice-President of the German Red Cross, Member of the European Economic and Social Committee (ESC)	

Dr. Helga Henke-Berndt	35, 36
Vice-President of the “Arbeiterwohlfahrtsorganisation” (Federal Workers’ Welfare Organisation)	

The role of charitable associations in developing European civil society

Kimmo Saares	38
Consultant Head of EU Office, Church Resources Agency, Finland	

The role of charitable associations in defending and representing the victims of social exclusion

Dr. Vitor Melicías	39
President of the “Uniao Das Misericordias Portuguesas” (Association of Portuguese Charities), Member of the European Economic and Social Committee (ESC)	

The particular role of charitable organisations in the further development of employment policy guidelines

Jean-Michel Bloch-Lainé 41

President of the “Union Nationale Interfédérale des Oeuvres et Organismes Privés Sanitaires et Sociaux Reconnue d’Utilité Publique” (Interfederal Union of Private, Social and Health Organisations of Public Benefit, France), Member of the European Economic and Social Committee (ESC)

Panel discussion

How should charitable associations shape their future?

MinR Dr. Wolfgang Linckelmann 44

German Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

Prof. Dr. Adalbert Evers 45, 46

University of Giessen, Director at the “Institut für Sozialforschung” in Frankfurt a.M.

Jan Olsson 48

Head of the European Office of the “Kooperativa Institutet”, Sweden. Member of the European Economic and Social Committee (ESC) and chairman of the ESC’s Section for Employment, Social Affairs and Citizenship

Summary of general debates

Appendix

Programme (English and German) 51, 52

Press releases (English and German) 53

List of participants 56

Opening Remarks

Mrs. Beatrice Ragnoni Machiavelli

President of the European Economic and Social Committee

Good morning ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to welcome you here today and thank you for participating in this conference on the importance and change in welfare organisations in an increasingly integrated Europe, and the contribution to the development of a European civil society. This conference was organised by the German Ministry for Family, the Elderly, Women and Youth and by the Economic and Social Committee. I would also like to thank Ms Christine Bergmann, German Minister for the Family, Mrs Diamantopoulou, European Commissioner in charge of Employment and Social Affairs, my colleague Ms van den Burg, Member of the European Parliament, Mr Peter Haupt, Secretary of State of the German Ministry for the Family, Mr Halla and all personalities and participants of this conference. I would also like to thank Prof. Adalbert Evers and Prof. Robert Lafore for contributing to our discussion. The topic of this conference is a part of the follow-up of the first Convention on organised civil society which is at the core of our programme. It was in the programme of my presidency and I would like to once again thank everyone for their help as I would never have been able to do the job without all the support I enjoyed. The Economic and Social Committee was empowered by the Treaty of Rome to this end and we were able to make it much more visible and effective as a bridge between civil society and the European institutions.

There are three documents which form the basis of our commitment, initiatives and follow-up to our actions. The first is an own-initiative opinion from 1997, for which Mrs zu Eulenburg was the rapporteur, entitled *“Cooperation with charitable associations as economic and social partners in the field of social welfare”*. The second opinion was submitted by Mr Olsson, president of the Committee’s Social Section, and dealt with the Commission Communication on the *“Promotion of the role of social associations and foundations in Europe”*. Finally, there is an own-initiative opinion of which the rapporteur was Mrs Sigmund, president of Group III. This is our bible if you will as it forms a framework of today’s conference and deals with the *“Role and contribution of civil society organisations in the building of Europe”*.

NGOs are of the utmost importance in contributing to active citizenship and exercise of democracy. I

would remind you that in his famous work *“Democracy in America”* A. de Tocqueville said that American democracy gained its force and legitimacy from the various associations that helped to develop it, this thanks to individual will in all walks of life. He said that there is nothing that people’s will cannot achieve in exercising freedom. An association can form around a very specific idea and it will have the support of those making up the association and those affected by it, and this is a very important concept. Sometimes people from different walks of life can come together for a common aim. We unfortunately never have enough statistics concerning the third sector and charitable organisations. Jacques Delors who opened our conference on October 15 gave a speech in which he mentioned how important it is to develop the charity sector in Europe. He said that the associations, mutual organisations and cooperatives cover 150 million European citizens out of the 370 million European citizens and we can say that at least 100 million European citizens are members of one organisation or another, so it really is a formidable army which is coming together to bolster democracy in Europe.

One of the major principles underlying the European Union is respect for dignity and it is that philosophy which underlies all social, political and economic associations. The respect for justice is the highest form of recognition of human rights. Social exclusion is the scourge of the day, thus the importance of European charitable associations. Social exclusion destroys solidarity and this is a serious risk. Solidarity can not only be seen as an altruistic feeling, but it must go hand in hand with responsibility and justice. To promote solidarity we have to work in the interests of the needy, the deprived, the unemployed and we must build society on the basis of values and rights of citizens. In 1929 during the terrible economic crisis, the depression, John Maynard Keynes said that *“the economic system of capitalism is based on values which are negative, i.e. the philosophy of assets rather than of being”*. Capitalism is the strongest opposed to the weakest and the richest opposed to the poorest, its having rather than being and this philosophy has reigned for more than a century. We need to concentrate on higher values, we need to love one another and show solidarity and fraternity. In 1942 in the United Kingdom a report was published which was very well known, the author William Beveridge made a proposal for a national health system. After the Second World War the government of the United Kingdom instituted the

Opening Remarks

National Health System. I think that Beveridge passed away quite recently, if I am not mistaken. In his last will and testament he expressed concern, he said that the welfare state was at risk but there were also risks involved, a sense of responsibility and citizens' fraternity was waning and people had to come together with the state to fight poverty and exclusion. I think this is something we should never forget, Lord Beveridge's ultimate aim did not come about. John Maynard Keynes expected a society to come about based on positive values but he also expected it to be a very long time in coming. We have a very ambitious aim before us, we want to extend the boundaries of democracy and promote civil dialogue and participatory democracy. We count on you; without your help and cooperation and your commitment we would be unable to achieve this very ambitious goal. We hope to have you by our side as we move forward and cooperate with other European Union institutions to create a true Europe of citizens, based on responsibility, solidarity and participation.

Thank you very much.

Dr. Christine Bergmann

Federal Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

Ms. Rangoni-Machiavelli,

Ms. Sigmund,

Ms. Diamantopoulou,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Distinguished guests of this conference,

It gives me great pleasure to be able to welcome you on behalf of the German Federal Government here to this conference on valency and change in welfare organisations and their contribution to the development of a European civil society. It is a novelty for the Economic and Social Committee of the European Union to hold such a conference in co-operation with a Member State. I hope that this present event will be followed by many similar ones and that this form of co-operation will also be sought by other Member States.

Today's conference gives us an opportunity to maintain a European dialogue on an issue which is significant for all Member States alike. For this choice of issue I would like to emphatically thank you, Ms Rangoni-Machiavelli and Mr Venturini, and all the others who contributed to it.

I also hope that this event will make it obvious that, by virtue of its advisory capacity, the Economic and Social Committee is an important organ of the European Union to which we must pay far greater attention than we did in the past - this is meant also and precisely for us Germans.

The Economic and Social Committee has been the pioneer and facilitator of organised social state structures in Europe. It builds a bridge between Europe and its citizens by acting as spokesman and advocate for all matters social. Past experience has shown time and again that the Economic and Social Committee has been instrumental in securing the charitable associations greater recognition and higher esteem by the European institutions. This is borne out by the own-initiative opinion on co-operation with the charitable associations and many other documents. The message it has been sending to both the citizens of Europe and the European institutions is clear: not only industry and finance count in Europe, but the shaping of a social Europe is at least equally important for further integration.

Social cohesion, social rights and services may not be ignored as the economic adaptation processes is pursued. Here the charitable associations play an important role as the agents of an organised civil society. They stand for a social, humane Europe that is close to its citizens. They embody the principle of subsidiarity, under which the lower level, the one that is closer to the citizens, must be generally given precedence when it comes to the execution of tasks.

Evolved from Christian social teaching, this principle has found its way into the Maastricht Treaty as a mainstay of Community law and has thus become sort of a benchmark of social policies in Europe.

It is not a new insight that Europe is growing closer and closer together, not only in economic terms but also in social terms. Witnessing this process, we just cannot overlook that market economy thinking takes on an ever greater importance also in the social field. As a major part of the social services are financed from ancillary wage costs or taxes, the financing and shaping of national social systems are under considerable pressure. This stands in contrast to the fact that the social security system - an important element of which in Germany are welfare services - is an integral part of overall social peace. And an important locational factor into the bargain.

Without functioning social security systems, Europe's eligibility as an investment and industrial location, in other words, its competitiveness, would be very soon endangered. What would Europe's quality as an industrial base be like, after all, if we no longer had smoothly operating social infrastructures to guarantee the continuity of production processes? As a matter of fact, it is in our own interest to continue to uphold the social state principle in Europe. The walls of the social state must remain intact, but its inner furnishing must be renovated as framework conditions change.

What does that mean in connection with charitable associations?

Well, we must realize that the charitable associations are exposed to an ever keener competition - not only on the national level, but to an ever larger extent also in the European context. As all providers basically receive equal remunerations and the demand side has the right to freely choose the provider of services, this competition takes place not only vis-à-vis commercial providers, but also on an internal basis.

For quite some time now, the voluntary welfare organisations in Germany have been discussing and practising ways of responding to the tightness of funds as providers of social services. The charitable associations in Germany fear that their traditional role might be eroded as Europeanisation advances. I understand this concern. We all know that the structures and framework conditions governing the charitable associations in Europe are equally diverse as the traditional social systems of the Member States on whose territories these organisations operate.

We want convergence in Europe, but at the same time we want to safeguard the diversity that has evolved over time among the Member States. It is just plain wrong - as undifferentiated assertions occasionally have it - to equate Europeanisation with levelling. In Europe, we can and indeed want to learn from each other, and Europe is also an energy that can break up encrusted structures in the Member States. At the same time, however, we know that it is essential to find an equilibrium in Europe between furthering common ground and common standards and safeguarding diversity and autonomy when it comes to the forms of organisation and activity of the social entities of the third sector.

The Europe of associations must also be diverse. This is precisely why the charitable associations should absolutely not discard the peculiarities that have made them strong. Competition among the

social services may not be based on mere cost. Instead, the quality of the social services provided must be centre stage.

And this is where the charitable associations excel. The important thing for the charitable associations now is to hold on to the tried and tested peculiarities that have made them successful and have established their positive image. The positive image of these associations is ultimately founded on the values they represent. Reflected in their attitudes towards their staff, the beneficiaries of social services and the general public alike, these values are the mainstay of the broad-based social acceptance which the associations enjoy.

This is why these values constitute a competitive advantage vis-à-vis many private providers of social services; an advantage that must be retained. The mere pursuit of profit while relinquishing their traditional value system would make it very difficult for the charitable associations to continue to tap and rely on voluntary private assistance in the form of donations and volunteering. Moreover, the Independent Welfare Services would lose their legitimacy as an advocate of social policy interests. The right approach to take is therefore for the Independent Welfare Services to hold on to the self-perception that has evolved over a long period of time, and to do so not only for the sake of their ideals, but also for economic reasons.

Ladies and gentlemen, at this point, I would like to take a somewhat closer look at the issue of "volunteering", first because the recognition of the Independent Welfare Services is largely also determined by the highly diverse activities of their volunteers, second because of the important role which voluntary commitment has to play in the development of a European civil society.

In our complex modern society, volunteering and voluntary social services can be likened to social cement. People who are thus committed act in line with John F. Kennedy's motto: "*Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country*". Volunteering is solidarity in practice.

We have just received the latest figures of a representative study conducted in Germany. It reveals that the number of people who do voluntary work in clubs, initiatives, projects or self-help groups is far greater than we have thought so far. They actually account for 34% of the population. I take this as an exceedingly positive signal. It suggests that we have the chance to bring about a reactivation, indeed a renaissance of solidarity, social values and community activity in our society.

Opening Remarks

It is encouraging to see that we are really on the way to a civil society. Every volunteer is committed out of conviction, in his or her very special and caring manner, motivated by other reasons than the professionals. Who would be more aware of this than the six head organisations of the Independent Welfare Services in Germany, in whose ranks approx. 2.5 million people are voluntarily committed.

Here synergies take place between professionals and volunteers for the benefit of the people cared for. Yet there is one thing I would like to state quite clearly: the occasionally voiced idea that "civil society commitment" or "citizens' work", constituting as it does the provision of voluntary unpaid services, might make large parts of the national social security system redundant, is one which I consider as utterly misguided.

Volunteering is no substitute for professional services; indeed it can never be more than complementary. The truth is that in the future, our societies will need - not least as a result of demographic change - more professionals in the social field. Volunteering can be a very useful complement in personal social services. But we should also realize the limits to volunteering in the social field: in Germany today, there are already two volunteers for every three paid jobs in the public social security system.

Yet, volunteering may not be just a stop-gap for public social services, either. Voluntary commitment is rooted in philanthropy and makes its very own contribution to the social culture of our community.

Ladies and Gentlemen, in spite of the above, charitable associations have also had to realize that the structure of volunteering is changing. If we want to see more people becoming committed to society in this way, we must look into why they make a commitment and take account of the reasons. Nowadays people are rightly demanding: volunteering must be fun!

Activities must be attractive, have a meaning, and make a difference. Volunteering must be rewarding - not necessarily in monetary terms, but in terms of recognition and acknowledgement and must afford opportunities of further training and exchange of know how and experiences with others. Therefore I consider it exceedingly important that the volunteers be offered novel forms of co-operation - without membership, but with increased flexibility of hours and greater responsiveness to individual preferences.

The further networking of associations and organisations active in the social field is necessary in an effort to both incorporate their interests into the political process and to ensure the quality standard of their work.

I can only encourage the European parent organisations in the social field and their member organisations to seek the co-operation with the Economic and Social Committee. This applies, for example, to the project of a European Charter of Fundamental Rights. This European Charter of Fundamental Rights is intended to reflect a set of values shared by the citizens of Europe, but is not supposed to be a catalogue of rights and duties imposed "from on high". Social rights must be part and parcel of this Charter; therefore it is especially important that the charitable associations contribute to the shaping of this process as representatives of the organised civil society.

This equally applies to the draft programme for the combating of social exclusion envisaged by the Commission. I am convinced that this programme, too, will constitute an important instrument for promoting the role of the associations thanks to an intensified co-operation.

I can only urge the charitable associations to make good use of such opportunities to participate in the shaping and designing of their field of work as they arise. But they must be given such opportunities in the first place. A visible and self-confident European civil society needs citizens who are willing to take on social responsibility.

The charitable associations can significantly contribute to making this happen.

I hope that today's congress will send a signal in this spirit for the shaping of a European civil society.

Dr. Christine Bergmann

Bundesministerin für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend

Sehr geehrte Frau Rangoni-Machiavelli,

sehr geehrte Frau Sigmund,

sehr geehrte Frau Diamantopoulou,

meine Damen und Herren, verehrte Gäste der Konferenz,

ich freue mich sehr, Sie im Namen der deutschen Bundesregierung hier zu dieser Konferenz über die Wertigkeit und den Wandel von Wohlfahrtsver-

bänden und ihren Beitrag zum Aufbau einer europäischen Zivilgesellschaft begrüßen zu dürfen. Es ist ein Novum, dass der Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschuss der Europäischen Union gemeinsam mit einem Mitgliedsstaat eine solche Konferenz veranstaltet. Ich hoffe, dass es nicht bei diesem einen Mal bleiben wird und dass diese Form der Kooperation auch von anderen Mitgliedsstaaten gesucht wird.

Die heutige Konferenz gibt uns die Möglichkeit, einen europäischen Dialog über ein Thema zu führen, das für alle Mitgliedsstaaten von Bedeutung ist. Hierfür möchte ich Ihnen, Frau Rangoni-Machivelli und Herrn Venturini, und allen anderen, die daran mitgewirkt haben, ausdrücklich danken.

Ich hoffe, dass mit dieser Veranstaltung auch deutlich wird, dass der Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschuss in seiner beratenden Funktion ein wichtiges Organ der Europäischen Union ist, dem wir weit mehr Aufmerksamkeit schenken müssen als in der Vergangenheit - dies sage ich auch und gerade an uns Deutsche gerichtet.

Der Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschuss ist Vordenker und Wegbereiter organisierter Sozialstaatlichkeit in Europa. Er schlägt die Brücken zwischen Europa und seinen Bürgerinnen und Bürgern, indem er sich zum Sprachrohr und Anwalt des Sozialen macht.

In der Vergangenheit hat sich immer wieder gezeigt, dass der Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschuss für die Wohlfahrtsverbände ein Wegbereiter zu mehr Anerkennung und Wertschätzung durch die europäischen Institutionen war. Die Initiativstellungnahme zur Zusammenarbeit mit den Wohlfahrtsverbänden und viele weitere Dokumente belegen dies. Seine Botschaft an die Bürger Europas und die Europäischen Institutionen ist klar: nicht nur Wirtschaft und Finanzen zählen in Europa, die Gestaltung eines sozialen Europas ist mindestens genauso wichtig für die weitere Integration.

Sozialer Zusammenhalt, soziale Rechte und Dienste dürfen über den wirtschaftlichen Anpassungsprozessen nicht vergessen werden. Dabei spielen die Wohlfahrtsverbände als Akteure einer organisierten Zivilgesellschaft eine wichtige Rolle. Sie stehen für ein soziales, humanes und bürgernahes Europa. Sie verkörpern das Prinzip der Subsidiarität, wonach der unteren Ebene, die näher bei den Bürgerinnen und Bürgern ist, grundsätzlich bei der Erfüllung der Aufgaben der Vorrang einzuräumen ist.

Dieses von der christlichen Soziallehre entwickelte Prinzip hat in den Vertrag von Maastricht als ein

Grundsatz des Gemeinschaftsrechts Eingang gefunden und ist damit so etwas wie die Richtschnur des sozialpolitischen Handelns in Europa.

Es ist keine neue Erkenntnis, dass Europa nicht nur wirtschaftlich, sondern auch sozial immer enger zusammen wächst. Dabei ist nicht zu übersehen, dass marktwirtschaftliche Überlegungen auch im sozialen Bereich eine zunehmend stärkere Bedeutung erlangen. Da die sozialen Dienstleistungen zum grossen Teil über die Lohnnebenkosten oder aus Steuermitteln finanziert werden, wird ein erheblicher Druck auf die Finanzierung und Ausgestaltung nationaler Sozialsysteme ausgeübt. Dem gegenüber steht, dass das soziale Sicherungssystem - dessen wichtiger Bestandteil in Deutschland die Wohlfahrtspflege ist - ein wesentliches Element des gesamtgesellschaftlichen Friedens ist. Und ein wichtiger Standortfaktor.

Ohne die funktionierende sozialstaatliche Sicherung wäre die Qualität des Standorts Europa, seine Konkurrenzfähigkeit, sehr schnell gefährdet. Wie würde die Standortqualität denn aussehen, wenn wir keine funktionierende soziale Infrastruktur mehr hätten, die kontinuierliche Produktionsprozesse absichert? Nein, wir tun gut daran, das Sozialstaatsgebot in Europa auch weiterhin zu erfüllen. Die Mauern des Sozialstaats müssen Bestand haben, sein Innenausbau muss unter den sich verändernden Rahmenbedingungen renoviert werden,

Was bedeutet das in Bezug auf die Wohlfahrtsverbände?

Wir müssen feststellen, dass die Wohlfahrtsverbände einem zunehmenden Wettbewerb ausgesetzt sind - national, aber auch zunehmend im europäischen Kontext. Bei grundsätzlich gleichen Entgelten für alle Anbieter und Wahlfreiheit der Nachfrager findet dieser Wettbewerb nicht nur gegenüber freigewerblichen Anbietern, sondern auch untereinander statt.

Die Verbände der freien Wohlfahrtspflege in Deutschland diskutieren und praktizieren daher schon seit längerer Zeit, wie sie bei der Erbringung sozialer Dienste auf die Knappheit finanzieller Mittel reagieren sollen. Es gibt bei den Wohlfahrtsverbänden in Deutschland die Befürchtung, dass durch die fortschreitende Europäisierung ihre bisherige Rolle erodieren könnte. Ich habe Verständnis für die Sorge. Wir alle wissen: Die Strukturen und Rahmenbedingungen der Wohlfahrtsverbände in Europa sind so unterschiedlich wie die sozialstaatlichen Traditionen der Mitgliedsstaaten, auf deren Boden die Organisationen tätig sind.

Opening Remarks

Wir wollen in Europa Konvergenz, aber unter Wahrung der gewachsenen Vielfalt in den Mitgliedsstaaten. Es ist eben falsch, Europäisierung - wie dies gelegentlich geschieht - undifferenziert mit Nivellierung gleichzusetzen. Wir können und wollen in Europa voneinander lernen, Europa ist auch ein Motor, um verkrustete Strukturen in den Mitgliedsstaaten aufzubrechen. Aber wir wissen auch, dass es in Europa darauf ankommt, die Balance zu finden zwischen der Förderung der Gemeinsamkeiten und gemeinsamer Standards und der Bewahrung von Vielfalt und Eigenständigkeit bei den Organisations- und Handlungsformen der sozialen Organisationen des dritten Sektors.

Ein Europa der Verbände muss auch vielgestaltig sein. Dabei sollten die Wohlfahrtsverbände eben gerade nicht ihre Besonderheiten ablegen, die sie stark gemacht haben. In den sozialen Dienstleistungen darf es nicht allein einen Preiswettbewerb geben. Die Qualität der erbrachten sozialen Leistungen muss im Vordergrund stehen.

Hier haben die Wohlfahrtsverbände ihre Stärken. Es kommt für die Wohlfahrtsverbände darauf an, an den bewährten Eigenarten festzuhalten, die zu ihrem Erfolg geführt haben und die ihr positives Image begründet haben. Das positive Image der Wohlfahrtsverbände gründet sich letztlich auf ihre Wertvorstellungen. Diese Wertvorstellungen, die gegenüber den eigenen Mitarbeitern, den Nachfragern sozialer Dienste und gegenüber der Öffentlichkeit gepflegt werden, sind der Grundpfeiler der breiten gesellschaftlichen Akzeptanz der Verbände.

Sie stellen daher einen Wettbewerbsvorteil gegenüber vielen privaten Anbietern sozialer Dienstleistungen dar, den es zu bewahren gilt. Eine von den bisherigen Wertvorstellungen losgelöste reine Gewinnorientierung würden es den Wohlfahrtsverbänden sehr erschweren, weiterhin freiwillige private Hilfsleistungen in Form von Spenden und ehrenamtlicher Tätigkeit zu erschliessen. Und die freie Wohlfahrtspflege verlöre zudem ihre Legitimation als sozialpolitischer Interessenvertreter. Es ist deshalb richtig, an diesem über einen langen Zeitraum entwickelten Selbstverständnis der Freien Wohlfahrtspflege nicht nur aus ideellen, sondern auch aus ökonomischen Gründen festzuhalten.

Lassen Sie mich an dieser Stelle etwas ausführlicher auf das Thema "Ehrenamt" eingehen, zum einen weil das Ansehen der Freien Wohlfahrtspflege durch die vielgestaltigen Tätigkeiten ihrer ehrenamtlichen Helfer und Helferinnen wesentlich mitgeprägt wird, zum anderen auch wegen der

Bedeutung des ehrenamtlichen Engagements für die Entwicklung einer europäischen Zivilgesellschaft.

Ehrenamt und freiwillige Dienste sind in unseren komplexen modernen Gesellschaften so etwas wie sozialer Kitt. Die Menschen, die sich engagieren, handeln getreu dem Motto von John F. Kennedy: "Frage nicht danach, was der Staat für dich tut. Frage was Du für den Staat tust." Das freiwillige Engagement ist praktizierte Solidarität.

Wir haben gerade die neuesten Zahlen einer repräsentativen Studie für Deutschland auf den Tisch bekommen. Weit mehr Menschen üben ehrenamtliche Tätigkeiten in Vereinen, Initiativen, Projekten oder Selbsthilfegruppen aus, als wir bisher annahmen. Inzwischen sind es 34% der Bevölkerung. Ich halte dies für ein ausserordentlich positives Signal. Es spricht dafür, dass wir die Chance zu einer Reaktivierung, ja zu einer Renaissance solidarischer Werte und solidarischen Handelns in unserer Gesellschaft tatsächlich haben.

Es macht Mut, dass wir uns wirklich auf dem Weg hin zu einer Zivilgesellschaft befinden. Wer ehrenamtlich arbeitet, tut dies aus Überzeugung, in einer ganz persönlich fürsorglichen Weise, aus anderen Motiven als Hauptberufliche. Wer wüsste dies besser als die 6 Spitzenverbände der Freien Wohlfahrtspflege in Deutschland, in deren Reihe sich rd. 2,5 Millionen Menschen freiwillig und ehrenamtlich engagieren.

Hier ergeben sich zum Nutzen der betreuten Menschen Synergieeffekte zwischen Haupt- und Ehrenamtlichen. Aber eins möchte ich deutlich sagen: die gelegentlich geäußerte Vorstellung, "zivilgesellschaftliches Engagement" oder "Bürgerarbeit" könne durch freiwillige, ehrenamtliche Leistungen grosse Teile des staatlichen sozialen Sicherungssystems überflüssig machen, ist aus meiner Sicht völlig verfehlt.

