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MISSCEO(2009)13

**MUTUAL INFORMATION SYSTEM ON SOCIAL PROTECTION  
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE  
(MISSCEO)**

**11<sup>th</sup> meeting**

**(Strasbourg, 7 - 8 July 2009)**

Palais de l'Europe  
Room 15

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**MEETING REPORT**

## **I. OPENING OF THE MEETING**

1. The 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the network was opened and chaired by Ms Ana Gomez Heredero, Secretary of MISSCEO, who began by welcoming the participants. The list of participants appears in Appendix I.

2. Ms Verena Taylor, Head of the Social Policy Department since 1 July 2008, welcomed the participants and spoke of the importance of social rights as human rights and of the major role played by social security in this area. Ms Taylor reported on the 1st Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Social Cohesion held in Moscow on 26 and 27 February 2009 and in particular on the main issues discussed, which were broadly based on the report of the High-Level Task Force on Social Cohesion. At the conference, a final declaration had been adopted, reiterating that social cohesion supported the objectives of the Council of Europe. The ministers had also agreed that the Strategy for Social Cohesion adopted in 2000 and revised in 2004 should be reviewed in the light of the Task Force's report and that a Council of Europe Action Plan in the field of social cohesion should be developed. The initial update of the revised strategy had been discussed by the European Committee for Social Cohesion (CDCS) at its meeting at the end of May 2009 and the Action Plan was expected to be submitted to the Committee of Ministers during the May 2010 session.

3. Mr Karl-Friedrich Bopp, Head of the Division of Social Cohesion Policy and Standards, likewise welcomed the participants and told them about the structural reform carried out in the division. The new division was the result of a merger between the former Access to Social Rights Division, of which he had been head since June 2006, and the former Social Security Division. Mr Bopp talked about how the MISSCEO and MISSOC networks complemented one another and about the excellent co-operation with the European Commission. He reported on the main results of the meeting of the Committee of Experts on Social Security (CS-SS) and drew attention to the latest publications on social security. The first, "Social security as a human right – the protection afforded by the European Convention on Human Rights", was available in English, French, Spanish, Russian and German while the second publication, "Social security: protection at the international level and developments in Europe", was available in English and French.

## **II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

4. MISSCEO adopted the meeting agenda, as set out in Appendix II.

## **III. INFORMATION FROM THE SECRETARIAT**

5. Ms Gomez Heredero gave a demonstration of the new system for retrieving information from the database and comparative tables (pdf format) on the MISSCEO website. Database searches could be performed by topic or country at: <http://www.coe.int/MISSCEO>. Also available on the site were the comparative tables and charts on social protection and the annexes on self-employed persons. Participants at the meeting were given printouts of the MISSCEO tables for 2008.

6. After the presentation, there was a discussion. The representative of "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" asked whether it would be possible to export data to Excel tables, making them easier to print. The Secretariat said that this very much depended on how the database was designed and that the matter would need to be discussed with the Council of Europe's technical services.

#### **IV. INFORMATION ON MISSOC AND ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

7. Mr Claude Ewen, the MISSOC correspondent for Luxembourg, reported on developments in the MISSOC network. He divided his presentation into seven parts:

1. The comparative tables. Mr Ewen spoke here about the overhaul of Table XII “long-term care” and about the initial discussions concerning the revision of Table XI on “minimum resources”.
2. Incorporation of information on citizens’ rights and obligations in the social security field into the MISSOC database by DG EMPL Unit E3.
3. The MISSOC Info Bulletins which were produced twice a year. The first issue was dedicated to developments in national legislation while the second covered a specific topic chosen by the national correspondents. The topic in 2009 was integrating/reintegrating invalids/persons with disabilities into the labour market.
4. Topical issue. This was a regular item on the agenda at MISSOC meetings. At the last meeting in Prague in May 2009, the chosen topic had been the impact of the financial crisis on social protection systems.
5. Information on legislation. Correspondents who felt that major changes had occurred in their respective countries notified the secretariat and were given time to speak at the MISSOC meeting. There was no systematic round-table discussion, therefore.
6. Satisfaction survey. The MISSOC secretariat had announced the results of a survey carried out among the correspondents. On the whole, the MISSOC correspondents were pleased with the way the network was run.
7. MISSOC Analysis. The MISSOC secretariat compiled and published a document on a selected topic. This year the focus was on long-term care.

