

## NATIONAL REPORT, MAY 2014

### **Political circumstances**

Due to personal offences the most powerful political party in Slovenia has fallen apart and consequently also left of centre government. Shortest solution of political crisis is expected by snap elections that could happen in July or September 2014, what means at least a half year gap of legitimate government and at the moment an obstacle to help Slovenians to overcome financial and economic crisis. Political interests are divided in strict two parts, the right wing is uniting while the leftist are losing people's interests, new small political parties are arising, but apparently they do not show enough impulse to find common goals.

### **Financial and economic crisis**

Circumstances in finances and economy have not changed since my last report in November 2013 although the statistics show a small change of gross domestic product from minus to plus 0,5%, what does not influence on working conditions and unemployment. I would not like to repeat the data, I am just asking you to look once again at our national report to EuroFIA meeting in November 2013.

### **Basis for further negotiations with representative TU of Public Sector 2015-2016**

In Slovenia, there is no legislation what are governmental authorizations after its resignation, so the government defined them itself, amongst them also the negotiations with TU of Public Sector. The number is quite abundant (35), coming from state and local authorities, education, health, social services, police, army, science, protection of environment, culture and many others. On employers' side we find a strict and powerful authority of state, while on the trade unions side there are vital interests of dispersed problems that may in future influence on national development, that seem to the citizens important as national survival. Central points represent health and social security, science, culture and environment.

Ministry of Interior, authorized for negotiations with TU of Public Sector has recently sent to trade unions a list titled as Basis for further negotiations. That list in short contains austerity measures for financial consolidation of public sector 2015-16. As told these measures are founded on Strategy Europe 2020, Stability Program and National Reform Program 2014-2015.

The measures are restrictions of public expenses:

- income strategy of pension and health funds,

- restrictions of social transfers,
- restrictions on expenditure on pensions,
- restrictions on material expenses, investments and subsidies,
- limitations on work costs under 4,2 billion EUR.

Temporary measures for a year or two ( **COMMENT: USUALLY THEY BECOME PERMANENT**):

- linear cuts of work costs ( measures proposed to become permanent) **COMMENT: ESCALATION OF PRECARIETY OF WORKING PLACES**
- cuts of fund of salaries for 5% (intense to cover budget deficit on 3%).

The basis sustains prolongations of temporary measures for 2014 and measures of structural nature:

- reduction of staff ( **COMMENT: IN CULTURE AIMED ON ARTISTS**)
- changes in structure of working places (**COMMENT: EMPLOYMENTS FOR INDEFINITE, LONG AN DEFINITE WORKING TIME WILL CHANGE TO PRECARIOUS WORKING RELATIONSHIPS**),
- changes of norms and standards (**COMMENT: LAST NORMS AND STANDARDS IN CULTURE WERE ADOPTED IN CULTURE COMMUNITY OF SOCIALIST REPUBLIC SLOVENIA – ENTITY OF FORMER YUGOSLAVIA - IN 1985 AND THAT IS QUESTION, WHETHER THEY ARE STILL LEGITIME. SO IT IS QUESTIONABLE WHAT IS SUBJECT OF CHANGING AT ALL**).

### **Act Regulating the Realization of the Public Interest in the Field of Culture (ZUJIK)**

Slovenian state has regulated cultural life in two fundamental acts, National Program of Culture (adopted by parliament for next four years), an act more or less a declaration of cultural agenda, and the second with nearly unpronounceable title, abridged ZUJIK, that regulates organization of public cultural life and institutions, its financing from public budgets, labour market, investments, and covers live culture and media as so as cultural heritage, libraries and archives. The act was adopted in 2002, and went by now through ten severe changes, the Ministry promises new basic changes in labour market, enter of private capital market, working relationships and others. Representative TU, GLOSA and SVIZ protested, because their representatives were not included in those preparations and succeeded, that the Minister named two of them as members of steering committee. But apparently they are not invited to the meetings. The act is supposed to be on the list of tasks of the resigned government, which can send the act to the parliament through fast-track procedure and cause damage in working relationships as for employees as for self-employed. In that case we shall have to ask FIA for emergency call.

### **Trade Unions of Culture and Relations with Employers' Associations**

Most of performing activities and creativeness is happening under cover of state and local budgets in public institutions in one or another way under umbrella of ZUJIK. It covers work of public TV and Slovenian film production. The system also allows to different individuals or entities (societies, cooperatives, fringe theatres, others) to ask for financial help to realize their programme. Allocations

depend on Minister or representatives of local authorities (on advice of independent professionals), which is many times politically coloured.

In last 25 years of social changes and transition quite a number of private events or performing practices aroused, organized by sometimes doubtful organizers and unknown status. Their intention is many times quick profit and uncontrolled commercial benefit. Further in Slovenia exist very powerful private media company ProPlus, part of international media corporation CME (Central European Media Enterprises, seated on Bahamas), that owns media companies in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Croatia, Romania, Slovak Republic and Slovenia. Proplus avoids any invitation to bargaining for collective agreements. There is no trace about them as members of Employers Association of Slovenia or Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia.

Similar problems we find also in public sector. Even though the state recognized rules of European Social Dialogue, government puts it into force only on highest level. Representative employers' associations can be found in health or maybe education, but nowhere in culture, though they never directly participate in negotiations for CA. Therefore TU representatives in negotiations instead of professionally educated experts meet disinterested state officials. And what is most unreasonable, the managers in performing arts and entertainment hide themselves behind these people, do not accept responsibilities defined by laws, ignore appeals of TU for funding their representative association and joining them to PEARLE and create a solid fundament for social dialogue. Because of such behaviour in public sector there is no wonder that the reaction in private sector is even more rough.

Some of workers, especially in national institutions feel themselves comfortable thinking that changes will not hurt their work and life balance and do not comprehend how quickly can changes happen. They have not learned well and enough from situations in Spain, Greece, Portugal and other impaired countries, not mentioning worse conditions in live performance and AV also in economically well conditioned EU members. This way of thinking influences a lot also on behaviour some TU representatives and even more on some civil professional organizations ( in Slovenian performing sector we can count more than 20, like actors, classical dancers, modern dancers, film directors, stage directors, dramatists , theatre critics and dramaturges, architects, designers and many others). They hardly find necessity for searching common goals and mostly grow their own small garden, what the employers' authorities use with good effect for themselves and manipulate the workers. But if the system will collapse, as expected, Slovenian culture and arts will become a dead culture and in further may exist instead of culture diversity only a folklore one. The real creative Slovenian forces will sink in poverty of international financial corporations. And such salvation may represent one of the possible ends of glorious European Union.

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