Ehrenamt ist kein Ersatz für professionelle Dienstleistungen, sondern kann immer nur eine Ergänzung sein. Unsere Gesellschaften brauchen in Zukunft - nicht zuletzt aus Gründen des demographischen Wandels - mehr Hauptamtliche im sozialen Bereich. Ehrenamtliches Engagement kann im Bereich der personenbezogenen sozialen Dienstleistungen eine sehr sinnvolle Ergänzung sein. Aber wir sollten auch die Grenzen des ehrenamtlichen Engagements im sozialen Bereich sehen: schon heute kommen in Deutschland auf je drei bezahlte Arbeitsplätze im öffentlichen sozialen Sicherungssystem zwei ehrenamtlich Tätige.

Ehrenamtliche Arbeit darf eben kein Lückenbüßer für staatliche Sozialleistungen sein. Freiwilliges Engagement hat seine Wurzeln in der Mitmenschlichkeit und leistet einen eigenständigen Beitrag zur sozialen Kultur unseres Gemeinwesens.

Aber gerade auch die Wohlfahrtsverbände müssen erkennen - und sie haben es auch erkannt - , dass die Struktur des Ehrenamtes im Wandel begriffen ist. Wenn wir wollen, dass mehr Menschen sich für die Gesellschaft einsetzen, dann müssen wir ihre Motive für ein Engagement ernst nehmen und diesen Rechnung tragen: die Menschen fordern heute zu Recht: Ehrenamt muss Spaß machen.

Die Tätigkeit muss attraktiv sein, Bedeutung haben, etwas bewegen. Das Engagement muss sich lohnen - nicht unbedingt in Mark und Pfennig aber durch Anerkennung und die Möglichkeit zur Fortbildung und zum Erfahrungsaustausch mit anderen. Deshalb halte ich es für ganz wichtig, den freiwillig Tätigen neue Formen von Mitwirkung anzubieten - ohne Mitgliedschaft, zeitlich flexibler, individueller.

Eine weitere Vernetzung der Verbände und Organisationen, die im sozialen Bereich tätig sind, ist notwendig, um ihre Interessen in den politischen Prozess einzubringen und letztlich auch um die Qualität der Arbeit zu sichern.

Ich kann die europäischen Dachverbände im Sozialbereich und ihre Mitgliedsorganisationen nur ermuntern, die Zusammenarbeit mit dem Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschuss zu suchen. Das gilt z.B. für das Projekt einer Europäischen Charta der Grundrechte. Die Europäische Charta der Grundrechte soll eine gemeinsame Werteordnung der Bürgerinnen und Bürger Europas widerspiegeln und nicht ein quasi "von oben" aufgezwungener Katalog von Rechten und Pflichten sein. Soziale Rechte müssen Teil dieser Charta sein; deshalb ist es besonders wichtig, dass sich die Wohlfahrtsverbände als Vertreter der organisierten Zivilgesellschaft von Anfang an in dieses Verfahren einbringen.

Ähnliches gilt für den von der Kommission in Aussicht gestellten Programmvorschlag zur Bekämpfung der sozialen Ausgrenzung. Auch er wird - davon bin ich überzeugt - ein wichtiges Instrument sein, die zivilgesellschaftliche Rolle der Verbände durch eine verstärkte Zusammenarbeit zu fördern.

Ich kann die Wohlfahrtsverbände nur nachdrücklich auffordern, die Chancen zur Mitgestaltung, die sich bieten, zu nutzen. Man muss ihnen diese Chance aber auch geben. Eine sichtbare und

selbstbewusste europäische Zivilgesellschaft braucht Bürgerinnen und Bürger, die bereit sind, soziale Verantwortung wahrzunehmen.

Die Wohlfahrtsverbände können hierzu einen wichtigen Beitrag leisten.

Ich hoffe, dass von dem heutigen Kongress in diesem Sinne ein Signal zur Mitgestaltung einer europäischen Zivilgesellschaft ausgeht.

Mrs. Anna Diamantopoulou

***Member of the European Commission in charge of Employment and Social Affairs* (*)**

Madam President, Madam Minister, Members of the Parliament, ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for this invitation.

I would like to thank you, Madam Minister, for your analysis. I believe it is a very useful one and it is true that Germany is one of the countries we could use as a benchmarking for our policy concerning NGOs. By coincidence I was here yesterday for a meeting with the European Economic and Social Committee and began my speech by saying that in Helsinki we have decided for the future of Europe and it is a very big and very ambitious decision. We have decided about enlargement for 13 new potential Member States. And this is a decision for broadening Europe, but this is not enough: we have to deepen Europe and we cannot deepen Europe without the participation of the citizens. We cannot deepen Europe without a new kind of organisation, without civil society, without civil dialogue, without civil citizens. We all know that one of the major developments in Europe over the last thirty years is that citizens and institutions, i.e. government and parliamentary institutions, now communicate along new lines. I would like to give you just a few figures, in the early 90's there were about 6,000 trans-national organisations, today there are 26,000 such organisations and this implies a new definition of the role of NGOs and of such organisations throughout the world. They play a political role because they influence governments' decisions and parliaments. They also play both a social role since they provide services and organise campaigns while promoting many different issues, and an economic one because if we evaluate the services provided by all these NGOs we find out that they are many and sometimes exceed what the United Nations do for the third world. What we need now is to establish a more organised way of relationships. A more

* Check against delivery - Es gilt das gesprochene Wort

Opening Remarks

organised and institutional way of communication between States and NGOs and between the European Commission and NGOs. So what I would like to say today in brief is what the European Commission will do and what our intentions and our priorities are as far as NGOs are concerned. Let me point out three different initiatives.

The first one is a Communication; as you know there was consultation for a Communication which will try to establish rules for the relationships between the Commission and NGOs. This Communication, with the participation of the European Platform and some other organisations, is in its final stage. We have a first discussion on this next Wednesday at the Commission and we believe that it will be adopted in the spring of 2000. The aim of this Communication is to improve the relationship on policy discussions and bring greater coherence to the way the Community finances NGO activities in all sectors. We all know what kind of problems there are: co-financing, delays, monitoring of programmes but on the ground of the experience you and us have gained we will be able to establish new rules with a view to better communicate.

The second category of issues deals with our programmes. First of all, one month ago the Commission made a very big step and adopted the anti-discrimination package according to the Article 13 in the Treaty. The anti-discrimination package consists of a Communication, two Directives and an Action Programme. Our intention is to collaborate with NGOs and local authorities in order to support Member States in implementing these Directives and the role of NGOs in this anti-discrimination package will be a priority. NGOs will be major partners among others in this respect. Secondly I would like to mention our social inclusion programme which we intend to present in the spring of 2000. There has been a consultation between NGOs and some of them which are attending today's conference have already participated in this consultation and of course the role of the NGOs in the implementation of this inclusion programme will be very important.

The third programme is the EQUAL initiative. We have submitted it in both Parliament and Council and we believe that it will be adopted in the spring of 2000 and this initiative will begin to be implemented in Member States by the end of 2000. The EQUAL initiative is a very important one because we want to support action in employment level for all those groups that are being discriminated and this is a third field of cooperation with NGOs.

Last but not least, there are the Structural Funds - the Social Funds. As you know, in all Member States and according to the new regulation for social funding NGOs are one of the major partners in the implementation of the programmes relating to employment strategy and social policy. Finally, I would like to share with you some ideas about two important issues. First, we intend to create a new basis as far as the social economy is concerned. According to the reorganisation of the General Directorates of the Commission some of the social economy area will go to the Employment General Directorate, and I would very much appreciate your proposals and your contributions to that. I would like to make some pilot projects and to make a first approach combining social protection systems, benefits, State and Government actions with society's needs, taking into account the NGOs' role. The second institutional intervention is related to our intention to support the NGOs' request to be included in the new Treaty. It is not easy since, as you know, there is a decision that the IGC will deal with the leftovers of Amsterdam, but we shall do our best to include the civil society, to include the NGOs in the Treaty by the end of 2000.

Thank you very much and I hope that we shall have a very good cooperation for the next five years.

Mrs. Ieke van den Burg

Member of the European Parliament

I am here as a representative of the European Parliament but I am rather a new Member it as I was elected in June 1999. I am also very committed to this issue you are dealing with today and as a former member of the European Economic and Social Committee and even as a president of its Section for social affairs. I was a member of Group II, for the Trade Unions, since I came from the Trade Union movement in the Netherlands where there exists a very old tradition of cooperation with NGOs in dealing not only with the strict interests of workers but also the interests of the unemployed, pensioners and other groups in society. We would deal for instance with subjects like poverty and social inclusion with a view to cooperate and broaden our perspectives. After I left the Economic and Social Committee and before I came to the Parliament I worked for some time with the European Trade Union Confederation where I was in very close contact with the Platform of Social

NGOs which was established during the first social policy forum set up by the predecessor of Mrs Diamantopoulou, Mr Padraig Flynn, in 1996 which launched the process of civil dialogue. Last year we both acted particularly on the budget lines which were jeopardized at that time because there was no legal basis for European funding according to the Court of Justice and legal services. So we undertook actions together. We also relaunched the debate on fundamental civic and social rights during the second social policy forum in June 98. We invited Mrs de Silguy who had chaired in 96 the *Comité des sages*, which also pleaded very much for a broad bill of fundamental civic and social rights, for a broad discussion in civil society and for anchoring civil society in the European Union.

I am very happy that at the Summit of Cologne last June Joschka Fischer, the German Minister for Foreign Affairs, again took the initiative to launch a debate on the Charter of fundamental rights and in Tampere last October the Council decided to establish a forum, a body, which the Parliament prefers to call a "Convention". In this respect, today may be a milestone since this body starts its activities and will hopefully induce the process of setting up fundamental social and civic rights in the European Union. This afternoon will be the first meeting of this body and I will have the pleasure to be attending it as one of the substitutes in the delegation of 16 European parliamentarians and there are also for each Member State a representative and there are two national parliamentarians for each Member State of the European Union which form together this body. Today, the rules of procedure and the whole process will be established making this day a very important one in view of really anchoring the issue of fundamental rights in European Union legislation.

The European Parliament, and particularly the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, has also worked together with NGOs already for some time. In March 1998 there was a major hearing with NGOs in preparation of a report drafted by my colleague Mrs Fiorella Tiardotty. This document is a reference for the European Parliament in view of the cooperation with civil society and NGOs. This report also deals with the role of voluntary organisations and associations in Europe and in its conclusions the European Parliament called for a serious structured social dialogue to be set in motion between the European Institutions and the NGOs represented at European level. It also called

on NGOs to clearly identify their representatives for the discussions on the various issues in order to avoid overlapping or adversary exclusions.

The Communication the Commissioner mentioned may have been the trigger of this process as it should make a map of the NGOs to take part in the civil dialogue and become partners for discussions with the European institutions. The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs of the European Parliament is very much looking forward to dealing with this Communication. Meanwhile, we have established our own cooperation with NGOs with a view to meeting at least twice a year with the representatives of the Platform of Social NGOs, to involve them in the drafting up of our working programme and various debates and reports that are relevant for NGOs. This feedback and this input from civil society is important in the eyes of the European Parliament despite budgetary problems. The European Parliament is the budgetary authority and deals with the budget of the Commission and the Council budgets. This is an area where we cooperate with NGOs and try to establish a better basis for funding activities, not only on the basis of article 13 on discrimination and article 137 on social exclusion of the Treaty but also on a more permanent basis for funding organisations at European level which can form the backbone of cooperation with the European Institutions.

As the Commissioner said in Helsinki, the door has been left open for the IGC to deal with other items and the millenium declaration adopted in Helsinki also refers to civil society. It states that the Union needs the confidence and active involvement of its citizens and civic organisations. We must rejuvenate the idea of a Europe for all, an idea on which each new generation must put its own mark. So this might also be seen as an opening for a broader and ongoing discussion about establishing a firm legal basis for cooperation with NGOs. In the recent meeting we had in the Employment and Social Affairs Committee with the Platform of Social NGOs, we concluded to involve the Platform in the drawing up of our working programme which we will start in the beginning of the year 2000. We will have to actively monitor budget activities and establish support for this plea on a legal basis for NGOs. I think that the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs of the European Parliament may come back to this item when the Communication of the Commission is issued.

As the rapporteur of this Charter of fundamental civic and social rights in the Committee on

Opening Remarks

Employment and Social Affairs I would very much like to cooperate with the Platform of Social NGOs and with the ETUC - which started a campaign on this particular topic - with a view to involving civil society in the drafting of this Charter. It is important especially on the issue of social rights to induce wider support and scope and I think the NGOs and the Trade Union movement as well as other civil organisations will contract a partnership with us to really integrate social rights in this Charter and also to put pressure on making it binding and establishing a process in which the European Union is not only a Union serving economic purposes but also a social Union which deals with citizens' interests.

I hope to continue this cooperation on the Charter of fundamental rights also with you.

Klaus Halla, Ministerial Adviser

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Finland

Your Excellency, Madam Commissioner, Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First allow me to express the regrets of Ms Eva Biaudet, Finland's Minister of Health and Social Services, for not being able to attend this important conference. Other binding obligations pertaining to the Finnish Presidency of the European Union and to the current parliamentary consideration of the Finnish State budget for the year 2000 require her presence in Finland. Minister Biaudet does regard the theme of this conference, arranged under the auspices of the European Economic and Social Committee and in collaboration with the German Ministry of Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth Affairs and the Institut für Sozialarbeit und Sozialpädagogik, as one of prime importance in building up the European civil society. One of the priorities of the Finnish presidency has been to reinforce the social dimension of the European Union. Welfare organisations form an essential aspect of this work.

During the Finnish presidency we have sought to emphasise the role of voluntary and welfare organisations so as to give them visible status at two presidency conferences dealing with social and health issues. In addition, a number of other conferences outside the official program have been organised by NGOs during the Finnish presidency. The NGOs played a significant role both at the Presidency Conference on Independent Living and the Conference on Mental Health. They participated actively in preparations for these events. During

the Finnish presidency, an expert seminar of the European Anti-Poverty Network took place in early November. A meeting of European NGOs was held in Tampere at the start of this month⁽¹⁾. The feedback from these conferences has been particularly good and the presence of organisations has been widely appreciated. I believe that all these events have contributed to strengthening and carrying forward the European dialogue on social issues. The conclusions of the European Council last week in Helsinki emphasised the importance of strengthening the civil society. This is very much a topical challenge also for the enlargement of the European Union.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The challenges facing Europe - globalisation, ageing, environmental issues, unemployment, an adequate standard of health and social service provision, sustainable financing of social security and combating social exclusion - all require a broad approach. With respect to social protection, the EU Member States face similar changes, even though the social security schemes and benefit systems are developed and made more efficient primarily on the national basis. The debate on the Commission's communication on modernising social protection called for strengthened cooperation, where the aim is also to build up links to the EU employment strategy and the macroeconomic dialogue. Seen from the Nordic point of view, the role of welfare organisations is a particularly important one in the promotion of social cohesion and safety nets which ensure adequate social protection for the entire population.

The basis of a socially sustainable society comprises the issues referred to in the introduction to the 1997 statement of the Economic and Social Committee. Viewed from the Finnish - and also from a Nordic - perspective the key issue on social protection is that the social security system functions well. Social protection is arranged in different ways in the Member States of the European Union. This means that the European social model encompasses the idea of national diversity. The Finnish social security system underwent a tough test in the early 1990's when a severe economic recession led to mass unemployment and a risk of poverty. Despite this, the basic social protection system could continue to function. While there was certainly an increase in costs, it was still possible to ensure a reasonable minimum income for

⁽¹⁾ December 1999

individuals and families as well as access to services. The recession nevertheless amplified the importance of welfare organisations which played a vital role in alleviating the consequences of the economic slump.

What, then, is the role of welfare organisations and what is the outlook in the European context? The background is that in societies which are becoming ever more complex, these organisations have long traditions. In Finland, the number of such organisations has always been large and the scope of their work has been broad. Their role has primarily been to complement and buttress public services. They are also significant employers, the volume of their operations is growing and their contribution has been considered to be an important one in supporting the civil society. The problems of the 1990s, especially unemployment, have strengthened the position of organisations working to prevent social exclusion. In particular, the work of the Church and of the Salvation Army is to be noted in this respect.

Organisations in Finland have traditionally played a lesser role in the field of unemployment than has been customary in many other countries. The area of the so-called "social economy" has been less significant in Finland than, for example, in southern Europe or in the Nordic countries. Cooperatives nevertheless have long traditions in Finland. Above all, non-profit organisations play a key role in Finland in the provision of social services. In 1997 for instance, the provision of social services by welfare organisations amounted in money terms up to 7,4 billion Finnish marks (1,3 billion Euros).

In the Finnish national employment policy action plan following the EU employment guidelines it is reported that good results have been achieved in new job creation at local level, in cooperatives and in new industries (including information technology). One aspect of this has been an increase in operations by (new) cooperatives. An expansion of the third sector has also taken place. Projects supported by the European Social Fund have contributed to this trend. Welfare organisations working in service sectors also have growth potential in supplementing public services, even though the provision of social services in Finland is the responsibility of the public sector.

We have in Finland developed a national model to support the work of welfare organisations. Slot machines are operated by national monopoly, the Finnish Slot Machine Association. The funds collect-

ed through the Slot Machine Association are allocated as support to welfare organisations. The funds this year amount to 1,4 billion Finnish Marks (equivalent to 250 million Euros). Finland was authorised to retain this monopoly in the slot machine operations by the European Court of Justice in its decision issued to this effect in September this year. The Finnish Slot Machine Association is owned by voluntary organisations and it distributes its profits on an annual basis to organisations working in the social welfare and health sector according to agreed principles. This year more than 1000 voluntary organisations have received support.

The strength of welfare organisations lies in their ability to react more rapidly than the public authorities and the State, which by definition represent a more rigid and static system. Organisations can intervene in social problems more flexibly and can react to them immediately. One problem for the organisations lies maybe in the fact that they need a lot of publicity for their work in order to secure adequate funding for their operations. This may lead to short-term approaches. In Finland, organisations are no doubt most effective when providing specialised services. Close ties to the work of the public sector have proved to be an advantage. From the Finnish point of view it is also important to stress the gender equality dimension at this point. At its best, the work of organisations can promote equal participation by men and women in constructing civil society.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The European model of civil society has many challenging tasks ahead. The welfare organisations form a particularly powerful tool in promoting social inclusion and there is a good reason to strengthen their possibilities to act. Among themselves, the welfare organisations also need to coordinate their activities. This need arises both at the national and European levels. In this respect the conference is important as it enables us all to review the role and challenges of welfare organisations in a common European framework. Ensuring continuity with respect to financing would in particular contribute to planning the operations in a longer term. The importance of the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund should be stressed in this connection. It is also important, however, to emphasise the content and flexibility of operations, instead of putting too much weight on constructing institutionalised frameworks.

Keynote Speeches

I believe that the discussions which take place today will reinforce the ongoing dialogue on the social dimension and, through it, enable us to lay the foundation for a stronger European framework for the social inclusion of all citizens.

Prof. Dr. Adalbert Evers

University of Giessen (Germany), Director at the "Institut für Sozialforschung", Frankfurt/Main

In search for a new contract - the role of voluntary organisations in rebuilding social welfare in Europe

Good morning ladies and gentlemen. The following lecture will concentrate on three issues. First of all it shall give an overview of the European dimensions and potential meanings of the organisations for which we have so many names, reaching from "third sector" to "voluntary organisations"; in doing this, I shall secondly emphasise a special point of concern: the added value social services and activities may get if they are performed by third sector organisations instead of the state or the private sector. Based on these considerations I will briefly outline what I see as common challenges on the level of the EU.

I want to reflect on the fact, that presently, there are clear tendencies to question the added value of third sector organisations as agents in social welfare, leading observers to ask what is still special about them and their action. This is not only a kind of moral question directed exclusively towards the third sector, but it refers to general tendencies in our society. There is a prevailing tendency to think about third sector organisations solely in terms of one dimension – service provision - disregarding the democratic and integrative dimensions of their operations; there is a tendency towards managerial streamlining and, finally, there is a tendency to see these organisations just as another kind of competitor on a social market where outcomes are rated solely in terms of price and not in terms of different qualities. To the degree to which this one-dimensional perspective gets positively accepted, a special role for voluntary organisations and welfare associations ("Wohlfahrtsverbände") really becomes questionable. There are then proposals saying that we have to treat these organisations as just another type of service providers. I think that a credible alternative to this would require that not only the organisations concerned but as well the policymakers and other people who address them

make a considerable effort to renew the meaning of their "contributing to the the public good", to describe newly in concrete terms their public benefit and then to find appropriate forms of legal frameworks, programs and policies concerning their role in social welfare and their status when it comes to grant giving and contract making. So far as to the content of my speech in nutshell.

Voluntary organisations - their contributions to a European social model.

I would like to remind you of the historical role third sector organisations have played for the development of the European social model – and I would like to add that they not only played a role once in history, for this model taking shape, but that they also continue contributing to its staying in shape. This is not only a matter of historical movements, but as well of present forms of articulation of concerns in civil society. What we see today, and what makes any analysis somewhat difficult, is the presence of at least three historical "waves" by which the third sector as we know it today took shape.

The first wave was in a way a fundamental one, backed by organisations like the churches, the labour movement and, not only in Scandinavia, but as well in southern Europe, by peasant movements and others who associated in solidaristic ways and thereby prepared the very foundations of welfare organisations that later became to some degree state institutions. To give you an idea of what I mean: what is called in my country a Bismarckian social security is, at least in the area of health, founded on pillars which were built a long time ago; these were associations of mutuals coming together in order to pool their risks and to work together in a solidaristic way. Dating back to this first wave in the second half of the last century, one can find the long history of voluntary agencies, cooperatives, mutuals and welfare associations.

Then we have a second wave which, though influencing the traditional welfare organisations in the third sector, mainly took place outside of them. It was the wave you will have experienced in all your countries, beginning in the late sixties with the kind of social and cultural revolution that had to do with new challenges – be it ecological challenges, the women's movement, questions of urban renewal, etc. Thus it is not by accident that the birthdays of a broad number of voluntary organisations in our countries date back to that time.

But I think that, fortunately, history and civil society has not ended there, and during the last decade we have witnessed the upcoming of a new, one might say third wave of organisations which are more strongly concerned with problems of employment and issues of social exclusion.

The three waves of civic association-building altogether constitute the bigger pool of initiatives that we have come to label as the third sector. When looking at this third sector, we not only see that those initiatives directly represented by and growing up alongside the big voluntary and social economy organisations are one part of it, but also, that our topic has a three-fold dimension.

First, it has a clear *economic* dimension; because when we think about cooperatives and mutuals and what grew out of them and when we think about the history of social services, they represent an own economy which is different from the redistribution economy of the public administrations, and which is also different from the economy of market actors. So there is an economic dimension in our talk about the third sector.

Then, there is a clear *social* dimension. I do not have to explain it any further, because it is this one which is most openly expressed by the respective initiatives themselves.

Last but not least, there is an explicit *civic* and democratic dimension, a dimension where all these organisations are addressed – as an American colleague has once phrased it – as „schools of democracy“. Integrating what we usually separate into democratic policymaking on the one hand and economic action on the other hand, tying both aspects together around social concerns can be seen as something which is specific for third sector organisations.

The third sector as a part of different traditions of building welfare in Europe

My next point deals with what I will call different forms of embeddedness of the third sector and voluntary organisations. It relates to the different institutional frameworks and their social, cultural and political dimensions on the level of the nation state, which is the most important level for its shaping. When it comes to comparing third sectors in Europe as parts of different welfare states, some people use the term „regimes“ I prefer speaking of different families of nations within the European Union.

This morning, we have already learned more about the Nordic concept. Contrary to a lot of misconceptions, the Nordic countries have a very lively civil society, but civil society more in the sense of non-governmental organisations, that is, organisations which stand for the interests and points of public concern, for the political community at large or for special groups; these „NGOs“ are far less concerned with the preservation of services than with campaigning and lobbying. In order to handle plurality and differences, the Nordic countries have developed what could be called a kind of local and municipal service state in which diversity is guaranteed by the high degree of decentralisation of service provision, with a large public sector and with voluntary organisations acting mainly as a kind of advocacy organisations.

Then, secondly, we have what I would call the Anglo-Saxon model, so well established in England. Here voluntary organisations by tradition rather act as pioneering forces, as organisations which are filling holes left by the system of the English welfare state. This model mainly centres around organisations which did not come from the big social organisations like churches etc. but which came from a kind of bourgeois-centred type of civic concern in terms of what is called in French „bénévolat“ and in English „charity“. The better-off felt obliged to give support to the poor for many complex reasons. Therefore, here as well the role of these voluntary organisations in service provision was traditionally a specific one, rather taking place under the label of „filling holes and pioneering“ and less in what I would call running mainstream services. Obviously, this has changed to quite a degree within the last fifteen years when there have been attempts to contract in voluntary organisations on a larger basis and this has been a big challenge but also a big problem for them which we can hopefully debate later.

So finally, there is the model which my country, Germany, stands for – not alone, though, since it is shared to some degree by countries like Belgium, Austria, Italy and the Netherlands. Here, the course of history was characterised by the fact that already very early the organisations backed by churches, the trade unions etc. went into agreements with the organisations of the state on the local and the central level and became important partners in public services. In this role these organisations were and still are very strong in service provision, which is especially visible in Germany. As a result the provision of services has become in Germany – in

Keynote speeches

contrast to other European countries – „big business“, with the organisations contracting tightly with public authorities, planning together with them in settings which we sometimes call, with a critical undertone, “corporate decision making”.

So there are very different points of departure and historical developments when looking at the role of third sector organisations. I have deliberately left out the situation in France because will we learn more about that from my French colleague.