8. The full text of Mr Ewen’s statement appears in Appendix III.

9. Mr Roland Bladh, from the European Commission, reported on the main developments at the Commission in the field of social protection. Mr Bladh said that major changes were taking place in the European Union: election of the new parliament, new commissioners in autumn 2009, finalisation of the Treaty of Lisbon. There were also going to be some changes in the social protection directorate as the current director was due to retire shortly.

With regard to social affairs and the effects of the financial crisis, measures had been taken, such as closer monitoring of developments in the social field in Member States, so as to be able to support them more effectively: greater flexibility in the way funds were spent, provision of micro-credit (under discussion) and more efficient management of funds, avoiding increases in expenditure.

He also said that 2010 had been designated European Year for Combating Poverty and that the focus would be on action to promote social inclusion.

With regard to the MISSOC network in particular, he said that the main publications were available on the internet, see [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/missoc/db/dspMain.do](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/missoc/db/dspMain.do).

He reported on the discussions in Prague on incorporating information on citizens’ rights and obligations in the social security field into MISSOC’s work. It had been decided to leave the structure of the MISSOC tables unchanged and to provide this information outside the tables, creating automatic links.

Mr Bladh provided participants with an information pack on MISSOC containing a CD Rom with the MISSOC data for 2008, and a second CD entitled “Moving in Europe: your social security rights”.

## **V. DOCUMENT SUMMARISING THE PRINCIPLE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEMS**

10. Mr Paul Schoukens, content co-ordinator for the 2009 edition, gave a brief presentation on the possibility of adding an introduction to the MISSCEO tables. Such an introduction might include certain topics not covered in the tables, such as the role of the Constitution in social security systems, judicial protection, and also certain general issues relating to the social security set-up. As an example, Mr Schoukens had prepared a summary describing the main features of the system in “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”. This summary had been revised by Ms Aleksandra Slavkoska, representative of “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”.

11. At the meeting, participants also discussed the possibility of going a step further and compiling country-based introductions for each table, which would outline the main features of the situation in each country with regard to the social security sector covered in the table. These would provide clear, simple information about social protection systems in the MISSCEO countries and could be published separately, giving the network much greater visibility. The introductions could be supplemented with information about developments in the field of social protection and replace the publication of analyses of trends. The MISSOC network was currently taking a similar approach.

The MISSCEO secretariat had produced a template for these introductions which was distributed to the correspondents.

12. The correspondents discussed these proposals. As Mr Ewen saw it, there were three decisions that needed to be taken:

- The first related to the preparation of an introduction to the system containing information that did not appear in the tables, such as the role of the Constitution and the arrangements for appeal; such an introduction could appear in Annex III to the tables;
- The second decision concerned the general introduction on the system whereby correspondents would have an opportunity to explain certain general aspects of the system which were difficult to explain in the tables because these related to specific risks;
- The third concerned the introductions which would precede each table. This was what was currently being discussed at MISSOC.

13. MISSCEO agreed that it made sense to prepare an introduction encompassing the first two issues.

The representatives of Azerbaijan, Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine and the Russian Federation expressed support for this idea, taking the view that such introductions would be very helpful and would neatly complement the MISSCEO tables.

With regard to the third point, MISSCEO would wait to see how things developed and what decisions were made at MISSOC.

14. To conclude, it was decided to revise the document, taking the social protection system in “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” as an example, and to send it as a model to the MISSCEO correspondents so that an introduction of this kind could be presented at the next

meeting in 2010. The document in question has been revised and amended and appears in Appendix IV to this report.

