



RESOLUTION

of the European Confederation of Independent Trade Unions

concerning

the Social Dialogue in Europe

Rapporteurs: Mr. Christian Chapuis and Mr. Valentin Vellisco



The European Confederation of Independent Trade Unions (CESI),

- given** the clauses relating to social dialogue in articles 138 et 139 of the EC Treaty (ex-articles 118 a et 118 b) ;
- given** the fundamental social rights mentioned in the introduction to the Treaty on European Union;
- given** the principle of democracy in article 6 § 1 of the Treaty on European Union ;
- given** European Social Charter of the Council of Europe of 1961 ;
- given** the Community Charter on workers fundamental social rights of 1989 ;
- given** the EU budget items B3 4000 et B3 4002, which allocate funds to recognised social partners;
- given** the development of social dialogue in the Commission communication COM(2002) 341 final “Proposal for a Council decision creating a tripartite social summit for growth and employment”;
- given** the representativeness criteria of the Commission communication to the Council and the European Parliament on putting into practice the agreement on policy COM(93) 600 final ;
- given** the resolution in support of union pluralism adopted by the European parliament on the 20th April 2000 on the proposal of Viviane Reding ;
- given** the resolution of the civil service ministers adopted in Strasbourg on the 7th November 2000 under the French presidency of the Council, which introduced union pluralism into discussions on the informal, sectoral social dialogue in public administration ;

adopted the following resolution at the meeting of the Executive Board on 25/2/2003.

The CESI

notes

1. that social dialogue goes beyond simple dialogue between trade unions and employers' organisations, since the results can have an immediate effect on European Union member states' legislation ;
2. that the informal exchange, initially bilateral and managed by the Commission, has become a trilateral political process ;
3. that institutionalised European social dialogue is still a long way off ;
4. that the recognised European social partners are integrated into an extensive information and consultation processes ;
5. that the European Commission has communicated and applied evaluation criteria according to its view of necessary representativeness to the recognition of social partners ;
6. the existence of democratic principles of pluralism, liberty, positive and negative collective organisation, equal opportunities and the chance to choose freely in elections of workers' representatives ;

welcomes

7. the fact that European social dialogue is an integral part of *acquis communautaire* ;
8. the fact that social partners are mentioned in the Treaty and that social dialogue is increasingly considered to be a driving force in European integration in terms of social policy, which is an area still essentially subject to national prerogatives ;

criticises

9. the under-use to date of the possibility, set out in the Treaty, for all European social partners to reach agreements launching legislative procedures on a European level or transposing them to member state level through the involvement of national social partners ;
10. the de facto exclusion from social dialogue of minorities and consequently the strengthening of the monopoly held by certain organisations, both on the side of workers and employers. This has to be seen as problematic from a democratic point of view ;
11. the exclusive participation of recognised social partners in the Convention on the future of the EU for example, in an advisory capacity (and therefore without voting rights) ;
12. the fact that European social dialogue is suffering from a lack of legitimacy, given that the legitimate right of minorities to participate has, up to now, been ignored ;
13. the practice of demanding a certain degree of representativeness which almost prevents the emergence or development of new organisations ;

requests

14. that the Commission also recognise the right of more recent organisations to develop in Europe and asks the European Parliament to defend the rights of qualified minorities ;
15. that the Commission give CESI members, who are not represented by the recognised European trade union organisation, the right to participate in European integration, too, and asks for support for the CESI on this point from the European Parliament, guarantor of pluralism and democratic centre of Europe ;

16. recognition as a social partner, both in trans-sectoral and sectoral social dialogue, since its members should also have the right to be informed and to be heard in Europe.

Brussels, 25th February 2003

Valerio Salvatore

President

Helmut Müllers

General Secretary