The added value that can be brought about by third sector organisations

The next point that I would like to make deals with naming more concretely the specific potential and what I have called here, for reasons of practicality, “added-value” of third sector organisations for building civil societies in Europe. “Civil societies” here refers to societies which are not only civil societies by nature but which constantly and conscientiously develop those virtues that make our society, to a certain degree, a civic society.

The first point I have noted down is simply that these organisations have become, especially within the last thirty years, important factors with respect to the task of promoting pluralism. This manifests itself in areas, where services have been formerly very standardised and uniform, like schools, health services etc. There are clear attempts to open these institutions up to the influence of the local environment and to give more room for diversity. Insofar as this now happens as well in public state- or municipal-based organisations in social welfare, they come closer to those manifold third sector organisations which have always been characterised by their high degree of local embeddedness and their enhanced ability to adapt to unique settings. I think that this is one important point: if we want to obtain in the future a consensus of all citizens on a shared standard we have first of all to acknowledge that notions of the common good and of social utility are diverse and that the respect of diversity will have to be part of shared overall notions of and standards in public services.

The second area in which we get a kind of added-value from these organisations is advocacy for “minor” in the sense of less estimated or discriminated groups and issues. This is reflected in the historically important role of the so-called ‘charities and benevolent organisations’; in present times, the huge problems we have in those areas where unemployment, social exclusion, urban decay etc.

show up altogether call for kinds of community-building which make heard the specific interests of those groups in the urban areas and regions which are otherwise often neglected. In this context I would like to point in particular at one new branch of development, the so-called social enterprises, defined by their attempt to build up businesses which are explicitly concerned with both, offering products of some social utility and at the same time taking on board people who would not otherwise find a place in the new labour markets.

The third point I would like to mention is “pioneering public welfare”. I have already tried to show that this is not only a historical issue relating to yesterday, but that it is equally a current issue. And I would like to give you two examples here: first of all, we would not have that degree of special services for immigrants in all our European countries without the influence of immediate action groups of the third sector. No market can fulfil this task and if we choose to wait for the „median voter“ and the central parliament we will probably be waiting for a long time. This can be as well demonstrated when looking to the history of organisations and services helping people infected with AIDS. The movement we had in the AIDS sector would have been inconceivable without the grounds having been prepared for a new conception of this problem by the respective non-government and third sector organisations.

In some areas where one wants to build up what could later become mainstream services, the only way to make such services popular and accepted, is to develop them in close touch with those who need them and who are ready to take part in the difficult process of transforming needs into articulated demands. This is something I have borrowed partly from the French debate on what they call “services de proximité”, something like services which are near to the culture of ordinary people and households. To give you an example of what I mean: not only in Germany, but as well in a number of other countries in Europe there are difficulties to establish services for the elderly as clearly accepted outside services, easily and naturally to be used. And it takes a lot of local work, of back and forth and arguing with people, of self-organisation and of interaction between the ones concerned who might need the service but do not dare to use it in order to transform silent needs into articulated demands and offers. I think that an outside organisation, whatever its basis may be, and the simple plugging-in of a public service will not safeguard that this service gets accepted; it has to

build its acceptance in a basic grassroots-oriented dialogue. The long history of establishing kindergartens will tell us something on the long and difficult process of pioneering a service and mainstreaming it as well as about the important role of associations in this context.

The next point can be resumed under the title “mobilising social capital”, and this is a kind of buzz word which in a way puts together a number of concerns and tasks. Social capital is the capital of a civil society in terms of trust, a sense of belonging, and its ability to associate. Voluntary associations create this

- by giving the possibility of membership, even if it is only passive membership
- by donors and sponsorship
- by fostering active participation in terms of volunteering
- and, something which is often overlooked, by their role as being at the foundations of new voluntary organisations taking shape.

This latter phenomenon has been called by research colleagues of mine the taking shape of multi-stake holder organisations. This label means that unlike in former years or during the last century, where one usually found only one organisation behind the voluntary organisation, like the church or the trade union, it can nowadays be observed that, when it comes for instance to community action and combating urban decay, a number of organisations within the civil society come together and form collective stakeholders. They may e.g. form the board of a new social enterprise for training and integration. Thus a society rich in such organisations can more easily bring to light new and additional ones.

The last point referring to the potential goods of third sector organisations is the explicit concern with social utility and the common good. When trying to visualise this surely quite complex notion to my students, I usually tell them that they should go out and compare what is provided by a traditional local library run by the municipality or a voluntary organisation, and a modern commercial store where one can lend videotapes. In doing this, one can really see the difference between an approach (the public library approach) which was classically linked with a certain ethos of *Volksbildung* – educating the people, giving knowledge to the people – and the business approach of the videotape store, dominated by questions of sales and profit.

I end this chapter by saying that, obviously, I have spoken here about single, strongly grassroots-oriented third sector organisations and that it is a different question to be debated to what degree in the respective countries, peak organisations, umbrella organisations and background organisations, such as nation-wide welfare associations, really nourish and enforce this specific potential. I do not want to go through this question, but it certainly can be debated to what degree organisations like the National Council of Volunteering in England fulfil this task and to what degree, the *Wohlfahrtsverbände*, the nation-wide voluntary organisations as clusters of organisations in Germany, do a good job here.

The third sector – between etatising and marketising

Next, I would like to deal with a process which in the terms of scientific thinking in these matters is called “Institutional Isomorphism”. This is a complicated word for a simple process, which happened over time in our countries: third sector organisations, when establishing connections with the state on the one hand and being increasingly forced to work in competition with market actors on the other hand, have become similar to one or the other side. In some countries they have become similar to the state, which is not surprising if, as the welfare associations demonstrate for the case of Germany, nearly 90% of the money comes from the state; being obliged and privileged to plan services with the state, it is hard for these organisations to stand back and take some distance. It is obvious that this privileged and tight partnership between the state and the agencies might have some benefit for the people who use the services in terms of the reliability of these services as quasi-public services. On the other hand, it can have enormous disadvantages when one becomes entangled into a kind of jungle of regulations which makes it hard to play that other pioneering role and maintain the added-value items I have spoken about before – the ability to work close to the needs of special groups and settings.

The other side of isomorphism may be much more interesting these days: the degree to which – by purpose or under the pressures of reality – third sector organizations will become similar to private market actors when they have to compete with them. Often– due to the regulative framework and/or by their inability to operate by bringing out their special strength – they become similar to their commercial competitors

Keynote speeches

This leads to the changing nature of public/private partnerships. Let me introduce my point of concern by saying that I witness a certain contrast between

- the high tone in which we discuss the benefits of the third sector as being a proponent of participation, integration and cohesion, as being so important for democratic values, and
- the rather ordinary, everyday behaviour of financially stressed local municipalities, having to deal with financial cutbacks and revising the way they act in partnership with third sector organisations.

First of all, there is the problem that, even if these organisations do a good job in risk and crisis areas, there is little money left for municipalities to support them there, so the extent of public support will in any case be restricted. And secondly, when it comes to general support, the idea is gaining ground – and this is a basic tendency in all European countries – that it may be better to move “from grants to contracts”, that is, from generalised subsidies to very specified subsidies. This makes it very difficult for the concerned organisation to keep a certain room for manoeuvre. And since it is a tendency of contracts to delimit sharply what the task is, the more I break down this contract into easy describable and quantifiable “products”, the more those special qualities of third sector based operations will be marginalized which are much more difficult to pin down in indicators and numbers.

The third sector and policies conducted by the European Union

With regard to the the role of voluntary organisations and the social economy it is a shared goal within the EU to have more contributions and more participation of the third sector. However, the fact that there is already a considerable difficulty in translating this notion of a third sector or system to all European languages shows the differences between the respective approaches in the member countries and their impact.

In any case, there is a choice to be made which is related to a very controversial question as well in the scientific area. Shall we concentrate on a third sector made up by voluntary organisations exclusively? Or shall we integrate into our future conception of the third sector what becomes better visible in the notion of a „social economy“, comprising, besides the voluntary organisations, as well other organisations like for instance mutuals, cooperatives, and social enterprises? All these

organisations do not belong to the third sector according to the non-profit distribution principle (which does not allow to hand over parts of the surplus to members or share holders), but nevertheless, even though such organisations make a surplus in order to survive and in order to reinvest, and even though there is no legally binding force how to use the surplus, one can argue that by their constituency (e.g. the board of different stake holder organisations) it is in a way safeguarded that they stay indebted to their social local cultural and political environment which means that they as well have to be understood as organisations with an economy that is different both from the economy of public enterprises and from the economy of large parts of the private sector, where one is free from all local „constraints“ and where the capital seems to be entirely free to flow wherever the best profit can be made. Such considerations about the transitional zones and limits between economies which are de facto or by purpose set under constraints (under local influence as e.g. local economies or governed by the cooperative principle of equal rights for co-decision-making for each member) lead us into a very broad field to be considered. There is as well a debate within the OECD on what has been called „a plural economy“ and the role of „social enterprises“ as a part of the social economy within the tension field made up by the state, markets and civil society. The fundamental questions are: Do we accept that there is a “reform – economy” outside state redistribution and outside the state economy which is to a certain degree special? What role should voluntary organisations play as one special form of such a different economy?

A further point of concern is related to the conditions which make public support for voluntary organisations legitimate or to be seen as an unfair tool on social markets. Let me just briefly outline the different potential perspectives. Wherever voluntary organisations offer rather standardised mainstream services on behalf of the public authorities, it is argued that all that the authorities owe them is to lay down the price for the service in a specific contract; it does not seem to be necessary in this case to give any additional support to the organisation itself – why should there be a difference between a contract made with the private provider and the voluntary provider? Then there is the second possible case that these organisations offer different services with a specific added-value, like social enterprises do, when they fulfill service tasks with employees taken from problem groups

who would otherwise find no job; here the question goes to what degree they can get an extra remuneration, given the fact that they have developed a new unusual service quality and/or taken additional social tasks on board.

Such cases do sum up to a more general question concerning the policy of public private partnerships in EU countries and the degree public authorities are ready to contract with partners whose services have a broad concept of social utility, which is inevitably more fuzzy and less easy to qualify and measure than the offers of commercial partners. For instance, when it comes to occupational social integration one has the choice either to contract with a private for-profit firm – like for instance the famous Dutch „Maatwerk“ which offers a delineated service against a per capita fee for each person successfully integrated – or to relate to a third sector - based initiative like e.g. a social enterprise for training, integration and job creation. The latter would mean, to step into building up a more complicated policy responsibility by a round table approach, with voluntary organisations and local social enterprises taking this task in a special community-rooted way. This is the one field where we can see that for the choice to be made the very definition of the task will make a difference: is the concern solely with occupational integration of those among the unemployed which are easiest to be placed or is it with activating fields and networks for both occupational and social integration? Obviously, one can debate the tasks of urban renewal in a similar way, and a contract will look different depending on whether one contracts out to a private developer or whether one contracts out in a round table approach together with local community organisations concerned. This altogether illustrates the huge responsibility of the public authorities in defining public tasks and goods; much depends of their idea of what is needed whether a private firm or a voluntary organisation will be seen as the better partner.

One should however not forget that often the real situations work the other way around: third sector providers offer the same services as their commercial competitors but they have an advantage before taxes because they have been once acknowledged the special status of operating for the “public benefit” (Gemeinnützigkeitsstatus). But do they still do so? And how to define this public benefit accurately? Defining criteria for getting access to the special status of “operating for the public benefit” and defining suitable processes by which this can be

defined and worked out in practice is a central part of the broader task of finding a place for the third sector in a society where other institutional choices - be it for public or private for profit provision - are constantly given.

Another important point concerning the agenda of EU - third sector relations refers to the role of voluntary organisations and the third sector in employment. There is a lot of talk about third sector organisations at EU level, but as far as I can see the only area where this has led to certain amount of funds flowing is the area of occupational integration and employment. Here, the question is whether the third sector should be the preferred partner for this task of integration or whether the private and public sector should have a similar responsibility to bear. When giving priority to the third sector in matters of occupational and social integration, the question is where this whole game might begin to turn against the third sector, with the latter being used as a kind of dumping ground for people rejected in other areas of economic and social activities and then confronting the third sector organisations with the double load of bringing excellent services and doing so with people other employers and entrepreneurs do not want to work with.

Finally, there is the challenge of conceiving which kind of participation of voluntary organisations and their umbrella organisations one wants to develop at EU level. Let me shortly point out that here I see a number of difficulties. The first one is the enormous plurality of ways in which the third sector is organized and represented in the respective countries; this has above all to be taken up and met jointly by the respective organisations of the countries themselves. As long as the national organisations do not agree among themselves about who are the respective partners in the respective countries they will have enormous difficulties in getting towards a convincing concept of representation of EU organisations. A further difficulty refers to the choice of the mode of participation at EU level; I doubt whether general and global participation in overall settings should be the main point of concern. It might be much more important to secure a fair participation in major action- and crisis-areas tackled by the European Union- current areas of action as, for instance, social integration and possible future areas of action as, among others, the struggle against urban decay. It will be interesting to see if one will stick to the corporate, traditional way of participating or whether one will come to a

Keynote speeches

new kind of networking and round table approach.

Let me conclude by a kind of summary. In some countries and European regions third sector organisations in social welfare have become very powerful in sheer economic terms, whereas in other countries they have to work under very difficult conditions; but both these cases might result in their social and democratic specificity vanishing behind their role as corporate trusts or as small and medium enterprises in service provision on social markets. The responsibility for either reducing or cultivating the plural – economic, social and civic - impact of third sector contributions to social welfare is located on both sides, the governments and the organisations themselves. Their interrelationships, the framework of law on “public benefit status”, the according regulations for grants and contracts can be developed either into a direction which makes third sector organisations simply more business-like or which makes it more concerned with sharpening their special profile with an eye on social utility and civic commitment. On both sides rhetoric and practices should be more in line with each other. Presently among both partners there is a tendency of speaking solemnly about a more civic society and the public good while at the same time making joint projects and contracts where tasks and procedures are hard to be differentiated from those between partners in ordinary business.

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Auf der Suche nach einem neuen Vertrag - die Rolle von Wohlfahrtsorganisationen im Umbau der Wohlfahrtspflege in Europa

Guten Morgen meine Damen und Herren,

Der folgende Vortrag wird sich auf drei Themen konzentrieren.

Zuerst wird er einen Überblick über die europäischen Dimensionen und potentielle Bedeutungen der Organisationen geben, für die wir so viele Namen haben: angefangen beim "Dritten Sektor" bis zu "Freiwilligenorganisationen". Dabei möchte ich zweitens auf einen besonders wichtigen Punkt hinweisen: den Mehrwert, den die Sozialen Dienste und deren Aktivitäten schaffen, wenn sie von Organisationen des Dritten Sektor anstelle von solchen des staatlichen oder privaten Sektors ausgeführt werden. Vor dem Hintergrund dieser Überle-

gungen möchte ich kurz ausführen, was ich als gemeinsame Herausforderungen auf EU-Ebene ansehe.

Zur Zeit gibt es klare Tendenzen, den Mehrwert von Organisationen des Dritten Sektors als Teil der Sozialen Wohlfahrt in Frage zu stellen, wobei Beobachter wissen wollen, was an ihnen und ihren Aktivitäten noch besonders ist. Dies ist nicht nur eine Art moralische Frage, die ausschliesslich an den Dritten Sektor gerichtet ist, sondern sie bezieht sich auf allgemeine Tendenzen in unserer Gesellschaft. Es gibt eine vorherrschende Richtung, die Organisationen des Dritten Sektors ausschliesslich mit dem Terminus "Bereitstellung von Service" zu belegen, ohne die demokratischen und integrativen Implikationen der Tätigkeiten zu beachten; und es gibt die Tendenz, sie zu verschlanken; weiterhin gibt es eine Tendenz, diese Organisationen als eine andere Art Konkurrenz auf dem sozialen Markt zu betrachten, wobei Resultate einzig in Kosten und nicht in Begriffen von unterschiedlicher Qualität gemessen werden. In dem Mass wie diese eindimensionale Sichtweise positiv belegt wird, wird die besondere Rolle der Freiwilligenorganisationen und der Wohlfahrtsverbände in Frage gestellt. Es gibt weiterhin Vorschläge, diese Organisationen gleichsam als eine andere Art von Service-Anbietern zu sehen. Ich glaube, dass eine denkbare Alternative hierzu wäre, dass nicht nur die betroffenen Organisationen, sondern auch die Politiker und andere Leute, die sie in diesen Bereichen ansprechen, beträchtliche Anstrengungen machen sollten, den Bedeutungsinhalt ihres "Beitrags zum öffentlichen Wohl" zu erneuern, um in konkreten Worten den öffentlichen Nutzen neu zu umreissen und um dann angemessene Formen von legalen Rahmen, Programmen und Politik hinsichtlich ihrer Rolle in der sozialen Wohlfahrt und ihres Status zu finden, wenn es um Zuschüsse und das Verhandeln von Verträgen geht. Soweit zum Inhalt meines Vortrages in Kürze.

Freiwilligen-Organisationen - ihr Beitrag zu einem europäischen sozialen Modell

Ich möchte an die historische Rolle, die Organisationen des Dritten Sektors in der Entwicklung des europäischen sozialen Modells spielten, hinweisen - und ich möchte hinzufügen, dass sie nicht nur in dessen Geschichte und für dessen Formgebung eine Rolle spielten, sondern weiterhin zu dessen Erhalt beitragen. Hierbei handelt es sich nicht nur um historische Bewegungen, sondern auch um aktuelle Artikulationsformen der Zivilgesellschaft. Was wir heute sehen und was eine Ana-

lyse etwas erschwert, ist die Wahrnehmung von wenigstens drei historischen "Wellen", die den Dritten Sektor, wie wir ihn heute kennen, formten.

Die erste Welle war gewissermassen fundamental dadurch, dass sie durch Organisationen wie die Kirchen, die Arbeiterbewegung, und das nicht nur in Skandinavien, sondern auch in Südeuropa, auf Bauernbewegungen und ähnliche Organisationen, die sich solidarisch assoziierten, gestützt wurden. So wurden die Voraussetzungen für die späteren zum Teil staatlichen Wohlfahrtsorganisationen geschaffen. Um Ihnen eine Idee von dem zu geben, was ich meine: was bei uns als Bismarck Sozialversicherung gilt, zumindest im Gesundheitswesen, wurde auf lange zuvor gebauten Säulen geschaffen; hierbei handelte es sich um Assoziationen von Gleichgesinnten, die zusammenkamen, um die Risiken zu bündeln und solidarisch zusammenzuarbeiten. Wenn man auf diese erste Welle in der zweiten Hälfte des letzten Jahrhunderts zurückgeht, findet man die lange Geschichte von freiwilligen, kooperativen, auf Gegenseitigkeit beruhenden und Wohlfahrts-Organisationen.

Dann finden wir eine zweite Welle, die, obwohl sie die traditionellen Wohlfahrtsorganisationen des Dritten Sektors beeinflusste, sich jedoch hauptsächlich ausserhalb dieses bewegte. Diese Welle werden Sie alle in ihren Ländern Anfang der letzten 60er Jahre erlebt haben als soziale und kulturelle Revolution, hervorgerufen durch neue Herausforderungen - seien es ökologische Herausforderungen, die Frauenbewegung, Fragen der Stadterneuerung etc. gewesen. Daher ist es kein Zufall, dass eine grosse Anzahl von Freiwilligenorganisationen auf diese Zeit zurückgehen.

Aber ich denke, dass glücklicherweise die Geschichte und die Zivilgesellschaft dort nicht endeten, denn während der letzten 10 Jahre können wir das Aufkommen einer, man möchte sagen, dritten Welle von Organisationen verzeichnen, die sich stärker mit den Problemen der Beschäftigung und Belangen des sozialen Ausschlusses befassen.

Die 3 Wellen der bürgerlichen Assoziationsgründungen machen zusammen den grösseren Pool von Initiativen aus, den wir als den Dritten Sektor bezeichnen. Wenn wir den Dritten Sektor betrachten, sehen wir nicht nur, dass die Initiativen, die direkt durch die grossen Freiwilligen und volkswirtschaftlichen Organisationen vertreten und gewachsen sind, ein Teil von diesen sind, sondern dass unser Thema eine dreifache Dimension hat.

Erstens hat es eine klare *ökonomische Dimension*; denn wenn wir an die Kooperativen und Zusammen-

schlüsse auf Gegenseitigkeit denken und was daraus hervorgegangen ist und wenn wir an die Geschichte der Sozialen Dienste denken, so repräsentieren sie eine eigene Ökonomie, die ganz verschieden ist von der Wiederverteilungs-Ökonomie der Öffentlichen Verwaltungen und die auch verschieden ist von der Ökonomie des Marktes. Wenn wir also über den Dritten Sektor sprechen, gibt es durchaus eine ökonomische Dimension.

Weiterhin gibt es eine klare *soziale* Dimension, die ich nicht weiter erläutern muss, weil sie das Thema ist, das am klarsten von den entsprechenden Initiativen ausgedrückt wird.

Zuletzt gibt es die explizit *staatsbürgerliche* und demokratische Dimension, eine Ebene die all diese Organisationen gemeinsam haben; ein amerikanischer Kollege bezeichnete sie neulich als: "Schulen der Demokratie". Sie integrieren, was wir normalerweise trennen in demokratisches politisches Handeln auf der einen und wirtschaftliches Handeln auf der anderen Seite; wenn jedoch beide Aspekte mit sozialen Belangen verbunden werden, ist das Resultat spezifisch für Organisationen des Dritten Sektors.

Der Dritte Sektor als ein Teil unterschiedlicher Traditionen beim Aufbau von Wohlfahrt in Europa

Der nächste Punkt befasst sich damit, was ich als unterschiedliche Anbindungsformen des Dritten Sektors und der Freiwilligenorganisationen bezeichne. Die nationalstaatlich verschiedenen institutionellen Rahmenbedingungen und ihre sozialen, kulturellen und politische Dimensionen, wirken sich am stärksten auf seine Struktur aus. Wenn man Dritte Sektoren in Europa als Teil der verschiedenen Wohlfahrtsstaaten vergleicht, werden diese manchmal als "Regime" bezeichnet, ich ziehe es vor, von verschiedenen Familien von Nationen innerhalb der Europäischen Union zu sprechen.

Heute morgen haben wir bereits über das Nordische Konzept gehört. Im Gegensatz zu vielen Missverständnissen haben die Nordischen Länder eine sehr lebhaft staatsbürgerliche Gesellschaft, jedoch staatsbürgerliche Gesellschaft mehr im Sinn von nicht-staatlichen Organisationen, d.h. Organisationen, die für die Interessen und öffentlichen Belange oder das politische Gemeinwesen im grossen oder für spezifische Gruppen stehen; diese "NGOs" (nichtstaatliche Organisationen) sind weit aus weniger beschäftigt mit der Bereitstellung von Diensten als damit, Kampagnen und Lobbyarbeit

zu leisten. Um Pluralität und Unterschieden gerecht zu werden, haben die Nordischen Länder das entwickelt, was man eine Art lokalen und gemeindebezogenen Service-Staat nennen könnte, in dem Diversität garantiert wird durch einen hohen Grad von Dezentralisierung des Service-Angebots mit einem grossen öffentlichen Sektor und mit Freiwilligenorganisationen, die hauptsächlich als Interessenorganisationen fungieren.

Zweitens haben wir, was ich das angelsächsische Modell nennen möchte und das in England so gut etabliert ist. Hier arbeiten Freiwilligenorganisationen aus Tradition als Pionierkräfte, als Organisationen, die Lücken des englischen Wohlfahrtsstaates füllen. Dieses Modell schliesst sich hauptsächlich um Organisationen, die nicht von den grossen sozialen Organisationen wie den Kirchen etc. kamen, sondern die sich von einem bürgerlich-zentrierten Typ des Bürgersinns im Sinn des französischen "bénévolat" und des englischen "charity" herleiten. Die Wohlhabenderen fühlten sich aus unterschiedlich komplexen Gründen bemüht, die Armen zu unterstützen. Daher ist die Rolle dieser Freiwilligenorganisationen für die Bereitstellung von Diensten traditionell auch hier eine besondere, die eher tätig wurden unter dem Motto "Lücken füllen und Pionierarbeit" und weniger als das fungierten, was ich als Mainstream-Dienste (Standard-Dienste) bezeichnen würde. Diese Situation hat sich jedoch in den letzten 15 Jahren sehr verändert, weil versucht wurde, mit den Freiwilligendiensten mehr Verträge abzuschliessen, was eine grosse Herausforderung, aber auch ein grosses Problem für sie war und worüber wir hoffentlich noch später sprechen werden.

Endlich das Modell, für das Deutschland steht, jedoch nicht allein, da es auch gewissermassen auf Belgien, Österreich, Italien und die Niederlande zutrifft. Hier wurde der Lauf der Geschichte dadurch charakterisiert, dass schon sehr früh die von der Kirche und den Gewerkschaften etc. gestützten Organisationen sich in Vereinbarungen mit staatlichen Organisationen auf örtlichen und zentralen Ebenen zusammenfanden und wichtige Partner der Öffentlichen Dienste wurden. In dieser Rolle sind und waren die Organisationen sehr stark in der Bereitstellung von Diensten, was besonders in Deutschland sichtbar ist. Als ein Resultat ist die Bereitstellung von Diensten in Deutschland - im Gegensatz zu anderen Ländern - "big business" geworden, indem die Organisationen eng vertraglich mit den öffentlichen Behörden zusammenarbeiten in Entwürfen, die wir manchmal mit einem kritischen Unterton als "Unternehmensstrategien" bezeichnen.