## **VI. GENERAL COMMENTS ON COMPARABILITY**

15. Mr Paul Schoukens commented on the six MISSCEO tables updated in 2009 which he had managed to examine. In general, the comments made in previous years had been taken on board, but there were a number of points which he wished to make:

- In the field of pensions, in Table XI “Guaranteeing sufficient resources”, it was sometimes difficult to determine whether a pension was a “social pension” which came under the heading of social assistance, or a “minimum retirement pension” which came under social security. The advice given to correspondents was to include the “social pension” in Table XI if it came under social assistance, and in Table VI “Old age” if it related to social security;
- There were more and more cross-references and Mr Schoukens said that these were often necessary in order to understand the systems;
- With regard to the questions about personal scope, the length of the replies varied greatly. Some countries gave long lists of persons protected. The idea was to list only the main categories of people covered, leaving it to the correspondent to decide what best reflected the reality of the system in place;
- It was important not to leave sections blank, i.e. unanswered;
- When completing Table I “Financing”, some countries forgot to indicate how survivor’s benefits were funded;
- The tables that caused the most problems were Tables IX “Family benefits” and XI “Guaranteeing sufficient resources”;
- On the whole, Mr Schoukens felt that the tables were completed by different people in the same country and that the modifications made were extremely variable and changed the style of the tables. He therefore asked the correspondents to kindly check the style and quality of the English.

16. Participants took note of these suggestions.

## VII. COMPARATIVE EXERCISE

17. The aim of this comparative exercise was to encourage the MISSCEO correspondents to look at the tables from a reader's perspective rather than that of an author.

18. Further to the decision taken at the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of MISSCEO (Yerevan, 9-10 July 2008), participants had been invited, this year, prior to the meeting, Tables IX ("Family benefits") and XI ("Guaranteeing sufficient resources") of the 2008 edition of MISSCEO (see in the MISSCEO database <http://www.coe.int/MISSCEO>) so that they could discuss and comment on them at the meeting.

19. At the meeting, the correspondents split into four groups of two countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia; Russian Federation and Serbia; "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" and Ukraine, and Armenia and Azerbaijan) to examine the tables.

20. The conclusions presented by the different groups could be summarised as follows:

- In both tables, some sections had been left blank;
- The amount of benefits was sometimes shown in local currency, in which case it was important to know how this figure compared with the national average wage, for example;
- In the case of some countries, there were numerous cross-references between family benefits and maternity benefits;
- Should benefits in kind be included among family benefits? The answer was "yes" in cases where family benefits came under the heading of social security and there were no cash benefits;
- It was sometimes stated (Table IX) that, in the case of family benefits, extra payments were available for the poorest families yet on looking at Table XI, it appeared that there were no social assistance benefits for families. It was important to include cross-references, therefore.

21. This exercise once again proved very useful and was expected to be repeated according to the same format in 2010.

## VIII. EVOLUTION OF NATIONAL SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS. INFORMATION FROM THE CORRESPONDENTS ON THESE EVOLUTIONS, IN PARTICULAR ON THE MAIN CURRENT OR PLANNED REFORMS

22. The national correspondents of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Russian Federation, Serbia, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" and Ukraine reported on numerous interesting developments that had occurred in their social protection systems in 2008 and the first half of 2009.

23. Five national reports describing these developments had been submitted to the secretariat to date. With a view to preparing a publication, it was agreed that any correspondents who had not yet done so would send their contributions to the secretariat by 1 September 2009.

## **IX. PREPARATION of the 2009 EDITION**

24. Participants discussed the latest technical and administrative aspects of the 2009 tables which were based on national legislation as at 1 January of that year.

25. MISSCEO agreed the following timetable:

- a. Any MISSCEO correspondents who had not yet sent in their contributions were to do so by 1 September 2009.
- b. Those correspondents who had received Mr Paul Schoukens's comments would submit their revised contributions to the secretariat by 1 September 2009.
- c. The final version of the national contributions were to be ready by 31 October 2009.
- d. The MISSCEO data 2009 (English version) would be transferred to the database in November 2009.
- e. The MISSCEO data 2009 would be translated into French in November 2009.
- f. The MISSCEO data in French would be transferred to the database in December 2009 or January 2010.

## **PLANNING OF THE 2010 EDITION**

26. The information given in the tables should reflect the situation as at 1 January 2010.

27. The Secretariat explained that the 2010 edition would be prepared as follows:

- a. The secretariat would ask for the national contributions in January 2010.
- b. The MISSCEO correspondents would update their national contributions by 1 April 2010.
- c. The comments on the national contributions were to be ready by 2 May 2010.
- d. The 12<sup>th</sup> meeting of MISSCEO would be held during the week beginning 5 July 2010.

## **X. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

28. Following MISSOC's overhaul of Table XII "long-term care", Ms Gomez Heredero presented a document which compared the current version of Table XII with the version containing the changes approved by MISSOC. This table appears in Appendix V to this report.

29. The MISSCEO correspondents had no particular comments to make on the changes suggested by MISSOC. Although the revision of Table XII had been influenced by the countries which had specific long-term care insurance, the changes made should not, in theory, cause problems for those countries where no such arrangements existed. The changes already introduced by MISSOC to Table XII would also be adopted by MISSCEO, therefore. The

version which the MISSCEO correspondents would receive in 2010 for the update should include these changes. The correspondent's manual would also be amended accordingly.

#### **XI. DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The 12<sup>th</sup> meeting of MISSCEO would be held during the week beginning 5 July 2010, although it was not yet known where. The correspondents were asked to suggest possible venues.



## Appendix I

### LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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**Appendix II****AGENDA**

- I. OPENING OF THE MEETING
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- IV. INFORMATION ON MISSOC AND ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION
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Tables IX ("Family benefits") and XI ("Guaranteeing sufficient resources")
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INFORMATION FROM THE CORRESPONDENTS ON THESE EVOLUTIONS  
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## **Appendix III**

### **Translation of the speech by Mr Claude EWEN at the MISSCEO meeting**

The new MISSOC Secretariat is now in the second year of its contract and its activities have been marked by both a degree of continuity and a concern to constantly improve the quality of work. In contrast to your usual practice in the MISSCEO network, MISSOC meetings take place twice a year.

To inform you about recent developments in the MISSOC network, I shall refer extensively to the proceedings of the meeting held in Prague on 14 and 15 May 2009. I will subdivide my presentation into seven points.

#### **1. The comparative tables**

For the MISSCEO and MISSOC networks, work on the comparative tables is the most important, top-priority activity. I should stress that there needs to be constant dialogue in this field between the Secretariat and the national correspondents in order to improve the quality of entries, in terms both of their clarity for users and of comparability.

Last time, at the meeting in Yerevan, I informed you that Table XII on long-term care had been completely restructured. This extensive restructuring naturally gave rise to long discussions and negotiations, but I think I can say that the national correspondents were happy with the proposals made by the Secretariat. At the last meeting in Prague, the specific issue of the adjustment of Table XII was included on the agenda in order to discuss and agree the proposed restructuring. There were no negative comments. On the contrary, the national correspondents were pleased with the work done by the Secretariat. I presume that when you come to use the new model for Table XII yourselves, you will also be able to see that the agreed new structure is a good one and will likewise be pleased.

The national correspondents were first asked to complete Table XII using the new model in 2009. The MISSOC Secretariat again emphasised the importance of following the instructions given in the Correspondents' Guide. The Secretariat also explained some of the difficulties it encountered when processing information received from the correspondents. In the great majority of cases, it has been possible to resolve these problems through bilateral discussions.

The Secretariat pointed out that some of the national information requested in the Guide was sometimes lacking or not sufficiently detailed (for example for "Evaluation of dependency"). In some cases, it was not clear whether certain information should be included in a given category (for example, leave to care for a dependent person in the "Benefits for the carer" category). Some correspondents also had problems distinguishing between two categories (for example "free choice between cash and/or benefits in kind"). On the basis of comments received from the correspondents, the Secretariat made some final changes to the structure of Table XII. For example, certain categories were combined, and others were moved and given a new title. The changes do not affect the content, but introduce specific, concrete improvements.