Also gibt es für die Rolle der Organisationen des Dritten Sektors sehr unterschiedliche Ausgangspunkte und historische Entwicklungen. Über die Situation in Frankreich habe ich mit Absicht nicht gesprochen, weil mein französischer Kollege uns darüber unterrichten wird.

Mehrwert, der durch Organisationen des Dritten Sektors erbracht werden kann

Als nächstes möchte ich das besondere Potential und, was ich hier aus praktischen Gründen den Mehrwert der Organisationen des Dritten Sektors genannt habe, für den Aufbau von staatsbürgerlichen Gesellschaften in Europa konkreter ausführen. "Staatsbürgerliche Gesellschaften" bezieht sich hier auf Gesellschaften, die nicht nur von Natur aus Zivilgesellschaften sind, sondern ständig und gewissenhaft solche Tugenden entwickeln, die unsere Gesellschaft bis zu einem gewissen Grad zu einer staatsbürgerlichen Gesellschaft machen.

Der erste Punkt, den ich dazu notiert habe, ist einfach der, dass diese Organisationen - besonders in den letzten 30 Jahren - wichtige Faktoren hinsichtlich der Förderung von Pluralismus wurden. Dies manifestiert sich in Bereichen, in denen die Dienste früher sehr standardisiert und einförmig waren wie Schulen, Gesundheitsdienste etc. Es gibt klare Tendenzen, diese Institutionen dem Einfluss von örtlichen Gegebenheiten zu öffnen und Diversifizierung mehr Raum zu geben. Insofern dies nun sowohl in öffentlich staatlichen oder Gemeindebasierten Organisationen bei der sozialen Wohlfahrt geschieht, nähern sie sich solchen vielschichtigen Organisationen des Dritten Sektors an, die sich schon immer durch ihren hohen Grad an lokaler Einbettung und ihre breite Fähigkeit, sich an ein einzigartiges Umfeld anzupassen, ausgezeichnet haben. Ich denke, dies ist ein wichtiger Punkt: wenn wir in Zukunft den Konsens aller Bürger zu gemeinsamen Standards erreichen wollen, müssen wir zu allererst anerkennen, dass Wahrnehmungen hinsichtlich des Gemeinwohls und des sozialen Nutzens unterschiedlich sind und dass das Respektieren von Verschiedenheiten Teil einer von allen geteilten Gesamtwahrnehmung von Standards der Öffentlichen Dienste sein muss.

Der zweite Bereich, in dem wir eine Art Mehrwert von diesen Organisationen erhalten, ist die Anwaltschaft für "Minoritäten" im Sinn von weniger geschätzten oder diskriminierten Gruppen und Anliegen. Dies spiegelt sich wieder in der historisch wichtigen Rolle von sogenannten "Wohltätigkeits- und Mildtätigkeits-Organisationen"; in heuti-

ger Zeit rufen die riesigen Probleme, die in den Bereichen herrschen, wo Arbeitslosigkeit, sozialer Ausschluss, städtischer Verfall etc. zusammentreffen nach Formen von gesellschaftlichen Zusammenschlüssen, die die spezifischen Interessen dieser Gruppen in den städtischen Bezirken und Regionen, die sonst oft vernachlässigt werden, zu Gehör bringen. In diesem Kontext möchte ich auf einen neuen Zweig der Entwicklung hinweisen, auf die sogenannten sozialen Unternehmen mit ihrem Versuch geschäftliche Aktivitäten aufzubauen, die explizit mit beidem befasst sind, nämlich Produkte von einigem sozialen Nutzen anzubieten und gleichzeitig Menschen einzustellen, die sonst keinen Platz auf dem neuen Arbeitsmarkt finden würden.

Der dritte Punkt, den ich nennen möchte, ist "der Öffentlichen Wohlfahrt Wege zu bahnen". Ich habe bereits versucht zu zeigen, dass dies nicht nur ein historischer Vorgang ist, der sich auf gestern bezieht, sondern als Thema ständige Bedeutung hat. Und ich möchte Ihnen hier zwei Beispiele nennen: wir könnten nicht das Ausmass von besonderen Diensten für Immigranten in all unseren europäischen Ländern ohne den Einfluss der unmittelbaren Aktionsgruppen des Dritten Sektors haben. Kein Markt könnte diese Aufgabe erfüllen, und wenn wir auf den "Durchschnittswähler" und das Parlament warten würden, würden wir wahrscheinlich eine lange Zeit warten. Dies zeigt sich ebenfalls beim Betrachten der Geschichte von Organisationen und Diensten, die mit AIDS infizierten Menschen helfen. Die Bewegung, die wir auf dem AIDS Sektor hatten, wäre undenkbar, wenn nicht die Grundsteine eines neuen Konzepts für diese Problematik von entsprechenden Nicht-Regierungsgruppen und Organisationen des Dritten Sektors gelegt worden wären.

In manchen Bereichen, in denen man solche Dienste, die später Mainstream-Dienste (Standard) werden sollen, aufbauen möchte, ist der einzige Weg, solche Dienste bekannt und akzeptabel zu machen, sie in enger Verbindung mit denen zu entwickeln, die sie benötigen sowie denen, die bereit sind, am schwierigen Prozess der Umsetzung des Bedarfs in artikulierte Nachfrage teilzunehmen. Dies ist etwas, was ich der französischen Debatte entnommen habe und was dort "services de proximité" genannt wird, Dienste, die nahe sind an der Kultur von Menschen und deren Haushalte. Um Ihnen ein Beispiel davon zu geben, was ich meine: Nicht nur in Deutschland sondern in einer ganzen Anzahl anderer Länder Europas gibt es Schwierig-

keiten, Dienste für die Älteren aufzubauen als klar akzeptierte von aussen kommende Dienste, die leicht und natürlich in Anspruch genommen werden. Und es kostet eine Menge Arbeit vor Ort, von Hin und Her und Diskussionen mit Leuten, von Selbstorganisation und von Interaktionen zwischen den Betroffenen, die den Dienst benötigen würden, sich jedoch nicht trauen ihn in Anspruch zu nehmen, denn sie müssten unausgesprochenen Bedarf in artikulierte Wünsche und Angebote umsetzen. Ich denke, dass da eine Organisation von aussen, gleichwie auf welcher Basis, und das einfache Einschalten eines Öffentlichen Dienstes die Akzeptanz dieses Dienstes nicht gewährleistet; die Akzeptanz muss auf einem Basisdialog aufgebaut werden. Die lange Geschichte der Kindergärten erzählt uns einiges über den langwierigen und schwierigen Prozess, einem Dienst den Weg zu bereiten und ihn einzuführen, wie auch über die wichtige Rolle von Angliederungen in diesem Kontext.

Der nächste Punkt kann unter dem Titel "soziales Kapital mobilisieren" zusammengefasst werden und dies ist eine Art Stichwort, das gewissermassen eine Summe von Belangen und Aufgaben zusammenfasst. Das soziale Kapital ist das Kapital einer Zivilgesellschaft in Termini von Vertrauen, dem Sinn der Zugehörigkeit und der Fähigkeit zu Zusammenschlüssen.

Freiwillige Vereine leisten dies, indem sie

- die Möglichkeit einer Mitgliedschaft, sei es nur eine passive, anbieten
- durch Spender- und Sponsorenschaft
- durch Förderung aktiver Teilnahme von Volontären
- und etwas, was oft übersehen wird, ist ihre Anwesenheit bei der Gründung von neu entstehenden Freiwilligenorganisationen

Dies letztgenannte Phänomen wurde von meinen Kollegen in der Forschung als das Entstehen von "multi-stake holder organisations" (Interessengruppen-Organisationen) bezeichnet. Diese Bezeichnung bedeutet, dass anders als im vergangenen Jahrhundert, wo sich nur eine Organisation hinter der Freiwilligenorganisation befand wie z.B. die Kirche oder Gewerkschaft, heute beobachtet werden kann, z.B. bei Aktivitäten der Gemeinwesen und bei der Bekämpfung von städtischem Verfall, dass eine Anzahl von Organisationen innerhalb der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft zusammenkommen und gemeinsame Interessenvertretungen bilden.

Keynote speeches

Sie bilden z.B. den Ausschuss eines neuen sozialen Unternehmens für Ausbildung und Integration. Auf diese Art kann eine Gesellschaft, die über viele solcher Organisationen verfügt, leicht neue und zusätzliche hervorbringen.

Der letzte Punkt in der Aufzählung der sozialen Werte in den Organisationen des Dritten Sektors ist die explizite Ausrichtung am sozialen Nutzen und am Gemeinwohl. Wenn ich meinen Studenten diesen wirklich komplexen Gesichtspunkt vor Augen führen möchte, bitte ich sie sich umzusehen und zu vergleichen, was sie in einer traditionellen Öffentlichen Bücherei finden, die von der Gemeinde oder einer Freiwilligenorganisation eingerichtet ist und was in einer modernen kommerziell betriebenen Geschäft, wo man Videos ausleihen kann, zu finden ist. Hierbei kann man am besten den Unterschied zwischen dem Zugang erkennen (der Öffentliche-Bücherei-Zugang), der klassischerweise mit einem gewissen Ethos von Volksbildung verbunden war - Erziehung der Menschen, Wissen an die Menschen vermitteln - und dem geschäftsmässigen Zugang der Videothek, dominiert von Verkauf und Profit.

Ich schliesse dieses Kapitel damit, dass ich hier von einzelnen sehr an der Basis angesiedelten Organisationen des Dritten Sektor gesprochen habe und dass es eine andere Fragestellung wäre, über das Ausmass zu sprechen, in dem in den entsprechenden Ländern die Spitzenorganisationen, Schirmorganisationen und Hintergrundorganisationen wie nationale Wohlfahrtsorganisationen, dieses spezifische Potential wirklich nähren und verstärken. Ich möchte diese Frage nicht weiter behandeln, aber man kann sicher darüber debattieren, in welchem Mass Organisationen, wie das National Council of Volunteering in England, diese Aufgabe erfüllen und in welchem Mass die Wohlfahrtsverbände, die nationalen Freiwilligenorganisationen als Zusammenschluss von Organisationen, hier in Deutschland gute Arbeit leisten.

Der Dritte Sektor zwischen Etat-Verwaltung und Marketing

Als nächstes möchte ich einen Begriff behandeln, der im Terminus wissenschaftlichen Denkens in dieser Richtung als "institutioneller Isomorphismus" bezeichnet wird. Dies ist eine komplizierte Bezeichnung für einen einfachen Prozess, der mit der Zeit in unseren Ländern stattfand: wenn Organisationen des Dritten Sektors mit dem Staat Verbindung aufnahmen und vermehrt in Konkurrenz auf Marktbedinglichkeiten reagieren mussten,

wurden sie der einen oder anderen Seite ähnlich. In manchen Ländern wurden sie staatsähnlich, was nicht verwunderlich ist, wenn die Wohlfahrtsorganisationen wie in Deutschland fast 90% ihrer Gelder vom Staat beziehen; da diese Dienste gehalten und privilegiert sind, zusammen mit dem Staat zu planen, ist es für diese Organisationen schwierig, sich im Hintergrund und auf Distanz zu halten. Es ist offensichtlich, dass diese privilegierte und enge Partnerschaft zwischen Staat und den Organisationen im Sinn von Verlässlichkeit, als quasi-öffentliche Dienste, für die betroffenen Menschen von einigem Nutzen ist. Auf der anderen Seite kann es enorme Nachteile haben, wenn man in eine Art Regulierungsdschungel gerät und so die Rolle des Wegbereitens und der Mehrwert verloren gehen, d.h. die Fähigkeit, nahe an den Bedürfnissen besonderer Gruppen und Milieus zu arbeiten.

Die andere Seite des Isomorphismus ist zur Zeit wesentlich interessanter: das Ausmass in dem - absichtlich oder unter dem Druck der Realität - Organisationen des Dritten Sektors durch Konkurrenz privat agierenden Firmen ähnlich werden. Sie werden oft wegen regulierender Rahmenbedingungen und/oder ihrer Unfähigkeit, ihre besonderen Stärken hervorzuheben, ihren kommerziellen Konkurrenten ähnlich.

Dies führt zur Veränderung von öffentlichen/privaten Partnerschaften. Lassen Sie mich meinen Hauptpunkt hervorheben; ich beobachte einen gewissen Kontrast zwischen

- dem hohen Ton, den wir anheben, wenn wir die Vorteile von Organisationen des Dritten Sektors diskutieren als Verfechter von Teilhabe, Integration und Zusammenhalt, die so wichtig für die demokratischen Werte sind und
- das ziemlich übliche alltägliche Verhalten der finanziell geschwächten Gemeinden, die mit finanziellen Einbussen fertig werden müssen und in ihrer Partnerschaft mit Organisationen des Dritten Sektors entsprechend verfahren.

Zuallererst besteht das Problem, dass diesen Organisationen, selbst wenn sie gute Arbeit auf Risiko- und Krisengebieten leisten, wenig Geld von den Gemeinden zufließt, so dass der Umfang der öffentlichen Arbeit in jedem Fall beschnitten wird. Und zweitens, wenn es um allgemeine Unterstützung geht, ist die Idee Boden zu gewinnen- und dies ist eine Grundtendenz in allen europäischen Ländern - und dass es besser sein könnte "von Garantien hin zu Verträgen" zu kommen, d.h. von allgemeinen Subsidien zu sehr spezifizierten Sub-

sidien, was dann den betroffenen Organisationen erschwert, ihren Bewegungsspielraum zu bewahren. Und da eine Tendenz von Verträgen darin besteht, die Aufgaben scharf zu begrenzen und je mehr ich diesen Kontrakt in leicht zu beschreibende und quantifizierbare "Produkte" herunterbrüche, desto mehr werden die besonderen Qualitäten der Angebote des Dritten Sektors marginalisiert, da sie schwieriger an Indikatoren und Zahlen gemessen werden können.

Der Dritte Sektor und Strategien der Europäischen Union

Im Hinblick auf die Rolle der Freiwilligenorganisationen und die Sozialökonomie ist es ein gemeinsames Ziel innerhalb der EU, grössere Beiträge und stärkere Beteiligung des Dritten Sektors zu erreichen. Jedoch, die Tatsache, wie schwierig es ist, den Begriff eines Dritten Sektors oder dieses Systems in alle europäischen Sprachen zu übertragen, zeigt, dass bereits gewisse Unterschiede in der Gewichtung zwischen den entsprechenden Ansätzen in den Mitgliedstaaten bestehen.

Jedenfalls muss eine Wahl getroffen werden, die sich auf eine sehr kontroverse Frage ebenfalls auf dem wissenschaftlichen Gebiet bezieht. Sollte man sich auf einen Dritten Sektor konzentrieren, der ausschliesslich aus Freiwilligenorganisationen besteht? Oder sollten wir in unsere zukünftige Konzeption des Dritten Sektors integrieren, was besser zum Begriff einer "Sozialökonomie" passt und das umfasst neben den Freiwilligenorganisationen auch andere Organisationen wie die auf Gegenseitigkeit, Kooperativen und soziale Unternehmen? All diese Organisationen gehören nach dem non-profit Verteilungsprinzip (das keine Verteilung von Überschuss an Mitglieder oder Anteilseigner gestattet) nicht dem Dritten Sektor an, jedoch obwohl solche Organisationen aus Überlebensgründen Überschuss erzielen und reinvestieren und obwohl es keine gesetzliche Bestimmung über die Verwendung des Überschuss gibt, kann man nach ihrer Verfassung (d.h. die Körperschaft verschiedener Interessensorganisationen) argumentieren, dass ihre Verpflichtung ihrem sozialen lokalen kulturellen und politischen Umfeld gewährleistet bleibt, was bedeutet, dass sie auch zu begreifen sind als Organisationen mit einer Ökonomie, die anders ist als die der öffentlichen Unternehmen und der Ökonomie grosser Teile des privaten Sektors, wo man sich von allen lokalen "Auflagen" befreit hat und wo das Kapital gänzlich befreit dorthin zu fliessen scheint, wo der beste Gewinn zu erzielen ist. Solche Überlegungen zu den Über-

gangszonen und Grenzen zwischen Wirtschaftsformen, die de facto oder bewusst unter Auflagen gesetzt werden (unter lokalem Einfluss wie z.B. die örtliche Wirtschaftslage oder gesteuert durch das kooperative Prinzip von gleichen Rechten der Mitgliedsentscheidung für jedes Mitglied) führen zu vielen weiteren Betrachtungen. Innerhalb der OECD wird eine Debatte geführt über die "pluralistische Ökonomie" und die Rolle von "Sozialunternehmen" als ein Teil der Sozialökonomie innerhalb des vom Staat geschaffenen Spannungsfeldes, der Märkte und der Gesellschaft. Die fundamentalen Fragen sind: akzeptieren wir, dass es ausserhalb staatlicher Wiederverteilung und ausserhalb der staatlichen Ökonomie, eine "Reform-Ökonomie" gibt, die bis zu einem gewissen Grad anders ist? Welche Rolle sollten Freiwilligenorganisationen als Spezialform einer solchen anderen Ökonomie spielen?

Ein weiterer Punkt von Bedeutung ist die Frage hinsichtlich der Bedingungen, die öffentliche Unterstützung der Freiwilligenorganisationen legitimiert oder als ungerechtfertigtes Mittel auf dem sozialen Markt anzusehen ist. Lassen Sie mich kurz die unterschiedlichen möglichen Perspektiven ausführen. Wo immer Freiwilligenorganisationen ziemlich standardisierten Mainstream Service anstelle der öffentlichen Einrichtungen anbieten, wird argumentiert, dass alles was die Behörden ihnen schulden, wäre der vertraglich festgelegte Preis für die Leistung; es erscheint nicht notwendig, der Organisation selbst zusätzliche Hilfe zuteil werden zu lassen - warum sollte es Unterschiede zwischen dem privaten und dem auf Freiwilligen-Basis tätigen Anbieter geben? Dann besteht der andere mögliche Fall, dass diese Organisationen unterschiedliche Leistungen mit einem besonderen Mehrwert anbieten wie es soziale Dienste tun, wenn sie besondere Dienstleistungen erbringen mit Angestellten aus Problemgruppen, die sonst keine Arbeit finden würden; hier erhebt sich die Frage, welche Extravergütungen erhoben werden können, wenn sie eine neue ungewöhnliche Qualität ihrer Dienstleistungen und/oder zusätzliche soziale Aufgaben aufgenommen haben.

Solche Fälle führen zu einer weiteren generellen Frage hinsichtlich der Strategie von öffentlichen privaten Partnerschaften in EU-Ländern und in welchem Mass öffentliche Einrichtungen bereit sind, Verträge mit Partnern abzuschliessen, deren Dienstleistungen ein breites Konzept von sozialem Nutzen haben, das unausweichlich schwieriger und weniger einfach ist zu qualifizieren und messbar ist als Angebote der kommerziellen Partner.

Keynote speeches

Wenn es zum Beispiel um soziale Arbeitseingliederung geht, hat man entweder die Möglichkeit mit einer privaten Profit-Firma zu arbeiten - wie z.B. die berühmte holländische "Maatwerk", die als ausgewiesenen Service für jede erfolgreich integrierte Person eine Gebühr berechnet - oder mit einer auf dem Dritten Sektor angesiedelten Initiative wie z.B. sozialen Einrichtungen für Ausbildung, Integration oder Arbeitsbeschaffung. Die letztgenannte Möglichkeit würde bedeuten, dass man am runden Tisch eine kompliziertere Politik von Verantwortlichkeiten aufbauen müsste mit Freiwilligenorganisationen und lokalen sozialen Stellen, die diese Aufgabe in einer speziellen Gemeindebasierten Verantwortung übernehmen müssten. Dies ist der eine Bereich, wo wir sehen können, dass für die Auswahl die genaue Aufgabenbeschreibung den Ausschlag geben wird: liegen die Belange lediglich bei der Arbeitseingliederung von Beschäftigungslosen, die am einfachsten vermittelt werden können oder müssen Bereiche und Netzwerke für Arbeits- und Sozialintegration aktiviert werden? Offensichtlich können Fragen der Stadterneuerung ähnlich diskutiert werden und ein Vertrag wird anders aussehen, wenn man einen privaten Entwickler unter Vertrag nimmt oder am Runden Tisch zusammen mit den betroffenen lokalen Gemeindegruppen einen Verfahrensweg konzipiert. All dies illustriert die enorme Verantwortung, die Öffentliche Einrichtungen bei der Definition öffentlicher Aufgaben und Werte haben; viel hängt von ihrer Vorstellung davon ab, was erforderlich ist und ob eine Privatfirma oder eine Freiwilligenorganisation als der bessere Partner angesehen wird.

Man sollte jedoch nicht vergessen, dass es in wirklichen Situationen genau andersherum geht: Organisationen des Dritten Sektors bieten genau die gleichen Dienste wie die kommerziellen Konkurrenten an, haben jedoch steuerliche Vorteile, weil sie einen besonderen Status als gemeinnützige Unternehmen erhielten. Aber sind sie es noch? Und wie definiert sich ihre Gemeinnützigkeit genau? Kriterien zu definieren, um Zugang zum besonderen Status der Gemeinnützigkeit zu erhalten und brauchbare Schritte zu entwickeln, wie dies beschrieben und in die Praxis umgesetzt werden kann, ist ein zentraler Teil der grösseren Aufgabe einer Platzbestimmung des Dritten Sektors in einer Gesellschaft, in der andere institutionelle Wahlmöglichkeiten - seien es öffentliche oder private für den Gewinnerhalt - ständig zur Verfügung stehen.

Ein anderer wichtiger Punkt der EU-Agenda hinsichtlich der Beziehungen des Dritten Sektors bezieht sich auf die Rolle der Freiwilligenorganisationen und die Beschäftigungslage auf dem Dritten Sektor. Es wird viel auf EU-Ebene gesprochen über Organisationen des Dritten Sektors, aber der einzige mir bekannte Bereich, in dem dadurch in gewissem Mass Zuschüsse geflossen sind, ist der der Arbeitseingliederung und Beschäftigung. Hier ist die Frage, ob der Dritte Sektor der Vorzugspartner bei der Aufgabe der Integration sein sollte, oder ob der private oder öffentliche Sektor ähnliche Verantwortung tragen sollten. Wenn der Dritte Sektor Vorrang in Fragen der Beschäftigungs- und sozialen Integration erhält, wird sich das ganze Spiel irgendwann gegen den Dritten Sektor richten, wenn er nämlich als Art Dumpingboden für Leute benutzt werden wird, die auf anderen Gebieten der wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Aktivitäten abgelehnt wurden und der Dritte Sektor dann mit der doppelten Last konfrontiert wird, sehr guten Service erbringen zu müssen und dies mit Leuten, mit denen andere Arbeitgeber und Unternehmer nicht zusammenarbeiten wollen.

Schlussendlich ist es eine Herausforderung, zu begreifen welche Art der Teilnahme der Freiwilligenorganisationen und ihrer Schirmorganisationen man auf EU-Ebene entwickeln möchte. Lassen Sie mich hier kurz auf die Schwierigkeiten hinweisen, die ich sehe. Der erste Punkt ist die enorme Pluralität, in der der Dritte Sektor organisiert und in den entsprechenden Ländern repräsentiert ist; das muss vor allem von den entsprechenden Organisationen der Länder selbst wahrgenommen und in Betracht gezogen werden. Solange die nationalen Organisationen unter sich nicht darin übereinkommen, wer in den entsprechenden Ländern ihre Partner sind, werden enorme Schwierigkeiten bestehen, zu einem überzeugenden Konzept für die Vertretung auf der Ebene von EU-Organisationen zu kommen. Eine weitere Schwierigkeit ist die Art der Teilnahme auf EU-Ebene; ich bezweifle, dass der Themen-Schwerpunkt auf allgemeiner und globaler Teilnahme der Gesamtaufgaben liegt, sondern es könnte viel wichtiger sein, eine gerechte Beteiligung an den Haupt- und Krisenaktions-Projekten zu sichern, die von der EU in Angriff genommen werden, wie es die gegenwärtigen Aktionsgebiete etwa sind, nämlich soziale Integration und mögliche zukünftige Gebiete wie u.a. der Kampf gegen den urbanen Verfall. Es wird interessant sein zu beobachten, ob man den traditionellen Unternehmerweg der Teilhabe wählt oder eine neue Art des Netzwerkens und den Runden-Tisch-Zugang finden wird.

Lassen Sie mich abschliessend eine Art Zusammenfassung geben. In manchen Ländern und europäischen Regionen sind die Wohlfahrt-sorganisationen des Dritten Sektors in rein finanzieller Hinsicht sehr mächtig geworden, während sie in anderen Ländern unter sehr schwierigen Bedingungen arbeiten müssen; aber in beiden Fällen könnte dies ein Resultat daraus sein, dass ihre soziale und demokratische Besonderheit hinter ihrer Rolle als Unternehmen oder als kleine und mittlere Dienstleistungsunternehmen auf dem sozialen Markt verschwinden. Die Verantwortung, den pluralen Einfluss - ökonomisch, sozial und staatsbürgerlich - des Dritten Sektors auf die Sozialfürsorge entweder zu reduzieren oder zu kultivieren, ist sowohl auf der Seite der Regierung wie auch auf der Seite der Organisationen selbst. Ihre Beziehungen untereinander und der gesetzliche Rahmen für den "Status des Öffentlichen Wohls", sowie die entsprechenden Regeln für Zuschüsse und Verträge können entweder so entwickelt werden, dass die Organisationen des Dritten Sektors einfach geschäftsorientierter werden, oder dass sie ihr Profil schärfen in Richtung soziale Nützlichkeit und öffentliche Verpflichtungen. Auf beiden Seiten sollten Theorie und Praxis besser übereinstimmen. Zur Zeit gibt es bei beiden Partnern eine Tendenz, feierlich über eine zivilere Gesellschaft und das Allgemeinwohl zu sprechen, während gleichzeitig gemeinsame Projekte und Verträge abgeschlossen werden, bei denen Aufgaben und Ausführung sich kaum von denen gewöhnlicher Geschäftspartner unterscheiden.