Still on the reform and improvement of the structure of the tables, I should say that we had an initial discussion on the possible revision of Table XI on guaranteeing sufficient resources. This was a preliminary discussion, which should enable the Secretariat to work further on the subject and maybe come back with specific proposals at the next MISSOC meeting in Stockholm, Sweden, in November.

In any event, the conclusion of the discussion was that the Secretariat should not rush into any major restructuring of Table XI and that the matter still required further debate.

You are of course directly concerned by the restructuring of the tables because, to ensure the comparability of the information provided by the MISSCEO and MISSOC networks, you decided to accept changes agreed by MISSOC.

This brings me to the second point of my presentation, because a new idea was tabled at the Prague meeting.

## **2. Inclusion of the information contained in the Guide “Your Social Security Rights when Moving within the European Union” in the MISSOC database**

You may know that the European Commission (DG Employment Unit E3) gathers information on citizens' rights and obligations in the social security field in the 27 EU member states as well as Iceland, Switzerland and Norway. There is a printed version of this publication, but the same information is also on the Commission's website. This guide was last updated in 2006, and a new edition is planned in 2010. The information on national social security rights covers similar areas to those dealt with by MISSOC, but it is less detailed and presented in a descriptive format rather than as a database. The primary objective of this guide is to inform citizens of their social security rights in countries they are visiting or plan to visit or move to.

To improve the clarity of the tables and facilitate users' understanding of them, the European Commission has said several times that it wants the MISSOC Secretariat to include, for each table, specific country introductions setting out, in a succinct and descriptive fashion, the main aspects of the country's social protection system dealt with by the table.

To facilitate and optimise the use of the various existing data, the European Commission said in Prague that it wanted to incorporate the information on these national social security rights into the MISSOC database. The Commission thus wishes to combine the advantages of the two approaches: the frequency of MISSOC's updates and its detailed information, combined with the simplified presentation of the website on national social security rights. The Commission argues that this would represent added value for MISSOC by providing contextual and descriptive information that would be made available to MISSOC users. Secondly, it stresses that having MISSOC's permanent network of national correspondents and the contributions of the MISSOC Secretariat should enable the frequent updating of information that would otherwise be revised only every four years. Lastly, combining these two sources of information on the same theme into a single database would improve the two products' user-friendliness.

In concrete terms, the European Commission wants to make three different but interrelated additions to the MISSOC tables:

1. “General Introductions to the Tables”, in other words a general contextual and transnational introduction to each table, explaining the concept and scope of the sector dealt with.
2. “Country Introductions to the Tables”, in other words a descriptive introduction to each table for each country, based on information contained in the guide to national social security rights.
3. “Organisation of Social Protection”, in other words information on the way social protection is organised in a given country, which would include the organisation chart now accessible on MISSOC as well as various pieces of information from the guide to national social security rights.

These ideas were discussed at the Prague meeting. It has to be said that the proposals were generally well received by those national correspondents who joined in the discussion. To sum up, the idea of combining information from the MISSOC tables and from the guide to national

social security rights met with a positive response on the whole, but it still raises a number of concerns. It is above all very important to preserve the comparative dimension of MISSOC and maintain the current structure of the MISSOC tables. It is therefore preferable to combine the way the two types of information are presented and make them compatible with one another, rather than amalgamate them completely. In any case, there seems to be a preliminary agreement on the fact that the MISSOC network and structures could also take on the task of updating the new part of the information.

The Commission will discuss this at a later date with the Secretariat and make a more detailed proposal at the MISSOC meeting in November. Consideration will be given to the possibility of developing a sample web page and a few examples before the network's next meeting.

### **3. The MISSOC Info Bulletins**

The publication of two MISSOC Info Bulletins each year is, in terms of the work entailed, MISSOC's second most important activity. It requires a significant and serious commitment from the national correspondents, who have been disciplined about meeting the deadlines for submitting their national reports on developments in national legislation, traditionally the topic for the first MISSOC Info bulletin each year.

All the national reports have been analysed by the Secretariat, and a consolidated report on developments in social protection in 2008 was presented by a member of the MISSOC Secretariat, Professor Iveta Radicova. Presenting her report in Prague, she outlined the most important developments in the five following areas:

- social integration and inclusion in the labour market,
- support to families with children,
- pension systems,
- health care,
- social services and long-term care.

With regard to the challenges facing the whole of Europe, Ms Radicova referred, in her analysis of the changes that have taken place, to technological progress, globalisation and ageing, all set in 2008 against the backdrop of the general economic recession and financial crisis. She concluded by repeating that certain objectives must not be lost sight of, namely:

- efforts to alleviate poverty,
- the viability of pension systems,
- access to health care,
- providing long-term care.

As every year, this consolidated report will be published together with the 27 national reports in MISSOC Info 01/2009, which should be available soon.

MISSOC Info 02/2009, for which the national correspondents are asked to submit their contributions before the summer holidays, focuses on the integration/reintegration of disabled/handicapped people into the labour market.

At the Prague meeting, the correspondents had a lively discussion about the questionnaire to be used for the preparation of national contributions and requested some amendments, in particular concerning the people targeted by these back-to-work measures.

For this discussion, the correspondents were again divided into three working groups. This is a good way of working, bearing in mind the large number of participants at MISSOC meetings. It makes for better discussions, because it is easier for participants to join in and speak in a smaller group, but has the disadvantage that participants lack information on the discussions that have taken place in the other groups. It is true that there are rapporteurs to report on the

various groups' discussions, but it is still hard to acquire an overview when this way of working is used. In any event, the Secretariat promised to take on board the conclusions of the discussions and amend the questionnaire which, I repeat, the correspondents must use for guidance when drafting their national contributions.

#### **4. Topical issue**

As you know, at each MISSOC meeting a topical issue is put on the agenda for study and, if appropriate, discussion by the participants. The chosen topic for the Prague meeting was the impact of the financial crisis on social protection systems.

The following points were dealt with in detail:

- how the crisis evolved,
- the initial reactions in Europe,
- the spreading of the crisis to almost all sectors,
- the deepening of the recession and increased pressure on pensions,
- record negative figures for economic indicators,
- prospects for the future, in particular regarding state aid and the Social Summit for Employment.

#### **5. Information on legislation**

As I told you during my previous presentations, at MISSOC meetings we do not have a systematic round-the-table discussion in which each correspondent takes the floor to provide information on changes in legislation in his or her country. Correspondents who believe there have been major changes in their country inform the Secretariat and they are given time on the agenda. They thus have an opportunity to explain the situation in their country in more detail.

During the Prague meeting, the representatives from Greece provided some interesting information on their country's major pensions reform. This was extremely useful for the other participants.

#### **6. Satisfaction survey**

It is understandable that when it started work, the new Secretariat wanted to know correspondents' opinions on the functioning of their network. This is why, at the MISSOC meeting in Paris in October 2008, the Secretariat asked the correspondents for their views on the following areas:

- communication between the Secretariat and the national correspondents,
- the organisation of MISSOC network meetings,
- communication strategy,
- the role and the responsibility of the MISSOC Secretariat with regard to the contributions of the correspondents,
- MISSOC Analysis.

The survey, which mainly consisted in filling in a questionnaire, also offered the correspondents an opportunity to make suggestions.

A document with detailed analysis of the results of this satisfaction survey was distributed at the Prague meeting. Generally speaking, the MISSOC correspondents are satisfied with the way their network functions.



## **7. MISSOC Analysis**

According to the terms of the contract between the MISSOC Secretariat and the European Commission, the Secretariat must publish, under its own responsibility, a paper on a subject chosen by agreement among the parties concerned. This year's MISSOC Analysis subject is long-term care.