Prof. Robert Lafore

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Ladies and Gentlemen, I would first of all like to say what an honour it is to speak to you here today in this prestigious forum and speak on this issue which is indeed very important.

Let me tell you how things stand in France. I think we can take up this approach that Prof. Evers has put forward for the solidarity sector and ask ourselves what our expectations are. Some of the problems involved in the third sector and third sector associations is that it is not at all homogenous, there are many different associations and the overall structure is very diverse and complex. Each association has its own history and development. In small villages there are tiny associations, like fishermen for example and then there are huge multi-national associations and there are also asso-

ciations uniting banks and industries. How are all these associations linked? Can they be linked? And can we attribute one single general overall turn to them? Now this is the question that hangs on my mind - and I think it is a question that we are here to answer today - some of the activities that are close to our hearts are under threat and it is hard for us to get our bearings and to know exactly what role organisations are to play and what place they have in society, that is our major problem. We may say with a degree of confidence that charity organisations have never had a clear-cut role and definition; did these activities have a specific nature and if so what are the stakes involved in today's world? How are we to broach the situation in today's world?

Now I would like to describe the French situation - which I am much more familiar with than situations in other countries - and provide you with some background information on the Third sector in France. The sector of social economy is being dealt with in a unique way in France but in many ways our approach is very similar to approaches throughout Western Europe. The concept came about in the 19th century and I think the reason for that is that the third sector social economy, although certain aspects go back to ancient concepts of charity and fraternity, is an answer to questions which arose in budding democracies. I think the problems stem from a gap between the citizen who has democratic freedom and family responsibilities and the State power. In France the 19th century showed how difficult it was to organise a society entirely based on free individuals where there was a void between individuals and the central government. Until the second half of the 19th century all kinds of intermediary organisations - unions and similar structures - were illegal. It was illegal to be member of a union or association and there were official penalties. Penalties were eventually lifted because there was a need to fill this gap and allow free citizens to come together and manage some of the problems they were coming up against. There was a need for them to mobilise and make society work and make themselves heard. They had to come together to meet some of their needs.

Now structures in France were similar to structures throughout Europe and they were largely invented at the end of the 19th century, using the term "grouping". It was based on contract - you entered into this group freely and it was a democratic organisation which was different from family and village-based organisations. One could enter freely

Keynote speeches

and then use the structure to solve problems for the common good. There were three dimensions involved: first of all in terms of democratic construction citizens were politically able to be represented to the government and to other citizens and so it was a political responsibility. Secondly, the groupings served as an alternative to problems involved in economic development. Social solidarity associations were created as an alternative to capitalism - cooperatives and mutuals for example allowed citizens to come together and solve the problems created by the work place. A third dimension contained provisions to allow citizens to help themselves, it was a kind of self-help and group-help. People mobilised to meet social needs, needs of group individuals and different portions of society. These groups had three main features, some of the groups were close to the economic system and served as economic development alternatives and in France these were mainly unions. Other groups were concentrated on social solidarity associations or mutuals and then there were the groups that served to mobilise people to achieve a certain aim - associations if you will.

Now in the social sector - at least in France and I presume that things are much the same in other countries - we saw this process coming apace. The group members took on collective responsibilities and interests, they wanted to meet social needs. They wanted to make sure that needs were met by people who were mobilising. They acted in the interests of representation, the individuals wanted representation vis-a-vis the government and they also developed the concept of service - they provided services, they developed institutions of different sorts. Now despite the diversity of the sector I think one can always identify these three aspects which may be present to different degrees. We have first a mobilisation of people from different walks of life who come together to achieve something that is very important, action does not happen, it is carried out. Action can be channelled and used but it has to start and it has to be pro-active. Second, there is the dimension of representation - a group makes itself heard vis-à-vis different forces and societies in the government and finally there is service - or the concept of service. Now, cooperatives and unions are close to the economy and mutual and associations are close to the needy while the ultimate aim is to allow everybody to have access to the means to act.

These three dimensions or aspects are always present in the third sector and I think it is the convergence of these three aspects that forms the basis of

the social sector and its strength and it is them that distinguish the third sector from other entities, such as the government which does not work with the same rules or else the market and companies which do not work according to the same logic and principles. So certainly the third sector is very diverse probably in France and in most countries but I think there is this common core and common heritage. This was a first point I wanted to make.

My second point deals today's problems - what questions do we need to ask ourselves? How do we defend this sector which is unique? Now, I am only making suggestions and raising questions - I do not necessarily have all the answers. So I am only making a few suggestions. Now, companies have the problem that in our society activities seem to be compartmentalised and I think some of the ideas raised by my colleague are along the lines of the question: is there something between the government and the market? Is there a place where we can carry out activities which are not just for profit? Can we serve the needs of individuals who make up a group? Is there something that governments can do? Will governments only serve to keep the order - to keep the peace? Is there a buffer between the government and the market? I think this is an essential question in France and no doubt everywhere else. This is a major issue for the third sector and it is also an issue for public service.

In France we have a very strong public administration. Many activities in the third sector go hand-in-hand with public-sector activities. They are actually covered by the public sector. Service provision on the part of the State is absolutely necessary in some areas. Representation and mobilisation may fade and public service might take over a given activity entirely. So how big is the gap between the government and the market? There is great pressure in all sectors to eliminate this sector or weaken it. Activities are expected to be profitable, efficient and market oriented and this occurs in two fields: European law has trouble addressing this issue, it is an issue of social security and the difference between public social security and insurance companies. Social security is becoming an insurance if you will. There exists a certain pressure on activities such as caring for the elderly which would be taken up by private companies thereby making the third sector loose ground. The market is taking over many third-sector activities and the consequence of that is a reduction of this sector and of the State itself - the State is only meant to

provide assistance for certain individuals who are lost cases in a way, who have fallen through the gaps in the market. Such activities are handed over and the market is unable to take care of all the problems - it is not solvent - and at the same time State resources are dwindling. Now I have nothing against charity but I think we need to make sure that it doesn't have to take on all the burdens and doesn't become too media-gearred at the expense of public social security. So is this pressure inevitable? Are we going to have a polarised society where the State is only responsible for keeping the peace and set down the rules of the game while all the social activities are handed over on a contractual basis to the market? If we are to avoid this scenario - and again it is only my humble suggestion, it is not a final project - I think we would have to go back to this idea that the third sector does have a special role to play and has a special nature which is that it mobilises its citizens, it attempts to address a need of everyone in society and it aims to respond to its own needs. I think this is a unique space between the government and the market, it is not entirely autonomous from the State because government interests and public interests often coincide but the government cannot take on all social activities. If it did then it would not represent all walks of society, it would not be able to address the very diverse needs in a country. I do think we need to reaffirm the unique nature of the third sector.

In addition we need to think about how to structure the third sector. Now, legal experts always go by the law and today in Europe we need to determine whether we can come up with legal structures which will no doubt converge across borders. We also have clearly to respect national traditions but we do need a degree of convergence in Europe. There is the struggle between private insurance and national social security, and all European countries are dealing with this issue and it takes us back to Article 89 of the Treaty of Rome - free competition. Social affairs sometimes hinge more on competition policy than social policy and unfortunately competition will often prevail over social guarantees. How can we stop this trend? I think we need to come up with a common legal structure and there are different ways to do this: one way is to come up with a homogenous legal structure based on the nature of the third sector and promote Europe-wide mutuals etc. I think all movements need to come together to define and defend their identity and this is very tricky because associations can be very different given their aims and size. So

perhaps will you find a core of common identity among associations based on these three dimensions which I put to you.

In France cooperatives have a special status as they are subject to trade law. The third sector encompasses economic activities and they are thereby subject to both economic rules and trade law. But there are some associations that cannot be subject to trade law, namely fishermen's organisations, clubs, free speakers' clubs which do not carry out economic activity, coming thus under a different legal statute. One can add public service organisations which are an extension of government services. Of course sometimes associations actually come up with proposed legislation that the government then turns into law. All these associations have a different legal status.

Perhaps one could think of uniting all these different associations in some way and having some kind of similar legal status for all. Of course this is very difficult. We have to distinguish between a functional approach - an association might get tax relief if it provides some kind of humanitarian service but if it engages in profitable activities then it would be subject to commercial law and would no longer get tax relief. These activities would have two different budgets. We would try to bring different legal statutes together and one association might have different statutes according to the different activities it carries out. This is the road we are starting to go down but we have to be careful and pragmatic while making sure there is a future in this and mobilisation is certainly a prerequisite. We have to think about the appropriate rules to put in place Europe-wide. I think that it would be a good road to go down and perhaps this conference can serve as a starting point.

I would like to conclude by saying that in building European democracy I do think the third sector has a very essential role to play. No one can say that Unions are useless, nobody can say that cooperatives have nothing to contribute, nobody can claim that charity organisations have no role to play in a third sector. We cannot just do away with all these associations. European society is structured in a way that these associations are crucial. They are central to our society which dates back to the mid-19th century and I think we need to do everything we can to preserve and enhance them and it really is a great pleasure to be able to discuss this here with you today.

Thank you.

Keynote speeches

Soscha Gräfin zu Eulenburg

*Vice-President of the German Red Cross,
Member of the European Economic and
Social Committee*

The contribution of charitable associations to safeguarding social rights and their role in drawing up a European Charter of Basic Rights

Ladies and gentlemen, in the Federal Republic of Germany the charitable social welfare associations are an important part of economic and social life. Their activity covers seven main areas: hospitals, children, families, the elderly, the disabled and specific social situations, and vocational continuous and specialised training courses.

All associations have a decentralised structure organised at the local, regional and national levels. Various services and establishments are affiliated with these structures in the form of so-called corporate members. Besides this some associations have also individual members.

The financial structure is not a simple one. Generally speaking, the overall income for 1996 has been estimated to be roughly EUR 45 billion and can be broken up as follows:

- from public authorities, about EUR 40 billion, of these EUR 30 billion are generated by charges for services. This is compensation for clearly defined services and is paid by taxes, for instance in the case of social welfare benefits or so socially influenced bodies, for instance in the case of hospitals. The remaining EUR 10 billion represent subsidies paid for other kinds of services.
- Private households pay about EUR 4.5 billion, of these EUR 3 billion come from people who pay for services out of their own means. Donations make up EUR 1.5 billion.
- The associations use own funds that amount to about half a billion euro.

We may add the monetary equivalent of the work done by volunteers and conscientious objectors doing civilian service, work that often receives limited remuneration. The value is estimated to be something like EUR 7.5 billion. Of these EUR 5 billion represent the input coming from voluntary helpers.

Income from public authorities has been multiplied by approx. four over the last two decades. This tendency has no parallel in any other source of income.

In 1998 the institutions of non-statutory welfare employed some 3.1 million people. Of these about 2 million are voluntary workers and about 100,000 are conscientious objectors doing the required civilian service. Part-time work represents about 40% and is thus about double the figure of other sectors.

About 90,000 non-statutory welfare establishments are the largest provider of social services in Germany. Over 60% of all institutions for the elderly and the disabled are run by its member associations. Most of the employees work in hospitals. About two-thirds of all service establishments are carried out by the two denominational organisations.

Non-statutory welfare has a long tradition in Germany. The new social policy legislation of the sixties confirmed the preferential place given to charitable associations. Only recently has this privileged position been modified to favour competition between charitable and commercial institutions. The debate deals also with the question whether it is possible to differentiate between service welfare financed by public funds and capable of positioning itself on the market and facing competition and poor welfare dependent on donations and subsidies.

All charitable associations are opposed to dividing non-statutory welfare in this way. They are of the opinion that social services differ in character from general services. They adhere to the principle of serving the general interest. With the entire scope of their activities, the associations see themselves as agents of the general interest. In their view the input of volunteers and honorary workers, as well as the forms of self-organisation put up by the target groups themselves, express the much-needed solidarity of our society as a whole. Without this social services would lose quality and would no longer be able to respond to the needs of people requiring assistance and we are fully convinced of this.

At present, welfare organisations in Germany are concerned that competition might be extended to areas where they would not be doing their work properly, that is to say wherever people need help, but are not clients or customers because they simply do not fulfil the necessary conditions. To be a customer one must have enough money.

In relation to the EU the German associations confirmed their viewpoint on role and task of charita-

ble associations in Germany in one important aspect. Associations which are responsible for social services and establishments have been acknowledged to be social protection operators in the Member States and within the Community. The Economic and Social Committee made reference to this fact in its own-initiative Opinion on 10 and 11 December 1997 and mentioned this several times today and requested that the Commission put into practice more of the Maastricht EU Declaration, namely to consult and to hear the charitable associations, to recognise their specific organisations defending social rights and providing social services and, thirdly, to promote their cooperation within Europe and within the Community. This must be reflected in the debate on the European constitution and on social rights. There is a specific reason for this. It is already clear that in the EU there will be no enforceable social rights, for instance the right to have accommodation, nor binding minimum standards, for instance concerning old age nursing care. It is therefore even more important that independent organisations like the charitable associations have a right to influence the constitutional debate in matters relating to social protection. The European Union must accept the charitable associations as partners which constantly intervene in favour of social rights. Within their services and establishments, one can really gauge the efficiency of existing social protection schemes.

The European social charter constitutes an important starting point. Article 14 gives to each citizen the right to enjoy social services, with a clear stipulation that special note is to be taken of independent organisations when offering such services. In the same line of thought the European Parliament most recently adopted the budget for the year 2000 with a request to have a multi-annual action programme for promoting cooperation with the charitable associations, a demand identical to the aforementioned opinion of the ESC. Unfortunately the Commission continuously refuses to even submit a corresponding draft. We have nobody we can talk to in the Commission as we requested in this opinion and the welfare organisation in Europe must make sure that one does not prevent the use of these associations and, when it comes to co-financing, all the normal financing funds for these voluntary organisations should be recognised. But we also have some good news to give you. Our joint work is being useful. Four countries have sent

representatives of their welfare organisations to the ESC.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have hoped that in Europe everywhere now one speaks about the civil society. We have a saying in German reminding us that everybody speaks about things that they do not have. Now, we have seen that the citizens of Europe have turned their back on European institutions. They consider this to be too bureaucratic. It is too far removed from the individual citizens and therefore a lot of interest and idealism which we so greatly need has got bogged down. Now if the Parliament, the Council, the Commission and the ESC and many other bodies, were to pick up this particular topic - this problem - with responsibility and true solidarity, then the European citizen will really show what he can do. European citizens are willing to participate and to do something to lead to a true society. Let the European citizen participate. Make use of his experience and support him and then I won't worry about Europe any more.

Gräfin Soscha zu Eulenburg

Vizepräsidentin des Deutschen Roten Kreuzes

Mitglied des Europäischen Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschusses

Der Beitrag der Verbände zur Sicherung sozialer Rechte und ihre Rolle bei der Erstellung einer europäischen Grundrechtscharta

Sehr geehrte Damen und Herren, in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland sind die Wohlfahrtsverbände ein wichtiger Faktor des wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Lebens. Ihre Arbeit erstreckt sich im wesentlichen auf sieben Tätigkeitsbereiche: Krankenhäuser, Kinderhilfe, Familienhilfe, Altenhilfe, Behindertenhilfe, Besondere soziale Situationen, Aus-, Fort- und Weiterbildung.

Alle Verbände sind dezentral organisiert, nämlich lokal, regional und nationale Verbandsgliederungen. In diesen Gliederungen sind die Dienste und Einrichtungen als sogenannte korporative Mitglieder zusammengeschlossen. Einige Wohlfahrtsverbände haben außerdem persönliche Mitglieder.

Die Struktur der Finanzierung ist nicht einfach. Die für 1996 geschätzten Gesamteinnahmen von knapp 45 Milliarden EURO lassen sich wie folgt unterscheiden:

Keynote speeches

- Aus öffentlichen Haushalten stammen ungefähr 40 Milliarden EURO. Davon entfallen 30 Milliarden auf Leistungsentgelte. Sie werden entweder aus Steuermitteln (z.B. bei Einrichtungen der Sozialhilfe) oder von Sozialversicherungen (z.B. bei Krankenhäusern) für genau bestimmte Leistungen gezahlt. Die restlichen 10 Milliarden sind Zuschüsse für andere Leistungen.
- Private Haushalte zahlen knapp 4,5 Milliarden. Davon entfallen 3 Milliarden auf die Personen, welche die Hilfen aus eigenen Mitteln bezahlen. 1,5 Milliarden sind Spenden.
- An eigenen Mitteln setzen die Verbände ungefähr 0,5 Milliarden ein.

Den Geldwert der nicht besonders vergüteten Tätigkeit von Ehrenamtlichen und Zivildienstleistenden kann man hinzurechnen. Dieser Geldwert wird auf ungefähr 7,5 Mrd. EURO veranschlagt. Davon entfallen 5 Milliarden auf Ehrenamtliche.

Die Einnahmen aus öffentlichen Haushalten haben sich in den letzten beiden Jahrzehnten ungefähr vervierfacht - eine Entwicklung, für die es bei anderen Einnahmequellen so gut wie keine Parallele gibt.

1998 waren in der Freien Wohlfahrtspflege reichlich 3,1 Millionen Personen tätig. Davon sind ungefähr 1,8 Millionen Ehrenamtliche und ungefähr 100.000 Zivildienstleistende. Die Teilzeitquote der Arbeitnehmer ist mit knapp 40 Prozent ungefähr doppelt so hoch wie in anderen Arbeitsbereichen.

Mit rund 90.000 Einrichtungen ist die freie Wohlfahrtspflege in Deutschland größter Anbieter sozialer Dienstleistungen. Mehr als 60 Prozent aller Einrichtungen der Altenhilfe und der Behindertenhilfe werden von ihr unterhalten. Die meisten Beschäftigten arbeiten im Krankenhausbereich. Ungefähr zwei Drittel aller Dienste und Einrichtungen werden von den beiden kirchlichen Wohlfahrtsverbänden getragen.

Freie Wohlfahrtspflege hat in Deutschland lange Tradition. Die in den 60er-Jahren neu konzipierten Sozialgesetze haben den Vorrang der Wohlfahrtsverbände gesetzlich ausdrücklich bestätigt. Erst in letzter Zeit wird dieser Vorrang zugunsten eines grösseren Wettbewerbes zwischen gemeinnützigen und kommerziellen Einrichtungen aufgelockert. Diskutiert wird außerdem, ob zwischen einer öffentlichen finanzierten Markt- und wettbewerbsfähigen "Dienstleistungs"- Wohlfahrt und einer auf Spenden und Zuschüsse angewiesenen "armen" Wohlfahrt unterschieden werden kann.

Eine grundsätzliche Aufspaltung der Freien Wohlfahrtspflege lehnen alle Wohlfahrtsverbände ab. Sie sind der Auffassung, dass soziale Dienstleistungen sich im Prinzip von von allgemeinen Dienstleistungen unterscheiden: sie sind auf das Prinzip der Gemeinnützigkeit ausgerichtet. (siehe dazu das Positionspapier der deutschen Wohlfahrtsverbände "Selbstverständnis und Aufgaben der Freien Wohlfahrtspflege in Deutschland" vom 23. April 1997). Sie verstehen sich über die gesamte Breite ihrer Tätigkeit als Agenturen des Gemeinwohls. Die Zusammenarbeit mit Ehrenamtlichen bzw. Freiwilligen ebenso wie die von Betroffenen organisierte Selbsthilfe verstehen sie als Ausdruck der notwendigen geamtgesellschaftlichen Solidarität. Ohne dies würden soziale Dienstleistungen an Qualität verlieren und den Bedürfnissen der auf Hilfe angewiesenen Menschen nicht gerecht werden.

In ihrer Stellungnahme zu dem Bericht einer Monopolkommission, in welcher der Freien Wohlfahrtspflege z.B. Kartell-Verhalten vorgeworfen wird, hat sich die deutsche Bundesregierung zu der besonderen Bedeutung von Wohlfahrtsverbänden bekannt: "Die.....Kooperationsbeziehungen zwischen den Sozialleistungsträgern und der Freien Wohlfahrtspflege sind ein vom Gesetzgeber gewünschtes konstitutives Element unseres Sozialstaates, in dem die Freie Wohlfahrtspflege Funktionen übernommen hat, die ansonsten der Staat ausfüllen müsste."

Ihre Auffassung über die Rolle und die Aufgabe von Wohlfahrtsverbänden in Deutschland sehen die deutschen Wohlfahrtsverbände von der Europäischen Union in einem wichtigen Punkt als bestätigt an: Wohlfahrtsverbände als Träger sozialer Dienste und Einrichtungen sind in den Mitgliedsstaaten und in der Gemeinschaft als Akteure des Sozialschutzes anerkannt. Dies hat der Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschuss (WSA) in einer Initiativstellungnahme des WSA vom 10./11. Dezember aufgegriffen und die Kommission aufgefordert, die Maastrichter EU-Erklärung weiter umzusetzen, nämlich

- die Wohlfahrtsverbände zu konsultieren und anzuhören,
- ihre besondere Bedeutung als Verteidiger sozialer Rechte und Anbieter sozialer Leistungen anzuerkennen
- und ihre Zusammenarbeit in Europa ebenso wie in der Gemeinschaft zu fördern.

In der Diskussion um eine europäische Verfassung und um soziale Grundrechte muss dies ebenfalls berücksichtigt werden. Das hat einen besonderen Grund. Schon jetzt steht fest, dass in der EU vorerst weder einklagbare soziale Rechte z.B. auf eine Wohnung noch verbindliche Mindeststandards z.B. für die Pflege im Alter zustande kommen werden. Umso wichtiger ist es, dass dann im Zuge der Verfassungsdebatte freien Organisationen wie den Wohlfahrtsverbänden ein Mitgestaltungsrecht am Sozialschutz eingeräumt wird. Die Europäische Gemeinschaft muss Wohlfahrtsverbände als Partner akzeptieren, die sich ständig zu Gunsten sozialer Rechte einmischen. In ihren Diensten und Einrichtungen lässt sich praktisch feststellen, ob der vorhandene Sozialschutz wirklich ausreicht.

Ein wichtiger Ausgangspunkt ist die Europäische Sozialcharta. Art. 14 gibt jedem Bürger das Recht auf Inanspruchnahme sozialer Dienste, und zwar mit der klaren Vorgabe, bei der Durchführung dieser Dienste besonders auf die Beteiligung freier Organisationen zu achten. Auf dieser Linie liegt es, dass das Europäische Parlament zuletzt im gerade verabschiedeten Haushaltsplan für das Jahr 2000 ein mehrjähriges Aktionsprogramm zur Zusammenarbeit mit den Wohlfahrtsverbänden gefordert hat, und zwar identisch mit derselben Forderung in der bereits erwähnten WSA-Stellungnahme.

Dennoch weigert sich die Kommission beharrlich, einen entsprechenden Entwurf vorzulegen. In ihren neuesten Vorschlägen setzt sie stattdessen die bisher für die Zusammenarbeit der Wohlfahrtsverbände bestimmten Mittel zur Finanzierung eines "Antidiskriminierungs-Programms" ein. Wie negativ die Kommission Verbände als Träger sozialer Einrichtungen bewertet, wird daran deutlich, wie gering sie die "vielen konkurrierenden Einrichtungen und Gruppen" einschätzt, die nach ihrer Meinung "nur ihre eigenen Interessen vertreten". Offensichtlich sollen also gerade die Verbände, die mit ihren Einrichtungen politische Macht ausüben können, möglichst von sozialpolitischer Einflussnahme auf die Europäische Union ferngehalten werden.

Diese Tagung wird hoffentlich von den anderen Institutionen der EU ebenso wie von den Mitgliedsstaaten zum Anlass genommen werden, die Kommission doch noch von ihrem bisherigen Kurs abzubringen und die Zusammenarbeit mit den Wohlfahrtsverbänden als Träger sozialer Einrichtungen und Dienste zu intensivieren.

Dr. Henke-Berndt

Vice-President Federal Workers' Welfare Organisation

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you very much for giving me an opportunity to take up a few thoughts concerning the course of the ongoing meeting as well as to the position and necessity of Welfare Organisations in Europe. I am especially glad that from important and competent parts impressive words have been said this morning in regard to the importance and future position of Welfare Organisations in Europe, which in my belief have demonstrated us being on a very good and future-oriented way.

An impression I had during the recent years seems to be corrected as I used to have a feeling that Welfare Organisations might lose connection regarding their European integration. Questions relating to economy and a common currency had been so overpowering that new projects had been initiated without considering their impact on the social sector. The actual discussion aiming at a social union is a right and important way to support with all available power.

In the following I would like to mention a personal experience I had as a Vice-President of the Workers' Welfare Organisation in Germany. In the past I have been concerned by the fact that all achievements built up by Welfare Organisation on a national level during the past decades suddenly seem to become meaningless for Europe. The idea of a European Market appeared to be so overwhelming that all striving for social integration and the development of a social dimension appeared to recede behind the idea of market orientation. To make this development clear I would like to quote an example from my home town of Cologne: There is quite a number of homeless squatting people around and in the quarter of the Cathedral of Cologne. This is a difficult situation, difficult for visitors to deal with but especially terrible for the homeless. All in all a situation calling for a solution. Discussing the problem with people merely interested in questions of economic development I have been told that it's not their problem to solve but whenever this question had been taken up with friends and members of Welfare Organisations a manifold of ideas would be raised for how to pacify this situation. My example is to show that we

Keynote speeches

need both, economic development securing further prosperity and peace in Europe as well as phantasy and creativity for a social design of the European Union providing protection and support for the socially weak and excluded. Who could safeguard this balance better than Welfare Organisations with their decade-long experience of social work?