As is now customary at MISSOC meetings, the representative of a ministry or institution from the country in the chair makes a presentation on the MISSOC Analysis subject. In Prague, Petr Wíjja of the Social Inclusion Policies Unit at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs made a presentation on the long-term care system in the Czech Republic. Then Professor Yves Jorens, the MISSOC Analysis Scientific Mentor, presented his research report on long-term care. The subject may be summarised as follows:

The characteristics and forms of long-term care are a matter of choice:

- institutional care or family care,
- a private or public organisation,

but there is a need to ensure quality and viable funding.

The report is divided into three main chapters, on accessibility, quality and co-ordination of care. The chapter on accessibility tackles the issue of knowing where (that is, in which branch) the risk of long-term care is covered, the statutory basis for schemes and the conditions for granting long-time care. The chapter on quality deals with initiatives aimed at increasing choice for patients, for example by emphasising informal care and the development of individual budgets, and the instruments used in the different countries for ensuring the quality of long-term care, such as accreditation systems. The chapter on co-ordination of care deals with an issue that is considered necessary to ensure a high level of quality, that is to say the effective use of resources and personalised treatment. Some countries have introduced methods of personalised management or individual management of care. The whole range of national benefits is also described in this chapter.

I again stress that the national correspondents have no responsibilities with regard to MISSOC Analysis. It is of course extremely interesting for them to learn about the ideas developed; they may discuss these at the meeting, but the Secretariat is solely responsible for the document finally published.

## **Conclusion**

I hope that this information on the way the MISSOC network functions has been of interest to you and that it may help you reflect upon how to improve the organisation of the MISSCEO network.

## **Appendix IV**

### **Document summarising the main features of the social security systems**

#### **Concept and sources of the social security law – judicial protection**

The social security system in “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” consists of the following schemes: social insurance, social protection and family benefits schemes.

The social insurance schemes are covering three basic types of insurances, i.e. the health insurance, the pension and invalidity insurance and the unemployment insurance. They are primordially financed on the basis of social security contributions and are of a professional nature. They are covering the professionally active persons (employees, self-employed people, farmers and civil servants), their family members and some assimilated groups. Although professional of nature, the health care insurance is covering the entire population residing in the country and guarantees equal access to health care regardless of employment and legal status of the citizens.

Social protection schemes are taken care of by the state, and focus upon prevention and coverage of the basic social needs. These schemes are universal in the sense that they cover all citizens and persons residing in the country. Some categorical assistance schemes, providing assistance to specific groups (elderly in need, handicapped) exist as well.

The family benefit (child protection) schemes are separately organised. They provide families with cash benefits and services. Although they are universal with regard to their personal scope, they mainly target working families with a low income (below minimum subsistence). For that purpose use is made of means testing. Special benefits are provided to children with special needs.

The Constitution of “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” includes a detailed list of provisions regarding the economic and social protection of the citizens. Under Article 1 of the Constitutional Basic Provisions, “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” is declared as an independent, sovereign, democratic and social state, while Article 8 of the basic provisions as one of the basic Constitutional values of “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” is determining the principle of social justice. The social rights can be found in Chapter 2, Part 2 of the Constitution and they include right to health protection, social security (social insurance) and social protection (Articles 32- 42). With regard to social security the following articles are essential:

Article 34:

“The citizens have right to a social security and social insurance determined with Law and the Collective Agreements”

Article 35:

“The Republic provides for the social protection and social security of citizens in accordance with the principle of social justice. The Republic is guaranteeing help to the helpless and to the citizens incapable for work. The Republic is providing special protection to the persons with disability as well as conditions for their active inclusion in the society.”

Moreover, everyone has the right to material assistance during temporary unemployment. Every citizen is guaranteed the right to health care. Mothers and children are particularly protected.

Citizens may invoke the protection of rights determined by the Constitution before the courts, as well as before the Constitutional Court of “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”, through a procedure based upon the principles of priority and urgency.

Individual's access to social rights is guaranteed in a three instance procedure, the third instance always being the judicial protection of the legality of individual acts of the state administration.