I would like to comment on the speakers' contributions of today having encouraged hope and strength to continue working for a development acknowledging the importance of an economic and monetary union by not forgetting to strive for a social Europe. And of course this is a task we have to set ourselves as we have to answer the question as to how our future contribution for a social Europe should be like. There is an intense national co-operation of organisations in Germany very effective if not always free from difference of opinion but there is a broad agreement on basic social questions. This agreement and co-operation render us to be an important political factor performing social help for the people in need.

I am aware that there are similar organisations in other European countries being of equal socio-political importance, and my vision for a future European way is to carry over to a European level what has been achieved on a national base in order to make it a central political factor playing an important role in the development of the social union. I realize this being a long-lasting process but it should come to be our central and mutual future goal. I am fully aware of the fact that there will be opposition to this vision but remembering today's discussions I am optimistic that there are many other people sharing such a vision and being prepared to invest power and engagement for its realisation. For all of us it would be a good and important result meeting again here after 10 years realizing that an important signal for a social Europe had been sent out today.

I would like to come to a further future aspect. The social field has been restructured under the catch words of effectivity and efficiency not only in Germany. During this process something having been a driving motor for shaping the social sector during the past, namely an established and reliable partnership between the public and the NGO's seems to get lost. Social achievements cannot only be judged in terms of market and competition especially not in those specific sectors not underlying market rules. A depending trustful co-operative

partnership is important because Welfare Organisations are best informed of social needs, a knowledge acquired by their local presence and activities enabling them to realize and state social changes and subsequent needs.

Welfare Organisations cover all fields of social work with regard to what is important and necessary for the people contrary to commercial profit-oriented organisations. NGO's are those organisation having a good overview by their manifold services making them an important partner for the public sector. This morning there has been mentioned that Welfare Organisations are dependant on public grants- a statement with different aspects. Welfare Organisations are more: they live through engagement and ideas contributed by their voluntary members who work in places where social needs show and they work for the common good, and when discussing public grants this fact is an important one to be pointed out.

After today's contributions I feel confident that there will be an increasing understanding on the role and position of the Welfare Organisations leading to a future intensified co-operation at European level. And I am sure we will be able together to master the problems lying ahead of us.

Frau Dr. Henke-Berndt

stv. Bundesvorsitzende der Arbeiterwohlfahrt

Meine sehr verehrten Damen und Herren,
liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen,

vielen Dank für die Möglichkeit hier einige Gedanken zum bisherigen Verlauf der Tagung als auch zu den grundsätzlichen Fragen der Stellung und Notwendigkeit von Wohlfahrtsverbänden in Europa äußern zu können. Besonders freue ich mich, dass heute Morgen von wichtiger und kompetenter Seite eindrucksvolle Äußerungen zur Bedeutung und künftigen Stellung der Wohlfahrtsverbände in Europa gemacht wurden. Ich glaube, wir sind damit auf einem sehr guten und zukunftsfähigen Weg.

Das korrigiert auch den Eindruck, der mich in den letzten Jahren sehr bewegt hat. Ich hatte oft das Gefühl, dass die Wohlfahrtsorganisationen den Anschluss bei Fragen der europäischen Integration verpassen. Die Fragen der Wirtschafts- und Währungsunion waren übermächtig, so dass viele Entwicklungen eingeleitet wurden, ohne die soziale Dimension ausreichend zu berücksichtigen. Mit

der aktuellen Diskussion für eine soziale Union sind wir auf einem richtigen und wichtigen Weg, den wir mit aller Kraft unterstützen sollten.

Lassen Sie mich im Folgenden über persönliche Erfahrungen als stv. Bundesvorsitzende der Arbeiterwohlfahrt in Deutschland sprechen. Was mich in der Vergangenheit sehr bewegt hat, war die Tatsache, dass alles was in den vergangenen Jahrzehnten von den Wohlfahrtsverbänden auf nationaler Ebene aufgebaut wurde, für Europa plötzlich keine Bedeutung mehr haben sollte. Die Marktidee der Europäischen Union schien so übermächtig, dass alles Bemühen um soziale Integration, um die Entwicklung einer sozialen Dimension hinter die Marktorientierung zurückzutreten schien. Um diese Entwicklung zu verdeutlichen, möchte ich Ihnen ein Beispiel aus meiner Heimatstadt Köln erläutern: In Köln gibt es rund um den Kölner Dom eine Vielzahl von obdachlosen Menschen. Dies ist eine schwierige Situation, schwierig für die öffentliche Verwaltung, schwierig für den Tourismus aber furchtbar ist es vor allem für die obdachlosen Menschen. Insgesamt eine Situation, die dringend nach einer Lösung verlangt hat. Wenn ich dies mit Menschen besprochen habe, die sich nur für Fragen der wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung interessierten, wurde mir gesagt, dass dies nichts mit ihnen zu tun hat. Diskutierte ich die gleiche Frage mit den Freunden und Mitgliedern aus den Wohlfahrtsorganisationen, so wurde eine Vielzahl von Ideen entwickelt, wie diese schwierige Situation gelöst werden kann. Mit diesem Beispiel möchte ich deutlich machen, dass wir dringend beides brauchen, eine wirtschaftliche Entwicklung, die weiterhin Wohlstand und Frieden in Europa sichert, aber auch Fantasie und Kreativität für eine soziale Ausgestaltung der Europäischen Union, die Schutz und Unterstützung für die sozial Schwachen und Benachteiligten gibt. Wer könnte das nicht besser als die Wohlfahrtsorganisationen, die auf jahrzehntelange Erfahrung zurückgreifen können.

Ich komme zurück auf die Beiträge des heutigen Tages, die wir gehört haben und die uns Mut und Hoffnung geben an einer Entwicklung zu arbeiten, die die Bedeutung der Wirtschafts- und Währungsunion anerkennt, aber die Fragen eines sozialen Europas darüber nicht vergisst. Und selbstverständlich ist dies eine Frage, die wir zuallererst uns, den Verbänden stellen müssen. Wir müssen eine Antwort darauf geben, wie unser künftiger Beitrag für ein soziales Europa aussehen soll. Auf der nationalen Ebene in Deutschland gibt es eine intensive Zusammenarbeit der Verbände – nicht frei von Meinungsverschiedenheiten, aber sehr wirkungs-

voll, wir haben eine breite Übereinstimmung in den grundsätzlichen sozialen Fragen. Diese Übereinstimmung und Zusammenarbeit macht uns auf der nationalen Ebene zu einem wichtigen politischen Faktor, der sich einsetzt für die sozialen Bedürfnisse der Menschen. Ich weiß, dass es in vielen anderen europäischen Ländern ähnliche Zusammenschlüsse gibt, und die in ihren Ländern eine wichtige sozialpolitische Bedeutung haben. Damit komme ich zu meiner Vision für die künftige europäische Entwicklung: Das was wir national leisten, müssen wir auf die europäische Ebene übertragen, um zu einem zentralen politischen Faktor in Europa zu werden, der eine wichtige Rolle bei der Entwicklung der sozialen Union spielt. Mir ist klar, dass das nicht von heute auf morgen gehen kann, aber es sollte unter zentrales gemeinsames Ziel für die Zukunft sein. Mir ist auch klar, dass es zu meiner Vision viele Einwände und Widerstände gibt, aber wenn ich an die Diskussion des heutigen Tages denke, bin ich mir sicher, dass es eine Vielzahl von Menschen gibt, die eine solche Vision mit mir teilen und bereit sind, Kraft und Engagement in die Verwirklichung zu stecken. Es wäre für uns alle ein gutes und wichtiges Ergebnis, wenn wir uns in 10 Jahren hier wieder treffen könnten und feststellen, dass wir eine wichtige Weichenstellung für ein soziales Europa realisiert haben.

Ich möchte einen weiteren Aspekt ansprechen, der mir für die Zukunft sehr wichtig erscheint. Nicht nur in Deutschland wurde der soziale Bereich in weiten Teilen unter dem Stichwort Effektivität und Effizienz neu strukturiert. In dieser Entwicklung scheint mir etwas verloren zu gehen, was in der Vergangenheit ein wichtiger Motor für die Gestaltung des Sozialen war, und zwar eine vertrauensvolle bzw. partnerschaftliche Zusammenarbeit zwischen öffentlichem Sektor und den Nicht-Regierungsorganisationen. Man kann soziale Leistungen nicht nur vor dem Hintergrund von Markt und Wettbewerb betrachten, sondern muss die Spezifika dieses Bereiches berücksichtigen, vor allem die Bereiche, die sich nicht einer Marktlogik unterordnen lassen. Diese vertrauensvolle und partnerschaftliche Zusammenarbeit ist so wichtig, weil die Wohlfahrtsorganisationen durch ihre Vielzahl von Tätigkeitsfeldern vor Ort die sozialen Bedürfnisse der Menschen kennen und somit in erster Linie in der Lage sind, Aussagen zu gesellschaftlichen Veränderungen und sozialen Bedarfen zu machen. Im Gegensatz zu gewerblichen Organisationen decken die Wohlfahrtsverbände alle Felder sozialer Arbeit ab, und zwar unter der Maß-

Keynote speeches

gabe, was für die Menschen notwendig und wichtig ist, und nicht ob dort Gewinne zu erzielen sind. Nicht-Regierungsorganisationen sind die, die durch ihre vielfältige Arbeitsweise einen guten Gesamtüberblick haben, sind also ein wichtiger Partner für den öffentlichen Sektor. Wenn heute Morgen geäußert wurde, dass Wohlfahrtsverbände von öffentlichen Zuschüssen abhängig sind, so müssen wir diese Sichtweise differenzieren. Wohlfahrtsverbände sind mehr: Sie leben von der Mitwirkung und Gestaltung ihrer ehrenamtlichen Mitglieder, sie arbeiten dort wo soziale Bedarfe sichtbar werden und sie arbeiten für das Gemeinwohl. Dies herauszustellen ist mir wichtig, wenn man von öffentlichen Zuschüssen für Wohlfahrtsverbände spricht. Aber die Diskussion des heutigen Tages macht mich insgesamt zuversichtlich, dass wir uns immer besser über die besondere Rolle und Stellung der Wohlfahrtsverbände verständigen können und wir künftig zu einer intensiven Zusammenarbeit auch auf der europäischen Ebene kommen werden. Und ich bin sicher, dass wir die vor uns liegenden Probleme gemeinsam bewältigen können.

Mr Kimmo Saares

Church Resource Agency, Finland

The role of charitable associations in developing European civil rights

I would like to explain what the Church Resources Agency does and what it is. We are the central organisation of which members are all the Finnish Christian associations as well as all parishes in Finland. I also work in the Eurodiocese work as representative of Finland.

Finland is a sort of pilot project, a laboratory, because much of our experience could be fruitful for other countries too and everything we hear here today also gives some food for thought. One of the most important events with regards to the role of NGOs was the citizens Agenda 2000 NGO forum which was held in Tampere a fortnight ago. In the conclusions, we underlined in particular the role of NGOs in building a citizens' Europe. In this context, the European conference of territories through its chair David Skinmore, took up three points that Christian organisations could bring to the discussion. These three points were a sense of history, a sense of where we are coming from and finally, as it was said today, a vision of where we should be going, what we should be aiming at. These conferences gave us the opportunity to talk about the def-

initions and terms of the third sector but I think an overall concept will be missing just as long as we lack a common vision. It is very important to find a common vision. There is a strong demand for justice and all people have the same human rights irrespective of what they do or of their merit. However they have the same rights just because they are human beings. We used to refer to the one party State, the Nation-State or the Almighty - now we have the market place. These phenomena have to be demasked and we have to put them in the right context. I would just like to tell you briefly what happened in Finland during this seminar. I was working in the diocese association which was a very good place to see how quickly changes took place in Finnish society. What happened in Finland in the 1990s? What eventually changed the role of NGOs and what changed the established system? What happened to the country which was having the sixth place in the United Nations Human Development Index and which then suddenly, in the mid-1990's, had to distribute food to its people? It was very strange that one of the richest countries in Europe was in the situation where people in Europe was in the situation where people had to queue up for getting food for free from some charity or voluntary organisation.

The role of the NGOs evolved very quickly because they were something of an air cushion between the economic recession and the individuals and this strengthened the status of NGOs in society. It gave them a stakehold status in society. In early 1990 the unemployment figure was multiplied by five and went from 3.5% to almost 20%, not quite overnight but almost. The public debt in relation to the GNP rose from 15% to 60% and our banking system almost collapsed between 1991 and 1993. This led to a development where 1.2 million Finnish citizens knew economic problems. In the early 1990's there were 120,000 households which were overindebted while social benefits or income aid benefits doubled. 12% of the people in the 1990's received income aid and it must be kept in mind that we are talking of a country of five millions inhabitants only. The basis of a welfare state is a very interesting thing. Judeo-Christianism, classical Greek philosophy, Roman law and humanistic liberalism make up the background. One can speak of a Nordic model based on Lutheranism while making a clear distinction between State and Church, the former being responsible for the welfare of people. Statistically speaking, this worked fairly well during the terrible recession that we had, but what does the situation look like in real terms? The Nordic model has four main or key

ingredients, first of which are the universal social rights. Ranking second is the responsibility of the public sector for people's well-being and welfare. The third point is about achieving equality between regions in terms of taxes and equal income distribution. The fourth one is about achieving full employment. The change took place in a way that at least the last two factors are now declining badly. We publicly invoke an increase of income disparities to allow for a more efficient economy. However, believing in income disparity for this reason raises the question of who is going to pay the bill. As a matter of fact, income disparities are increasing at least in our country. In the European statistics the Finnish situation after the recession seemed fairly good but grassroots people, for example, will tell you that queues for bread still exist. Migration from country to city has emptied rural areas and we still have 130,000 long-term unemployed and this figure rises to some 200,000 if we count those who work in various employment projects.

What is then the new role of the NGOs? First of all, the number of NGOs is constantly growing in Finland. Many Finnish organisations always thought that the basic responsibility is incumbent upon the State but during the recession people were reserved about the Government's responsibility because it meant a step backwards. We are talking about voluntary organisations or charities and in Finland this has a very negative connotation. The so-called food-banks which distribute food free of charge to the poor clearly are a step backwards however necessary this may be. Yet at the same time many organisations have increased their market shares or their markets because municipalities have reduced their services. The question of who is providing these services has also been raised in Germany. The competitive aspect has now reached this sector. We need to commit ourselves to our common targets and objectives. We need to find the visions I was talking about but at the same time we pay lip service and it is very difficult to lead to concrete action and in order to further provoke the discussion here I would like to say that NGOs are now facing very high expectations. Not only the European Commission but also the Member States and the organisations themselves expect much from NGOs as if they were in a position to solve all problems. The question is what do we want to commit ourselves to? What do we want to do? What is the role of voluntary work and how should we implement work distribution within society? What sort of arrangements should we make between the official social security system and the

NGOs? What is the role of the third sector and of the welfare organisations when we talk about the employment objectives and strategies?

I would like to finish by quoting the Bratislava resolution of the churches conference: *"There must be part of a movement giving you a sense of purpose beyond economic growth. Our future reason of Europe is marked by openness to the rest of the world and by the disappearance of economic difference, racism and discrimination and by the creation of equality and opportunity of treatment of groups currently facing exclusion. It is a vision of such dynamism sustainable communities, neighbourliness, sharing, careful people and for the environment"*.

Thank you very much.

Mr Vitor Melicias

President of the Association of Portuguese Charities, Member of the European Economic and Social Committee

The role of charitable associations in defending and representing the victims of social exclusion

Ladies and Gentlemen, we must keep in mind how difficult it is to define the third sector in its diversity. Nor should we forget that there is also a fourth sector of economic solidarity. We have attempted over the years to defend the uniqueness of the three sectors, namely public, private and social. The Communication on associations and foundations of 1997, the promotion of declaration 38 of the Maastricht Treaty and declaration 23 annexed to the same Treaty all aim at granting the European civil dialogue a special place in the ongoing process of reforming the European Union institutions.

My contribution will deal with the third sector's special calling in representing and defending victims of social exclusion. I would like to expound in particular on the Portuguese situation with which I am very familiar. In age-old Portuguese tradition, society was organised around two pillars: the municipalities and local administration on the one hand and the associative institutions at local level on the other. Today the Constitution of the Republic recognises this state of affairs in particular in the fact that the principle of subsidiarity is officially enshrined in Article 9. The citizen is free to enjoy freedom of assembly without any prior approval from the authorities and free of any interference

Keynote speeches

from the authorities except for special cases provided for in the law.

There is another important law which is of a constitutional nature referring to these institutions which should serve as special mediators between family, the community and the State. Over the past 25 years since the democratic revolution in Portugal this social philosophy has allowed us to make great strides in promoting the autonomy of associations. Since the beginning of this century until 1974 we had been inspired by the French model and we have since gone back to an older model. We base associations on partnership and subsidiarity. Historically, there have always been certain solidarity organisations, namely the firemen's association. There are no state firemen. The municipalities have fire-stations which come under them. There is great participation in associations among the citizenry and the laws actually give civil society priority in creating the associations which aim to provide social protection.

Charities have been in operation for five centuries and they are mainly local associations and the State gives them a great deal of responsibility. Over the past 30 years we have seen nationalisation of hospitals because these charities used to control nearly all hospitals -regionally and locally. Today the government realises that nationalisation was a mistake and it is trying to devolve control of hospitals to these local and regional charities, in particular where the elderly are concerned.

The third sector solidarity associations are made up of two thirds of the Portuguese population. The firemen's association has 1,800,000 members. The associations are governed by a base law and as of December 1996 there has been an instrument in effect which is called the Pact of Cooperation for Solidarity. It has been signed by three kinds of associations: charities, mutuals and social solidarity groups which represent the government, the municipalities and small communities. The Pact was solemnly signed and certain legal experts say that it does have constitutional value and it serves as a paradigm for regular laws. This Pact is based on five main principles: firstly independence and autonomy of the institutions; the State recognises their right to choose and exercise their activities. There are certain guidelines. Second is the principle of recognition of the character and aims of these associations. The State does not define the aims. The associations themselves decide what they are going to do. The third principle is active subsidiarity which I mentioned - the State must

only intervene if civil society is unable to carry out the necessary activity or they don't take the initiative. If need be the State provides support but it does not take the initiative. Fourth is the principle of participation. The organisation should participate in social laws. Fifth is integrated planning to make this instrument work.

A national committee for monitoring and evaluation was set up. It keeps a balance between the State, the municipalities and civil society organisations and keeps them all on an equal footing in terms of powers of vote and there are also regional committees which support the national committee. No law or major administrative act can be taken without the express participation of this national committee. This privilege, this concept of having a special mediator allows us to adapt and practice representative and participatory democracy and this has to be done gradually. It is urgent that we make modern society function effectively. We have to implement effective measures which give citizens a voice. Some citizens are not able to make themselves heard by themselves so all people and all groups should have a right to exercise their rights and be heard. Often the governments do not want to take this initiative and sometimes the excluded citizens themselves are unable to make themselves heard and so it is up to these associations to step in and help.

In many European countries, including Portugal, civil society has mobilised to defend the destitute. This has always been the priority of both lay and religious associations in civil society. Portugal does have separation of Church and State although it is predominantly Catholic and we stress the concept of equal opportunity. Social action is organised at a municipal level and civil society is working to set up a national social network. I have a lot of experience in this and it is my conviction that these institutions are particularly well adapted to serve as a framework for social fabric which will promote the rights of excluded citizens. I think the main merits of this solution are as follows: there is institutional culture and values; there is fellowship and there is active participation in the community on the part of the leaders and on the part of the associations which define their own aims and activities. There is great potential for mobilisation, in particular mobilisation of the media.

If we are to succeed in all this it is essential that we uphold and extend, we respect the differences between the public and private sector. We have to

realise that the aims, the methods and the rules of procedure are very different between public and private sectors. Rigidity, inflexibility, excessive regulation, zero budget and penny pinching make it very hard for associations to work independently and effectively in civil society.

In Portugal we have a traditional figure called the director, administrator - someone who administers - and they act on behalf of those who cannot make themselves heard and who have been disenfranchised. In Scandinavia it is called ombudsman and in Portugal we have a director or administrator of charities. They speak on behalf of prisoners. They have special access to court proceedings and they have a privileged relationship with the public administrators. They act in a fully independent fashion, economically and politically. They have the trust of the community and they must be above all suspicion. And the trust society places in them is crucial in making them an effective instrument and a spokesperson for excluded citizens. So this person is almost an institution. And that is the kind of role we should give the NGOs of today. They need to have the moral and social capacity to be forthright in expressing the views of those who are unable to express themselves and it is this kind of philosophy that breathes life into the fight for the rights of the excluded that we have to stress and work on.

In particular in terms of legal representation of excluded citizens in Brazil there are institutions to this effect and in some case the poor have free legal counsel. There are individuals who have the legal right and duty to represent excluded citizens and they are sometimes called the "father of the streetchildren", "father of the outcasts". And I think that is what modern society needs. Equality before the law is a major precept of democracy and we have to uphold it but we have to have equality before the law for those who are in the system and those who have been cast out. We have to apply social rights across the board equally. We have to empower institutions and make them representative and speak on behalf of those who go unheard.

Associations have their own working methods and own aims. They have to remain autonomous. They have to keep their unique institutional culture to represent the excluded.

In our country when the government wants to raze a neighbourhood to build a road somebody has to be there to act and to defend the interests of the

stake holders. So I think we need this at national and European level and even at international level as in the case of Timor for example. Civil society should represent the employers, workers and consumers but the excluded should also have representation. I think the Economic and Social Committee and other associations that represent the excluded should work together to build a new Europe - a Europe of the future.

Thank you.

Jean-Michel Bloch Lainé

President of the "Union nationale interfédérale des oeuvres et organismes privés sanitaires et sociaux" (UNIOPSS), Member of the European Economic and Social Committee

The particular role of charitable associations in the further development of employment policy guidelines

I will start by giving you my apologies as I decided to change the topic with the agreement of the organizers of this meeting because I felt that it would be useful to speak on a broader subject than the one which was first set out in the programme. I also would like to talk about the hopes of UNIOPSS. My organisation in fact is not very large. It is less important than all the figures we were given for Germany. We have got 600,000 salaried workers, between 500,000 and 600,000 voluntary workers and some 7,000 establishments and services in the medical and social sectors.

Let me talk about the current situation. At present, solidarity associations in France, those which are members of UNIOPSS and which are working in the health and social sector are very worried indeed. They are worried about the future. But they are not resigned and I will tell you why. This will be my first point. The second point will relate to the various factors we are defending and thirdly, and I will try to expose the proposals I would like to make.

The fact that we are worried is due to a number of things. First of all things which we could call paradoxes. The first paradox is that never in France have the associations of this sector been faced with such great expectations from all over, especially from the public authorities. Actually these associations participate via UNIOPSS actively together with the public authorities in setting up a lot of legislation,

Keynote speeches

regulations and decisions so that we really could not say that they are not consulted or not listened to. But at the same time we do see the threat or destabilizing current - taxes, fixing of tariffs and the way of dealing with the public. The second paradox is that these associations have far more employees than other similar associations in France and yet seem to lack financial means and logistics. We do not have such strong political roots as other families in the third sector.

A number of ambiguities must be added to these paradoxes. Now ambiguities are always uncomfortable. Ambiguity is when one says the associations are afraid of being used. Public authorities reject this charge in good faith. The relative decrease in funds can lead to misunderstandings. I may be exaggerating a little but it may be that some people have aggressive attitudes on both sides. It certainly happens when public authorities want to decide upon your projects in which case the association would reply that since they have the knowledge, do the work and should be setting up projects, it should be up to them to say where public funds are to be spent. Now if you have that sort of dialogue you will never get together and agree. Something had worked well for decades in which period the State and the associations were able to allocate their roles. This compromise is now being attacked, not just in an academic manner but also in real terms. The second ambiguity is that associations fear that in dealing with them the State and local authorities - be it for convenience's sake - may minimise the differences between them and the market forces. When I say minimise I mean that they are proposing certain arrangements which don't have any proper standard. Now the associations don't necessarily refuse this but they also disregard the specific nature of these welfare associations.

Lastly, the other ambiguity is that at present in France these associations in that sector fear that they will be drowned by being assimilated in the rather vague field of what we call social economy because this field gathers together all sorts of actors which can be very different. It is not just a matter of saying one can't get on with these actors. They are our allies; they are our friends; they are our brethren. But we must not confuse all this. I worked a lot in Brussels when I was in the directorate of the treasury dealing with international monetary matters. In the monetary committee we never quarrelled about terminology, about words. What strikes me in our more interesting sector is

that we use identical words for designating different things and we use different words for identifying similar things. So an effort will have to be made to find what we are talking about. The first of this effort is to note down carefully what our specific character in associations is in the general set up of the third sector.