The procedures for attainment the rights and obligations related to health insurance are laid down in the Health Insurance Law and Law on General Administrative Procedure. The procedure is being initiated upon an application of the insured persons or a member of their family. A regional service of the Fund or

the Fund itself is obliged to issue a decision regarding the filed application and to deliver it to the applicant thereof. The applicant has a right to a complaint to the Minister of Health in the capacity of a second instance authority against the aforesaid decision of the Fund. The complaint shall be lodged within 15 days as of date of receipt of the decision. The Minister of Health shall bring a decision and deliver it to the applicant within two months as of date of filing of the complaint at the latest. Judicial protection is provided to the insured person against the decision of the Minister. The individual can address his/her complaints to the Administrative Court of "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" in accordance with the Law on Administrative Disputes.

The rights related to the pension and invalidity insurance are different because they are acquired depending on the period and amount of investment in the funds for pension and disability insurance. The procedure is provided through the Pension and Disability Insurance Fund, having regional units throughout the country. Applications should be launched with the local branch office of the Fund for pension and disability insurance. In case a person wants to launch an appeal against the taken decision, he/she can apply to the Governmental Commission. This is the second instance, while in a further process against the second instance decision the individual can launch an administrative dispute in front of the Administrative Court.

Proceedings with regard to unemployment benefits shall be brought by the administrator of the local Employment Centre where the unemployed person is registered, which means that the rights determined by the Law on Employment and Insurance in Case of Unemployment are dealt with by the Ministry competent for labour affairs in the first instance. A complaint against the aforesaid decision does not delay the execution thereof. In third instance the individual can lodge an administrative appeal with the Administrative Court against the decision of the minister of labour.

The Social Work Centre decides upon the rights of social welfare and family benefits in the first instance. Competent is the centre where the individual holds temporary or permanent residence. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy deals with social benefits complaints in the second instance procedures. Family benefits in second instance are dealt with by a Governmental Commission. The judicial protection is provided by means of initialising administrative proceedings before the Administrative Court of "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia". Provisions laid down in the Law on Social Protection, Child Protection Law and Law on General Administrative Procedure apply for administering the aforesaid proceedings.

## Annexe V

## Revision of Table XII “long-term care”

MISCEO	MISSOC	COMMENT
<b>Table XII Long Term Care</b>	<b>Table XII Long Term Care</b>	
<b>1. Applicable statutory basis</b>	<b>1. Applicable statutory basis</b>	
<b>2. Basic principles</b>	<b>2. Basic principles</b>	
<b>3. Risk Covered: definition</b>	<b>3. Risk Covered: definition</b>	
<b>4. Field of Application</b>	<b>4. Field of Application</b>	
<b>5. Conditions</b> 1. Age	<b>5. Conditions</b> 1. Qualifying period	Enlarged category in MISSOC
2. Qualifying period	2. Means test	
	3. Minimum level of dependency	
	4. Age	
	5. Duration of benefits	
	<b>6. Organisation</b> 1. Evaluators	New category in MISSOC
	2. Providers • informal caregivers • professional providers	
	3. Evaluation of care dependency • indicators	
	• categories	
<b>6. Benefits in kind</b> 1. Home Care	<b>7. Benefits in kind</b> 1. Home Care	
2. Semi-Stationary Care	2. Semi-Residential Care	
3. Nursing Care	3. Residential care	

MISCEO	MISSOC	COMMENT
4. Other Benefits	4. Other Benefits	
7. Cash Benefits 1. Home Care	8. Cash Benefits 1. Amount	New category in MISSOC
2. Semi-Stationary Care	2. Discretionary use	
3. Nursing Care		
4. Other Benefits		
8. Participation of the Beneficiary	9. Combination of benefits 1. Mixed benefits	New category in MISSOC
	2. Free choice between cash and benefits in kind	
9. Accumulation	10. Accumulation 1. Accumulation of cash benefits with benefits in kind	New category in MISSOC
	2. Accumulation with other social security benefits	
	11. Benefits for the carer	New category in MISSOC
	12. Participation of the beneficiary	New category in MISSOC
10. Taxation	13. Taxation	