There are certain things at stake. One is sure that these stakes are very important and we cannot resign ourselves to the association sector being cut down. It would be a waste for society if associations were little by little discouraged from playing their fundamental role of finding out what the social needs are. When you look back in France what do we find? There are practically no examples of new misfortunes which had not been first detected by the associations and it may start with ten people pointing at a common distressing problem. This is what we had with social exclusion. We have this now in France in respect of violence among young people. Now we hear from the associations that there are gangs of young girls of 12 or 13 years of age and they wield knives. The associations are the detectives in the field and it would be a great waste if they were discouraged from doing this job. Secondly there is the matter of dealing with social demands after you have found them. Now the associations require specific capacity. They do not deal with people as if they were users or customers but treat them as human beings, for instance in the case of home help for the elderly. The work done by associations does not stop here as they will look at the rest of the house or the street to see whether anybody else needs help. No private service would do this.

Talking about the elderly, in France a number of hospitals have too many beds available for illness so we have asked that they be affected to the elderly. But if one does that and put them in the hospitals they will become ill. Associations will see to it that these old people go on with their activities, read their newspapers etc.

One must ensure coherence. I don't know how this is in your countries but in France we have a real talent for making things complex! As soon as there is a problem we try to do something about it but our society can be compared to a labyrinth: society gets more and more compartmentalized and welfare associations are the only ones which are capable of finding their way through this social labyrinth. So there is a problem of coherence which I think the associations are the only ones to resolve.

First of all we must not be resigned to the situation. There are two main approaches as to how one might get out of this difficulty. One could put up a legislative work. The act of 1901 is an important law in France. It is almost a hundred years old now and there are people who think that it should be modified. Meanwhile efforts are being made to develop a new legislation or a new status for the social enterprise. Both options must be explored. We nonetheless think that the best way of doing things is to have the solidarity pact which was mentioned earlier. Behaviour, inertia and practices play a role in this context. In a given French department one can have a very good understanding between local authorities and associations while it might be entirely different in the neighbouring one. So I think that it is not necessarily a matter of legislation - although this does not mean that we should not envisage the legislative option. The solidarity pact remains the best solution which besides is being adopted by the Portuguese and, to a lesser extent, by the British. Such a pact would be very important if it contained true contracts. Now it would have a counterpart for the associates which is that they would have to accept being assessed and this would pose a problem for the French associations. When I say assess I do mean assessment on the basis of criteria agreed upon

jointly. There is no exclusivity and assessment implies a cultural change.

Finally, I think that the association movement should have its own space as it were within the European institutions and perhaps first of all in the European Economic and Social Committee. I think it would be useful if solidarity associations without breaking off with anybody else in the third sector would set themselves up, however informally, within the European institutions. At present this is not the case or not sufficiently the case and I think it is important to achieve this. I do not want to make any quotation but you might remember the doctor of "Mr Pickwick" who, when looking at the little dead girl just said "Well, I let nature take its course". We should not. René Char, a famous French writer, said that we have received an inheritance to which no testament is attached. This heritage is made up of associations, the local and public authorities and we do not know how to use it - unless we have to reinvent it whenever things change. Can this be achieved with legislation? I do not know but I do think we have to go down that path and there is no reason why we should not succeed.

Panel discussion

Dr. Wolfgang Linckelmann

Senior Legal Secretary (Germany)

I shall make only a few brief comments upon the experience I have gleaned from this meeting and from the discussion, and about the future task which we will all have to fulfil. I'll do this in four points: First of all, it seems to me that the search for the position between the market and the state for the welfare institutions or institutions and organisations which act as free bodies in the social field was a subject which we dealt with throughout the day. There were various options we have heard about e.g. the differentiation according to determined fields of activity and outsourcing, as we call it in Germany, in corresponding economic enterprises or attempts of „*économie sociale*“ – social enterprises. Well, we are all looking for the right solution to these problems. I think that we must continue exchanging our views and experiences. My impression is, that the pressure from the market will increase and that the welfare organisations will have to take up this. In Germany they do this in part but I think that is a challenge which everybody will have to take up in all European countries.

The second point I want to make is the question of the profile of the welfare organisations and the social organisations. We have spoken a great deal about value-oriented work and the platform or the agency for mobilising volunteers and there again it seems to me that one should be more specific and one should seize developments which already exist in some European countries; (Mr. Seibel has mentioned this regarding Portugal).

Here in Germany we must certainly take up a little more these developments and be more specific not only about the question of what is this value-oriented profile with regard to the welfare organisations but also the requirements, wishes and ideas of those citizens who are willing to volunteer in the social area.

This morning we heard from our minister on the basis of a survey one can say that this potential is very great. The flexibility of traditional associations exists in part but I think there is still a lot of room for further development. I am just thinking of the development of the models at volunteer's centres within and outside of German associations and that in this respect we might learn a great deal from some countries such as the Netherlands.

Now, if this specific nature of the welfare associations is to be an agency for the mobilisation of cit-

izen's commitment then I believe the public should consider it as something crucial which applies perhaps not to the entire third sector but certainly to the associations in the social sector.

Thirdly: The question of the European platform was mentioned on several occasions and I too believe that we need something like that. Mr Bloch Lainé has asked for that in particular and in fact it was also mentioned in other statements but the complex nature of our diversity in every single European country requires, I believe, that one first gets together at national level.

Let's say that this is no problem in Germany, (I can see that Mr. Seibel does not agree, that is something we can discuss) and I believe that the question to what extent the basic organisation and the basic initiatives should be included (this was mentioned by our British partners) is in fact a question that has not been resolved, due to the strong mediation of the umbrella organisations, which hardly permits to do so.

The European platform also includes the question if there should be something like a European guideline and concept. I find this quite an interesting thought which has an influence on the entire third sector or particularly the European landscape of social organisations.

Lastly, the European platform also in developing the European charter of basic rights. That is something which has to move the discussion from the national level to an international European Union level. This morning Mrs Diamantopoulou demanded such a European mouthpiece I believe that is reason enough for the associations to set to work.

Thank you.

Herrn Ministerialrat Dr. Wolfgang Linckelmann

Ich will versuchen nur ein paar Bemerkungen aus der Erfahrung dieser Tagung und aus der Diskussion zu machen, sowie zu dem, was vielleicht an zukünftigen Aufgaben auf uns alle zukommt und zwar in vier Punkten:

zum ersten, mir erscheint, dass die Suche nach dem Standort zwischen Markt und Staat für die Wohlfahrtsorganisationen oder die Institutionen und Organisationen die als freie Träger im sozialen Bereich tätig sind das durchgängige Thema hier war und daß wir bestimmte Optionen zwar gehört haben etwa Ausdifferenzierung nach bestimmten

Bereichen und Ausgliederung, wie wir das in Deutschland nennen, in entsprechende Wirtschaftsbetriebe, oder Ansätze der „économie sociale“, Sozialunternehmen – aber wir sind alle gemeinsam noch auf der Suche nach den richtigen Lösungen. Daraus ergibt sich auch die Notwendigkeit den Erfahrungsaustausch fortzusetzen. Mein Eindruck ist, dass der Druck des Marktes zunehmen wird und dass die Sozialorganisationen und Wohlfahrtsorganisationen sich dem auch stellen müssen; in Deutschland tun sie es zum Teil, aber ich denke diese Herausforderung werden alle in allen europäischen Ländern stärker aufgreifen müssen.

Der zweite Punkt den ich erwähnen möchte, ist die Frage des Profils der Wohlfahrtsorganisationen und der Sozialorganisationen.

Hier ist sehr viel von Wertorientierung gesprochen worden, von der Plattform und der Agentur zur Mobilisierung von Freiwilligkeit. Auch hier erscheinen mir Präzisierungen notwendig sowie sinnvoll Entwicklungen aufzugreifen, die in manchen anderen europäischen Ländern sich vielleicht verstärkt herausbilden (Herr Seibel hat das angesprochen in Hinblick auf Portugal). Wir in Deutschland, denke ich, müssen uns sicher die Frage: „Was ist eigentlich das wertorientierte Profil“ etwas stärker stellen bei den Wohlfahrtsorganisationen, aber auch den Anforderungen, Wünschen und Vorstellungen von solchen Bürgern, die bereit sind sich bürgerschaftlich zu engagieren und gerade im sozialen Bereich.

Wir haben heute morgen von unserer Ministerin gehört auf Grund einer Umfrage, das Potential ist gross, die Flexibilität und das Bestreben traditioneller Verbände, hier überzeugende Antworten zu suchen ist zum Teil vorhanden, aber ich denke da ist auch noch viel Entwicklungsmöglichkeit drin.

Ich denke nur an das, was sich an Modellen etwa von Freiwilligenzentren sowohl innerhalb wie ausserhalb der Verbände in Deutschland entwickelt hat und wo wir vielleicht von anderen Ländern wie den Niederlanden lernen können. Und wenn es zum Spezifikum der Wohlfahrtsorganisationen gehört, auch Agentur für die Mobilisierung von bürgerschaftlichem Engagement zu sein, dann denke ich ist das etwas, was auch stärker in der Öffentlichkeit als das Entscheidende, vielleicht nicht des gesamten dritten Sektors aber doch gerade der Verbände im sozialen Bereich, dargestellt werden muss.

Zum dritten, die Frage der europäischen Plattform, die hier mehrfach angesprochen worden ist. Auch

ich bin der Überzeugung, dass wir so etwas brauchen (Herr Bloch-Lainée hat das noch einmal präzise gefordert), sowie dies auch in verschiedenen Beiträgen zum Ausdruck gekommen ist. Die Komplexität unserer Vielgestaltigkeit in den einzelnen europäischen Ländern scheint für mich allerdings zwingend zu fordern, dass zunächst einmal die jeweilige nationale Ebene sich zusammen findet.

Das erscheint bei uns in Deutschland kein Problem zu sein, sagen wir, (ich sehe, Herr Seibel ist nicht einverstanden, das ist ja ein Diskussionspunkt) und ich denke die Frage wieweit hierbei sozusagen die Basisorganisationen und Initiativen – das ist von unserer englischen Partnerin insbesondere zum Ausdruck gekommen – beteiligt werden können, ist eine ungelöste Frage bisher, denn die starke Mediatisierung der Dachverbände lässt dieses so immer nur mittelbar zu.

Europäische Plattform sicher auch in der Frage ob es so etwas wie ein europäisches Leitbild geben kann. Finde ich einen interessanten Gedanken, der es Wert wäre, weiter verfolgt zu werden, sei es im Hinblick auf den gesamten dritten Sektor oder speziell als prägende Kraft für die europäische Sozialorganisationslandschaft.

Und schliesslich, europäische Plattform auch in der Entwicklung der europäischen Grundrechtscharta. Ich bin überzeugt, hier gilt es den Diskussionsprozess von der nationalen auf die europäische Ebene zu tragen. Und wenn heute morgen Frau Diamantopoulou auch ein solches europäisches Sprachrohr zu diesen Fragen gefordert hat, dann denke ich, ist diese Aufforderung genug an die freien Träger, hier sich ans Werk zu setzen.

Vielen Dank.

Prof. Dr. Adalbert Evers

University of Giessen, Germany

I would like to resume today's work in a few brief points. The first relates to the fact that that the future of a social Europe cannot only be created by the market and the welfare state. One should also include the contribution of civil society in the field of social policy and I think that this very point was our smallest common denominator. No doubt we may have different opinions as to where the responsibility of the State stops and the responsibility of civil society should start. Should it merely help to broaden the whole thing and to make it nicer or are there certain essential qualities required for a welfare society?

Panel discussion

We must also remember however that what is new in all this - and the uncomfortable part for the associations - is that neither the market, nor the citizens, nor the State find a natural place for associations. Tradition suggests that, their natural place would be on the side of the poor but de facto they have taken on a much greater role and this is the heritage of a non-written testament. They are involved in the central areas of social services and they are mixed up with the private and the public sectors so there is also rivalry between various solutions as to who can do things better in certain areas. The problem here is that the yardsticks for what is better will have to be set out on the basis of public debate and a lot will depend on them. Now if it is a matter of providing fast and complete easy-in and easy-out services, the market would be best if we had a guideline for services implying co-production and participation. The assessment of services would then be quite different, I suppose. In other words, if welfare associations and organizations act as representatives of civil society and can ask for a special role, then they will have to work on the quality of their services. They must make this apparent. There is no point in being vague about values; that would not be enough.

Concerning the role of the State, the problem nowadays lies in the fact that European governments, whether they be national, local or regional, are not giving any clear signals. They in fact give us a double message. One is roughly this: where would we be without our associations, without the role of the welfare associations? We simply would not know what to do in cases of exclusion, etc. So you are being asked to play a social role. The second signal is quite different as it implies that you will have to learn to work better with less money - "Please do not bother us with requests for additional funds and vague ideas on social advancement!"

You have to be very clear-cut in what you do and this will have to be enshrined in a contract. Now this is a different message of course, meaning that one will have to be able to compare your services with private operators. You will provide services at a minimum price while the decision as to quality will be made at State level. This double signal needs to be debated on especially when the private sector cannot take over. The question relates to the public task of fighting poverty, achieving urban development and implementing community work. This is something very important which is covered by the French solidarity pact - or contract as I called it. It's a basic contract relating to reciprocal

responsibilities and tasks and there of course one also has to have individual contracts setting out things very clearly. I have understood the important role of reformulating a sort of basic contract in areas where in the past the social organizations played an undoubted important part.

We find ourselves in a very difficult process which is only just beginning and where both sides - the public sector and the NGOs - will have to know exactly what strategies they will apply. We have heard a lot about diversity, but one can also have a more negative approach according to which representatives throughout Europe only have a very vague idea of certain essential points and occasionally they do not tell people what connects them. One has to make quite clear what the requirements are to oneself but at the same time one must have a minimum of joint perspective or aims.

The positive actions of the third sector organizations at local level have been described. The quality of that work must be the same at regional, national and international level as well. We did not really discuss this very much. These organizations are very often small and linked to the local set-ups. Do they really feel as well represented by the umbrella organizations as they would wish? I think this question deserves critical examination. Some sort of an agreement should be made and we really need to have something on paper. This certainly will be necessary because at that level a large amount of the criticism and doubts about the legitimacy and the role of associations and umbrella organizations comes into play.

Our British colleagues raised the question of the legitimacy while others invoked closer or direct contact between the institutions of the European Union and the local associations.

Rede Prof. Dr. Adalbert Evers

Universität Gießen

Ich möchte die heutige Arbeit in einigen Punkten kurz zusammenfassen. Der erste bezieht sich darauf, daß die Zukunft eines sozialen Europa nicht nur vom Markt und vom Wohlfahrtsstaat gestaltet werden kann. Es sollte auch der Beitrag der Zivilgesellschaft im Bereich der Sozialpolitik mit einbezogen werden, und ich glaube, daß gerade dieser Punkt unser kleinster gemeinsamer Nenner war. Natürlich können wir verschiedener Auffassung darüber sein, wo die Verantwortung des Staates aufhört und die Verantwortlichkeit der

Zivilgesellschaft beginnen sollte. Sollte sie nur dazu beitragen, die Politik auf eine breitere Basis zu stellen und freundlicher zu gestalten, oder gilt es, einige wesentliche Anforderungen an eine Wohlfahrtsgesellschaft zu stellen?

Wir müssen jedoch auch bedenken, daß das Neue bei der ganzen Sache - und der für die Verbände unangenehme Teil - ist, daß weder der Markt noch die Bürger oder der Staat den Verbänden "einen natürlich gewachsenen" Platz einräumen. Traditionsgemäß wäre ihr natürlicher Platz auf Seiten der Armen, aber de facto haben sie eine viel gewichtigere Stellung eingenommen, und dies ist Ergebnis eines ungeschriebenen Vermächtnisses. Sie sind in den zentralen Bereichen der sozialen Dienste tätig und mit dem privaten und öffentlichen Sektor verquickt, so daß es auch zu einer Rivalität zwischen verschiedenen Lösungen kommt, also darüber, wer in bestimmten Bereichen erfolgreicher agieren kann. Das Problem ist, daß die Maßstäbe für den besseren Ansatz auf der Grundlage einer öffentlichen Debatte angelegt werden müssen und sehr viel von diesen Maßstäben abhängen wird. Soweit es darum geht, schnelle und vollständige "easy-in" und "easy-out"-Dienste anzubieten, könnte der Markt am besten agieren, wenn es einen Leitfaden für Dienstleistungen einschließlich Ko-Produktion und Beteiligung gäbe. Die Bewertung der Dienste würde dann wohl ganz anders ausfallen. Anders ausgedrückt - wenn Wohlfahrtsverbände und Organisationen als Vertreter der Zivilgesellschaft agieren und eine Sonderstellung beanspruchen können, werden sie die Qualität ihrer Dienstleistungen verbessern und dies deutlich machen müssen. Es hat keinen Sinn, in bezug auf Werte vage zu sein; damit wäre niemanden gedient.

Bezüglich der Rolle des Staates liegt die Schwierigkeit heutzutage in der Tatsache, daß die Behörden in Europa, egal ob auf nationaler, lokaler und regionaler Ebene, keine klaren Signale setzen. Sie geben eine doppeldeutige Botschaft. Eine davon lautet grob formuliert: Wo wären wir ohne unsere Verbände, ohne die Rolle der Wohlfahrtsverbände? Wir würden ganz einfach nicht wissen, was beispielsweise in Fällen von Ausgrenzung zu tun ist. Auf diese Weise wird man aufgefordert, eine soziale Rolle zu spielen. Das zweite Signal ist ganz anders geartet und impliziert, daß die Verbände lernen müßten, mit weniger Geld besser zu arbeiten - "Bitte belästigt uns nicht mit Bitten um zusätzliche Mittel und vagen Ideen für einen sozialen Fortschritt!"

Bei der Abgrenzung der Tätigkeit ist äußerste Präzision geboten, und alles muß in einem Vertrag verankert werden. Dies ist natürlich eine andere Sichtweise, die bedeutet, daß sich die Dienste mit

den Leistungen privater Anbieter messen lassen müssen. Also werden die Verbände Dienstleistungen so billig wie möglich anbieten, wohingegen die Qualitätsentscheidungen auf staatlicher Ebene fallen. Über diese doppelte Botschaft muß debattiert werden, insbesondere wenn der private Sektor nicht einspringen kann. Es geht um die öffentlichen Aufgaben der Armutsbekämpfung, der Realisierung der Stadtentwicklung und der Durchführung gemeinnütziger Arbeiten. Das sind sehr wichtige Fragen, die im französischen Solidarpakt enthalten sind - oder Solidarvertrag, wie ich ihn genannt habe. Es ist dies ein grundlegender Vertrag über die gegenseitigen Verpflichtungen und Aufgaben, wobei hier natürlich auch individuelle Verträge erforderlich sind, die die Einzelheiten festlegen. Ich habe verstanden, wie wichtig es ist, eine Art grundlegenden Vertrag in den Bereichen neu aufzusetzen, in denen die Sozialverbände früher zweifellos eine wichtige Rolle gespielt haben.

Wir befinden uns in der Anlaufphase eines äußerst schwierigen Prozesses, in dem beide Seiten - der öffentliche Sektor und die NGOs - genau erwägen müssen, welche Strategien sie verfolgen wollen. Es wurde viel über Vielfalt gesprochen; man kann jedoch auch einen weniger positiven Eindruck haben, dem zufolge Vertreter aus ganz Europa nur sehr vage über bestimmte Kernpunkte informiert sind und gelegentlich die Öffentlichkeit darüber im unklaren lassen, was sie verbindet. Man muß eindeutig klarstellen, welche Herausforderungen man sich steckt, gleichzeitig aber über ein Minimum an gemeinsamen Perspektiven oder Zielen verfügen.

Die positiven Leistungen der Organisationen des dritten Sektors auf lokaler Ebene wurden beschrieben. Die Qualität ihrer Arbeit muß sich auf regionaler, nationaler und internationaler Ebene fortsetzen. Darüber haben wir nicht ausführlich genug gesprochen. Diese Organisationen sind oft klein und in örtlichen Gegebenheiten verwurzelt. Fühlen sie sich von den Dachverbänden tatsächlich so gut vertreten, wie sie sich das wünschen würden? Ich denke, diese Frage verdient eine kritische Erörterung. Eine Art Vereinbarung sollte getroffen werden, und wir müssen hier wirklich ein Schriftstück aufsetzen. Dies ist deshalb unbedingt notwendig, weil auf dieser Ebene ein Großteil der Kritik und der Zweifel an der Legitimität und Rolle der Vereinigungen und Dachverbände ins Spiel kommt.

Unsere britischen Kollegen haben die Frage der Legitimität aufgeworfen, während andere engere oder direkte Kontakte zwischen den Institutionen der Europäischen Union und der lokalen Verbände angesprochen haben.

Panel discussion

Mr Jan Olsson

Member of the European Economic and Social Committee, Chairman of the Section for Employment, Social Affairs and Citizenship

I have listened with great interest to you today and followed most of the debate. I take the floor not only as chairman of the Section for Social Affairs and Employment of the European Economic and Social Committee but also as a member of the Committee's Group III and as representative of a Swedish social economy organisation. First of all I would say that I certainly consider social welfare organisations - social solidarity organisations - as an important part of organised civil society. Second I also think they are an important part of social economy that - in line with a debate which took place about this today. I am saying this because social economy has a somewhat wider scope than the third sector while sharing the same fundamental elements - as discussed today - based on persons, democratic values and solidarity. I am now preparing an opinion of this Committee on social economy and the Internal Market and the relevant working group deals with exactly the same issues as those which were brought up today. I listened with great interest to Mr Evers and Mr Lafore this morning who had an open approach but addressed exactly the same problems that we are discussing in our group, namely market, non-market, rules of competition, tax system, public procurement rules, financing of social economy and legislation in general. We shall try to find compromises within the Committee so that at least some answers can be found. Thirdly I would like to say that social welfare organisations - i.e. you - you have a forum in the European Economic and Social Committee. We ourselves are a kind of forum of organised civil society where you could express your opinions. There are a couple of members belonging to your organisations like Mr Melicias and Mr Bloch-Lainé but there are at least 10-20 sympathisers of your associations. However, at the Economic and Social Committee you have to confront your views with other parts of organised civil society such as business organisations, Trade Unions and other NGOs. I would like to take an example: Mrs Zu Eulenburg's drafting her opinion on welfare organisations was not an easy task - and this could be confirmed by Mr Martins and Mr Kuper - because we had to make a compromise or a consensus without which opinions are worthless. We had to find a consensus with our good friend of Group II Mr Vogler who is not always easy to deal with as he represents the Trade Unions - he would sympathise

with the values and the objectives but certainly would also defend the Unions' perspective on these issues.

We, at the Economic and Social Committee, have an ambition to find a consensus, which is important but not always easy. You have to confront your views to find respect for them and to allow other people to understand them and doing so give them a certain impetus. Just as we do, you have your specific role and methods as associations and you are not going to be institutionalised by us but we certainly will want to collaborate with you. Through the Section I chair, the ESC has now to issue an opinion on the anti-discrimination package. We will certainly receive soon a referral on the relations between NGOs and the European institutions and another one on social exclusion which the Commissioner said this morning will become a problem. We will also get a referral on the social action programme and I think that you could express your views to us on those opinions and confront them with others.

Any collaboration with organised civil society as I see it myself is very practical in the sense that we are open for you with your ideas, your arguments, and you could discuss the drafts of our opinions with the rapporteurs who sometimes are indeed very close to you. We could organise hearings like today's meeting or envisage other forums where you would assist and participate. I think that we need you as European Economic and Social Committee but I also think that you need us and I would refer to Mr Evers' pointing earlier at a particular item which I would like to raise again here. You need alliances, you have to discuss alliances between your organisations both at national and European level - alliances within the whole spectrum of social economy organisations - and ultimately discuss alliances with other organisations and institutions. This strategy will allow you to come forward with all your arguments and all your views, thus giving them more power.

I think that this is not a first step but a further one in inducing collaboration between the European Economic and Social Committee and organised civil society which you represent. This joint initiative between the German Presidency, the ESC and the social welfare organisations is also very interesting. This has been very worthwhile for you to confront views among yourselves but also to confront your views with other parts of organised civil society and members here from this Economic and Social Committee have been carefully listening to you.

You are always welcome here to come forward with your arguments and your views.

Summary of general debates

In the course of the discussions participants underlined the importance of the specific European context in terms of economic and social developments throughout the Member States. These Member States share very worrying developments such as social exclusion, high rates of unemployment and over-ageing populations, not to forget the flow of refugees and asylum seekers. Voluntary organisations were also described as potential social “fire brigades” in critical situations.

These developments are counter-balanced by an increasing tendency on the part of the States to reduce social services. This withdrawal goes along with the unspoken expectations that charitable association should increase their involvement to compensate for this social disengagement. The participants questioned the attitude of the governments in this respect as their social responsibility will remain undisputed in the future as is legitimately expected by European citizens. However this does not affect in any way the essential role played by the welfare organisations as they should not restrict themselves to strictly providing social services but should be politically very active as well.

At European level it is difficult for welfare organisations and other NGOs to gain political influence. This is due to problems such as barriers to their effectiveness relating to the issue of embeddedness and the differences in the Member States. Financial difficulties obviously contribute to further deteriorate this situation. The question of public financial support is a complicated matter that can easily lead to polemics. It was pointed out that dependency on State funding could have a negative impact on both the purpose and the identity of organisations. NGOs mainly enter the European debate in the framework of projects and programmes but cannot contribute to developing social policies. One participant requested that they be more directly involved in this process.

This above-mentioned dependency from State funding could even lead to considering welfare organisations as being para-statal, in the provocative words of one of the participants. The scope of action of these organisations is determined by the way the States address and formulate tasks for the public good. The aspect of shared responsibility of both the public side and voluntary organisations is a crucial point in providing social services. It is also underlined that ebbing of state funding poses major resource problems to these organisations as they cannot rely on a multiple resource structure.

The future of such organisations is closely related to the development of civil society while intensive cooperation between welfare organisations and the traditional social partners remains of paramount importance. However social progress is still a matter for governments, family and institutions.

The notion of Third Sector is a vague one while on the other hand the German concept of “Wohlfahrtsverband” cannot easily be translated into other languages and this may lead to misunderstandings. It is therefore necessary to develop guidelines or terms of reference to allow for a European understanding and in this respect the discussion on social economy is a starting point. The impact of globalisation has to be stressed in this context. Indeed globalisation goes far beyond the national dimension thus weakening in a way the individual States and one can easily figure out what are the implications on social policy and social welfare. This raises the question of having a third power, namely that of the citizens – encompassing not only a political dimension but also an economic one. Ultimately this is about social economy.

There currently exists an extreme distance, both in terms of consultation and funding, between the European Union institutions and those NGOs directly working with people who suffer social exclusion. The Commission for instance is invited to seek close contact with NGOs doing proper field work on social exclusion. Furthermore administrative procedures – or administrative convenience as one speaker put it – is another obstacle to having direct contact between field work and European funding. It is indispensable to broaden the scope of definition of welfare to include organisations working at the cutting edge while finding ways to allow their pragmatic views to be heard at European level.

One participant underlined the role of the Church not only in giving spiritual comfort but also in playing an active, consolidating role in the social sector. Furthermore the ideological or political nature of welfare organisation does play a significant part while human values should be at the forefront of social action. NGOs should have a qualitative impact on the process of implementing a social Europe.

Social exclusion does not only comprise individuals but clearly has a territorial dimension if one thinks of poor urban and rural areas. Local communities have to be involved in prevention activities and field work to better fight poverty. Welfare

Summary of general debates

organisations as “natural partners” of local communities have to take their chance to be the voice of people in need of immediate help and assistance. Furthermore conference participants pointed out that welfare organisations have to make a clear distinction between themselves and the private sector in the social economy. This would lead to developing a specific identity and economic strategy which would successfully resist any external audit or evaluation and would as well lay down principles for more efficient social services.

It also matters that welfare organisations look at themselves with a view to defining their role and position. In order to counterbalance the ever-increasing hegemony of the market these organisations will have to put all their weight to attract the attention of the Member States. Europe needs social standards and must guarantee a proper quality of social services.

The relationship between the third sector and the private sector was not sufficiently discussed during the conference although this could be important for the development of a European social economy. The whole discussion is about a humane society of which a sound basis would be a solidarity pact at European level.

In conclusion, it is also suggested that this conference may lead to a vivid and pragmatic debate including NGOs and citizens on European guidelines or the European Charter of Social Rights.



European Economic and Social Committee

„VALENCY AND CHANGE IN WELFARE ORGANISATIONS IN A MERGING EUROPE – THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF A EUROPEAN CIVIL SOCIETY”

BRUSSELS, 17 DECEMBER 1999

MODIFIED PROGRAMME

Thursday, 16 December 1999

7 p.m. **Reception** at the European Economic and Social Committee (ESC), 2 rue Ravenstein, B-1000 Brussels

Friday, 17 December 1999

9.30 a.m. **Welcome address, introduction**

Beatrice RANGONI MACHIAVELLI, President of the European Economic and Social Committee;
Dr Christine BERGMANN, Minister for the Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth of the Federal Republic of Germany;
Anne-Marie SIGMUND, President of the Various Interests Group (Group III) of the European Economic and Social Committee, Conference director;
Anna DIAMANTOPOULOU, Commissioner in charge of the Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs;
Ieke van den BURG, Member of the European Parliament;
Klaus HALLA, representative of the Finnish ministry for Social Affairs and Public Health.

10.30 a.m. **Papers followed by possibility for plenary discussion**

Prof. Dr. Adalbert EVERS (Germany), University of Gießen, Director at the Institut für Sozialforschung in Frankfurt/Main: *In search for a new contract - the role of voluntary organisations in rebuilding social welfare in Europe*;
Prof. Robert LAFORE (France), Director of the Institut d'études politiques (Institute of Political Studies), Bordeaux;
Gräfin zu EULENBURG (Germany), member of the board of directors of the Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der Freien Wohlfahrtspflege (BAGFW), Member of the ESC, on *“The contribution of charitable associations to safeguarding social rights and their role in drawing up a European Charter of Basic Rights”*.

12.45 p.m. **Lunch**

2.15 p.m. **Panel discussion followed by discussion:**

Dr Helga HENKE-BERNDT (Germany), member of the board of directors of BAGFW;
Kimmo SAARES (Finland), Consultant Head of EU Office, Church Resources Agency, Finland, on *“The role of charitable associations in developing European civil society”*

3 p.m. **Coffee break**

3.30 p.m. **Dr Vitor MELÍCIAS** (Portugal), President of the União Das Misericórdias Portuguesas (Association of Portuguese Charities), member of the ESC, on *“The role of charitable associations in defending and representing the victims of social exclusion”*

Jean-Michel BLOCH-LAINÉ (France), President of the Union Nationale Interfédérale des Oeuvres et Organismes Privés Sanitaires et Sociaux Reconnue d'Utilité Publique (Interfederal Union of Private, Social and Health Organisations of Public Benefit), member of the ESC, on *“The particular role of charitable organisations in the further development of employment policy guidelines”*

4.30 p.m. **Panel discussion** (continuation)

“How should charitable associations shape their future”, introduced by **Ieke van den BURG**, Member of the European Parliament, Committee on Employment and Social Affairs);
Odile QUINTIN, Deputy Director General (invited) from the Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs of the European Commission;
Mr Wolfgang LINKELMANN, German Ministry of the Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth.

Chair: **Prof. Adalbert EVERS**.

5.30 p.m. **Close - Conclusions**



Europäischer Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschuß

„WERTIGKEIT UND WANDEL VON WOHLFAHRTSVERBÄNDEN IN EINEM ZUSAMMENWACHSENDEN EUROPA – IHR BEITRAG ZUM AUFBAU EINER EUROPÄISCHEN ZIVILGESELLSCHAFT“

Brüssel, den 17. Dezember 1999

PROGRAMM

Donnerstag, den 16.12. 1999

19.00 Uhr Empfang in den Räumen des Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschusses, Rue Ravenstein 2, B-1000 Brüssel

Freitag, den 17.12.1999

09.30 Uhr Begrüßung, Einführung

Beatrice RANGONI MACHIAVELLI, Präsidentin des europäischen Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschusses (WSA);
Dr. Christine BERGMANN, Bundesministerin für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend der Bundesrepublik Deutschland;
Anna DIAMANTOPOULOU, Kommissarin für „Beschäftigung und soziale Angelegenheiten“;
Anne-Marie SIGMUND, Vorsitzende der Gruppe III (Verschiedene Interessen) des europäischen Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschusses (WSA), Tagungsleiterin;
Ieke van den BURG, Mitglied des Europäischen Parlaments;
Klaus HALLA, Vertreter des finnischen Sozial- u. Gesundheitsministeriums.

10.30 Uhr Referate mit anschließender Möglichkeit zur Diskussion im Plenum

Prof. Dr. Adalbert EVERS (Deutschland), Universität Gießen, Direktor am Institut für Sozialforschung in Frankfurt a.M.: *„Auf der Suche nach einem neuen Vertrag - die Rolle von Wohlfahrtsorganisationen im Umbau der Wohlfahrtspflege in Europa“*;
Prof. Robert LAFORE (Frankreich), Direktor am „Institut d'études politiques“, Bordeaux: *„Die Rolle der Verbände am Beispiel Frankreichs“*;
Gräfin zu EULENBURG (Deutschland), Mitglied des Vorstandes der Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der Freien Wohlfahrtspflege (BAGFW), Mitglied des WSA: *„Der Beitrag der Verbände zur Sicherung sozialer Rechte und ihre Rolle bei der Erstellung einer europäischen Grundrechtscharta“*.

12.45 Uhr Mittagspause

14.15 Uhr Podiumsdiskussion mit anschließender Diskussionsrunde.

Dr. Helga HENKE-BERNDT (Deutschland), Mitglied des Vorstandes der BAGFW;
Kimmo SAARES (Finnland), Consultant Head of EU-Office, Church Resources Agency Finland; Thema: *„Der Beitrag der Verbände zum Aufbau einer europäischen Zivilgesellschaft“*.

15.00 Uhr Kaffeepause

15.30 Uhr **Dr. Vitor MELÍCIAS** (Portugal), Präsident der Uniao Das Misericordias Portuguesas, Mitglied des WSA; Thema: *„Die Bedeutung der Verbände als Anwalt und Vertreter von Betroffenen im Kampf gegen soziale Ausgrenzung“*.
Jean-Michel BLOCH-LAINÉ (Frankreich), Präsident der Union Nationale Interfédérale des Oeuvres et Organismes Privés Sanitaires et Sociaux Reconnue d'Utilité Publique (UNIOPSS), Mitglied des WSA; Thema: *„Die besondere Rolle der Verbände im Kontext der Fortentwicklung der Leitlinien zur Beschäftigung“*.

16.30 Uhr Podiumsdiskussion (Fortsetzung)

„Wie sollen die Verbände ihre Zukunft gestalten“ mit einleitenden Worten von Frau **Ieke van den BURG** (MEP, Ausschuß „Beschäftigung und soziale Angelegenheiten“)
Odile QUINTIN, Stellvertretende Generaldirektorin (angefragt) GD „Arbeit und Soziales“ der EU-Kommission
Dr. MinR Wolfgang LINCKELMANN, Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend der Bundesrepublik Deutschland
Moderation: **Prof. Dr. Adalbert EVERS**.

17.30 Uhr Ende der Veranstaltung - Schlußwort

VALUE AND EVOLUTION OF WELFARE ASSOCIATIONS IN EUROPE

Joint conference of the German Ministry for Family Affairs and the European Economic and Social Committee

Brussels, 17 December 1999

"It is a first for a ministry", said Ms CHRISTINE BERGMANN, German federal minister for family affairs, senior citizens, women and young people, "to organise a conference with the European Economic and Social Committee (ESC). The reason is simple: it was the ESC who first recognised and informed the member states of the importance of welfare associations."

In the EU's decision-making process, the ESC has a consultative role and thus ensures representation of economic and social interest groups in the EU institutional set-up.

The conference on 17 December entitled *"Value and evolution of welfare associations in a Europe in the throes of integration - their contribution to building a European civil society"* was organised jointly by the German federal ministry for family affairs, senior citizens, women and young people and the ESC.

The least one can say is that its timing was right. **Commissioner ANNA DIAMANTOPOULOU** was not slow to point out that the European Commission was in the process of preparing a communication on this topic.

The ESC president, **Ms BEATRICE RANGONI MACHIAVELLI**, stressed the importance of this conference in her welcoming speech, coming so soon after the convention on civil society organisations put on at the ESC's initiative on 15 and 16 October and which was at the centre of the programme for her presidency.

Three ESC opinions served as a basis for discussion: **Co-operation with social welfare associations** (rapporteur: **Ms SOCHA ZU EULENBURG**, Various Interests Group, Germany) **Promoting the role of associations and foundations in Europe** (rapporteur: **Mr JAN OLSSON**, Various Interests Group, Sweden) and **The role and contribution of civil society organisations in the building of Europe** (rapporteur: **Ms ANNE-MARIE SIGMUND**, Various Interests Group, Austria).

All independent welfare associations represent a vital link in the German social system. With more than 91,000 institutions and services, 1.2 million permanent staff and more than 2.5 million volunteers they are also one of the leading social players in Europe. Welfare associations are an important platform for civic commitment. They co-ordinate and support welfare and self-help groups and collect voluntary private services in the form of gifts and voluntary activities. They also represent the interests of people who need some form of social assistance and think up new forms of aid in complete independence.

But the presence of general interest associations to complement the national social security system is also an old tradition in other European countries.

Even if, like before, it is above all the states that have the basic powers in this field, social policy is progressively gaining in importance at European level. With the Treaty of Maastricht and the Treaty of Amsterdam, which came into force on 1 May 1999, the influence of EU law on member states' social security systems has grown through the extension of the EU's terms of reference in social matters. But in fact one has yet to see the effects on associations of general interest in the social field in Germany.

The conference has seen welfare associations from Finland, Portugal, France and Germany give an account of their tasks and activities and explain their points in common and their differences. The aim was to open the debate with the contribution of national welfare associations to setting up a European social model. The discussion was concerned, among other things, with the guaranteeing of social rights and the drawing-up of a European charter of basic rights, together with an appropriate framework for competition in the field of social benefits.

"Welfare associations represent an essential part of civil society and social dialogue, but also of the social economy. For these organisations the ESC acts as a forum where they may express their views and attract other organisations and associations to their cause. Welfare associations need partners and allies, both in civil society and in the European institutions" stressed one of the ESC rapporteurs, **Mr JAN OLSSON**.

At the final press conference, **Ms BERGMANN** added: *"European integration is not only progressing in the economic but also in the social field. Welfare associations are real partners of the national governments and*

Press releases

the European institutions and as such represent a vital factor for internal cohesion in the EU. They help give form to the principle of the welfare state at national and European level. I am pleased here that the Economic and Social Committee shares our point of view. Social benefits cannot be simply a plaything of competition because that would be to the detriment of all those who need them. We must provide Community procedures for social standards and the quality of social benefits, in other words create the competitive conditions for social benefits in Europe. The known economic principles of competition are not enough. It is important to know which structures have proved their worth and the social, cultural and economic traditions in each country and take account of them. This conference can contribute greatly to this. Our aim is to strengthen the role of general interest organisations in Europe and support them in their work. For a united Europe is not only an economic Europe, it is also a social Europe."

“WERTIGKEIT UND WANDEL VON WOHLFAHRTSVERBÄNDEN IN EUROPA”

Gemeinsame Konferenz des deutschen Familienministeriums und des Europäischen Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschusses

am 17.12.99 in Brüssel

“Erstmals hat ein Ministerium eine Konferenz mit dem Europäischen Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschuß (WSA) veranstaltet”, erklärte Dr. Christine BERGMANN, deutsche Bundesministerin für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend. “Und das aus einem einfachen Grund: Der WSA habe als erster die Bedeutung der Wohlfahrtsverbände erkannt und den Mitgliedstaaten vermittelt.”

Der WSA hat im Beschlußfassungsprozeß der Europäischen Union eine beratende Funktion und sichert damit die Vertretung der wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Interessengruppen im institutionellen Gefüge der Gemeinschaft.

Die Konferenz unter dem Titel *“Wertigkeit und Wandel von Wohlfahrtsverbänden in einem zusammenwachsenden Europa - ihr Beitrag zum Aufbau einer europäischen Zivilgesellschaft”* vom 17. Dezember wurde vom deutschen Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend in Zusammenarbeit mit dem WSA veranstaltet.

Das Timing der Fachtagung war, wie Kommissionsmitglied **Anna DIAMANTOPOULOU** nicht versäumte zu betonen, geradezu ideal, denn die Europäische Kommission bereitet derzeit eine Mitteilung zu diesem Thema vor.

Die Präsidentin des WSA, **Béatrice RANGONI MACHIAVELLI**, unterstrich in ihrer Begrüßungsansprache die Zweckmäßigkeit dieser Tagung, die nur kurze Zeit nach der auf Initiative des WSA am 15./16. Oktober veranstalteten Konferenz über die organisierte Zivilgesellschaft erfolge und im Mittelpunkt ihres Präsidenschaftsprogramms stehe.

Die Diskussionsgrundlage bildeten insbesondere drei Stellungnahmen des Ausschusses: **“Zusammenarbeit mit den Wohlfahrtsverbänden im sozialen Bereich”** (Berichterstatterin: Gräfin Socha zu Eulenburg, Gruppe Verschiedene Interessen, Deutschland), **“Die Förderung der Rolle gemeinnütziger Vereine und Stiftungen in Europa”** (Berichterstatter: Jan Olsson, Gruppe Verschiedene Interessen, Schweden) und **“Die Rolle und der Beitrag der organisierten Zivilgesellschaft zum europäischen Einigungswerk”** (Berichterstatterin: Anne-Marie Sigmund, Gruppe Verschiedene Interessen, Österreich).

Die Verbände der Freien Wohlfahrtspflege sind ein unverzichtbarer Bestandteil des deutschen Sozialsystems. Mit über 91.000 Einrichtungen und Diensten sowie 1,2 Millionen hauptamtlichen und mehr als 2,5 Millionen ehrenamtlichen Mitarbeitern gehören sie auch in Europa zu den größten Akteuren auf dem sozialen Feld. Die Wohlfahrtsverbände sind eine wichtige Plattform des Bürgerengagements, koordinieren und unterstützen Selbsthilfe- und Helfergruppen und erschließen freiwillige private Hilfeleistungen in Form von Spenden und ehrenamtlicher Tätigkeit. Außerdem vertreten sie die Interessen der sozial Bedürftigen und entwickeln selbständig neue Formen der Hilfe.

Auch in anderen europäischen Ländern haben gemeinnützige Träger von sozialen Dienstleistungen eine lange Tradition als Ergänzung der sozialen Sicherungssysteme.

Auch wenn die Kernzuständigkeiten für die Sozialpolitik nach wie vor in erster Linie in der Hand der Mitgliedstaaten liegen, gewinnt eine europaweite Sozialpolitik zunehmend an Gewicht. Mit dem Vertrag von

Maastricht und dem Amsterdamer Vertrag, der am 1. Mai 1999 in Kraft getreten ist, sind die Einwirkungen des Gemeinschaftsrechts auf die Sozialordnungen der Mitgliedstaaten durch eine Erweiterung der Zuständigkeit der Europäischen Union im Sozialbereich größer geworden. Die Auswirkungen auf die gemeinnützigen Anbieter sozialer Dienste in Deutschland sind im Ergebnis noch nicht absehbar.

Im Rahmen der Fachtagung stellten Wohlfahrtsverbände aus Finnland, Portugal, Frankreich und Deutschland ihre Aufgaben und Tätigkeiten in ihrem Land dar und erläuterten Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschiede. Ziel war es, die Diskussion über den Beitrag der nationalen Wohlfahrtsverbände für ein europäisches Sozialmodell anzuregen. Dabei ging es unter anderem um die Sicherung sozialer Rechte und die Erstellung einer europäischen Grundrechtscharta sowie angemessene Rahmenbedingungen für den Wettbewerb bei sozialen Leistungen.

“Die Wohlfahrtsverbände sind nicht nur ein wesentlicher Bestandteil der Zivilgesellschaft und des sozialen Dialogs, sondern auch der Sozialwirtschaft. Der WSA nimmt für diese Organisationen die Funktion einer Heimstätte wahr, in der sie ihre Standpunkte vertreten und weitere Verbände und Vereinigungen von ihrer Sache überzeugen können. Denn die Wohlfahrtsverbände brauchen tatsächlich Partner und Verbündete, in der Zivilgesellschaft wie in den europäischen Institutionen”, betonte **Jan OLSSON**, einer der Berichterstatter für die Stellungnahmen des Ausschusses.

Anlässlich der abschließenden Pressekonferenz erklärte **Dr. Christine Bergmann**: *“Europa wächst nicht nur wirtschaftlich, sondern auch sozial immer enger zusammen. Die Wohlfahrtsverbände sind als Partner der nationalen Regierungen und der europäischen Institutionen ein unverzichtbares Element für den inneren Zusammenhalt der EU. Sie gestalten die nationale und europäische Sozialstaatlichkeit mit. Ich freue mich, daß wir hier mit dem Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschuß einer Meinung sind. Soziale Leistungen können nicht allein dem Preiswettbewerb unterliegen, weil dies zu Lasten der Hilfsbedürftigen gehen würde. Wir müssen europaweit Verfahren für soziale Standards und für die Qualitätssicherung von sozialen Leistungen festlegen, also Wettbewerbsbedingungen für soziale Leistungen in Europa schaffen. Die bekannten ökonomischen Wettbewerbsprinzipien allein reichen bei sozialen Leistungen nicht aus. Dafür ist es wichtig, daß wir bewährte Strukturen und gewachsene soziale, kulturelle und wirtschaftliche Traditionen in den einzelnen Ländern kennen und berücksichtigen. Diese Fachtagung leistet dafür einen wichtigen Beitrag. Unser Ziel ist es, die Rolle der gemeinnützigen Organisationen in Europa zu stärken und ihre Arbeit zu unterstützen. Denn ein vereintes Europa ist nicht nur ein Europa der Wirtschaft, sondern auch ein soziales Europa.”*

WERTIGKEIT UND WANDEL VON WOHLFAHRTSVERBÄNDEN IN EINEM ZUSAMMENWACHSENDEN EUROPA

Fachtagung des Bundesfamilienministeriums und des Europäischen Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschusses in Brüssel

Die Verbände der Freien Wohlfahrtspflege sind unverzichtbares Element des deutschen Sozialsystems. Mit über 91.000 Einrichtungen und Diensten sowie 1,2 Millionen hauptamtlichen und mehr als 2,5 Millionen ehrenamtlichen Mitarbeitern gehört die Freie Wohlfahrtspflege auch in Europa zu den größten Akteuren auf dem sozialen Feld. Die Wohlfahrtsverbände sind eine wichtige Plattform des Bürgerengagements. Sie koordinieren und unterstützen Selbsthilfe- und Helfergruppen und erschließen freiwillige private Hilfeleistungen in Form von Spenden und ehrenamtlicher Tätigkeit. Außerdem vertreten sie die Interessen der sozial Bedürftigen und entwickeln selbständig neue Formen der Hilfe.

Auch in anderen europäischen Ländern haben freigemeinnützige Träger von sozialen Dienstleistungen eine lange Tradition als Ergänzung der sozialen Sicherungssysteme.

Auch wenn die Kernzuständigkeiten für die Sozialpolitik nach wie vor in erster Linie in der Hand der Mitgliedstaaten liegen, gewinnt eine europaweite Sozialpolitik zunehmend an Gewicht. Mit dem Vertrag von Maastricht und dem Amsterdamer Vertrag, der am 1. Mai 1999 in Kraft getreten ist, sind die Einwirkungen des Gemeinschaftsrechts auf die Sozialordnungen der Mitgliedstaaten durch eine Erweiterung der Zuständigkeit der Europäischen Union im Sozialbereich größer geworden. Die Auswirkungen auf die gemeinnützigen Anbieter sozialer Dienste in Deutschland sind im Ergebnis noch nicht absehbar.

Im Rahmen der Fachtagung „Wertigkeit und Wandel von Wohlfahrtsverbänden in einem zusammenwachsenden Europa – ihr Beitrag zum Aufbau einer europäischen Zivilgesellschaft“, die am 17. Dezember 1999 in Brüssel stattfindet, werden Wohlfahrtsverbände aus Finnland, Portugal, Frankreich und Deutschland ihre Aufgaben und Tätigkeiten in ihrem Land darstellen sowie Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschiede erläutern. Ziel ist es, die Diskussion über den Beitrag der nationalen Wohlfahrtsverbände für ein europäisches Sozialmodell anzuregen. Dabei wird es unter anderem um die Sicherung sozialer Rechte und die Erstellung einer europäischen Grundrechtecharta sowie angemessene Rahmenbedingungen für den Wettbewerb bei sozialen Leistungen gehen. Die Fachtagung wird veranstaltet vom Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend und dem Europäischen Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschuss (WSA). Der WSA hat im Beschlussfassungsprozess der Europäischen Union eine beratende Funktion und sichert damit die Vertretung der wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Interessengruppen im institutionellen Gefüge der EU.

Anlässlich einer Pressekonferenz im Rahmen der Brüsseler Fachtagung erklärt die **Bundesministerin für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend, Dr. Christine Bergmann**: „Europa wächst nicht nur wirtschaftlich, sondern auch sozial immer enger zusammen. Die Wohlfahrtsverbände sind als Partner der nationalen Regierungen und der europäischen Institutionen ein unverzichtbares Element für den inneren Zusammenhalt der EU. Sie gestalten die nationale und europäische Sozialstaatlichkeit mit. Ich freue mich, dass wir hier mit dem Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschuss einer Meinung sind. Soziale Leistungen können nicht allein dem Preiswettbewerb unterliegen, weil dies zu Lasten der Hilfsbedürftigen gehen würde. Wir müssen europaweit Verfahren für soziale Standards und für die Qualitätssicherung von sozialen Leistungen festlegen, also Wettbewerbsbedingungen für soziale Leistungen in Europa schaffen. Die bekannten ökonomischen Wettbewerbsprinzipien allein reichen bei sozialen Leistungen nicht aus. Dafür ist es wichtig, dass wir bewährte Strukturen und gewachsene soziale, kulturelle und wirtschaftliche Traditionen in den einzelnen Ländern kennen und berücksichtigen. Diese Fachtagung leistet dafür einen wichtigen Beitrag. Unser Ziel ist es, die Rolle der gemeinnützigen Organisationen in Europa zu stärken und ihre Arbeit zu unterstützen. Denn ein vereintes Europa ist nicht nur ein Europa der Wirtschaft, sondern auch ein soziales Europa.“

List of Participants

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List of Participants

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Stöllnberger, Klaus	Member of the European Economic and Social Committee
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Valkanov, Vesselin	Mission of Bulgaria to the EU
van den Burg, Ieke	Member of the European Parliament
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von Hebel, Manfred	Deutscher Caritasverband
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Wende, Brigitte	Ständige Vertretung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland bei der EU
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Yesildaglar Aysegül	Permanent Delegation of Turkey to EU
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zu Eulenburg, Soscha	Deutsches Rotes Kreuz