



Social Protection Reform Project
中国-欧盟社会保障改革项目



**FROM THE
RESIDENT EXPERT, COMPONENT 1**

With the year 2017 coming to an end, our Component was proud to report to the project Coordination meeting held in Rome on 1 December 2017, that not only it completed or substantially advanced in all parts of its ambitious programme for the year, but also launched new elements that, although not initially foreseen, proved to be of great interest for improving project efficiency.

Information was already provided in the previous editions of this newsletter on the update in baseline data and production of technical notes which, beyond servicing the Chinese stakeholders and experts visiting China, might help conducting reforms in other countries by making accessible to a wide audience both the Chinese experience, and the European response to some world-wide challenges in social security planning and management. In order to ensure that activities planned for 2018 take place in a well-informed context, the Component took the initiative to make and advance review, held in Rome on 30 November 2017, of the topic of active labour market policies, which will be the common thread of most of our overseas activities for next year. We are entering what was initially scheduled to be the last year of our project. Even though discussions are on going to consider a possible cost-neutral extension with the European Union,

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results already achieved are quite substantial – and the recently conducted EU project evaluation mission unambiguously confirmed that our component was on track pursuing the results assigned to it. Our plan of activities for 2018, already substantially discussed and agreed with the Chinese National Development and Reform Commission NDRC, will be formally adopted during a Project advisory committee meeting to be held around the Chinese Spring Festival in February of next year. For our component, 2015 was the year of reviewing the fundamentals of the pension system, 2016 that of Sustainability issues, 2017 was dedicated to the relevance and efficiency of pension schemes. For 2018, our ambition is to contribute to a better understanding of the role of social protection in upholding societal changes – which is in fact about the very legitimacy of a country's social system...

Jean-Victor Gruat
December 2017

PUBLICATION

The three-volume Chinese version of the report on Component One 2016 High level event on Employment promotion and social security policies is published. Available on request from the project office. Free download from Project website – <http://www.euchinasprp.eu/cn/>



ROME 1 DECEMBER – PROJECT COORDINATION MEETING The meeting held at the invitation of the Italian National Social Protection Institution INPS, which is in charge of overall project leadership on behalf of the European consortium, allowed Chinese stakeholders, component coordinators and other members of the Consortium, secretariats as well as resident experts to exchange views on the various aspects of the project, without the pressure inherent to official decision-making statutory sessions. Participants could therefore conduct a friendly though efficient and in-depth discussion around major topics such as the evaluation of past activities, proposals for 2018 programme, the prospects for inter-component collaboration and the possible contents of an envisaged project extension. Progress made on the occasion of the coordination meeting will no doubt facilitate further exchanges among all parties involved, until and during the 2018 project advisory committee meeting.



GENDER AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Professors Lin Yi, Director, Centre for Insurance & Social Security Research (CISSR), Southwestern University of Finance and Economics, Chengdu and Ngok Kinglun (aka Yue Jinglun), vice-dean of the School of Government/Center for Public Administration Research, Sun Yatsen University, Canton, completed for the project Component one two major researches on the employment and social protection situation of women in their respective provinces. This work will feed in a major item on the Component programme of activities for 2018, with exchange of views and experiences and formulation of recommendations for overcoming factors of gender imbalance in the related fields. The studies indeed show that, both in Sichuan and Guangdong provinces, the situation of women, especially migrant workers, lags well behind that of male in terms of accessing decent employment, enjoying stability in labour relation, and benefitting from a robust, well- established social protection scheme.

GET IN TOUCH

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PARIS: INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP AND POLICY DIALOGUE

An International Workshop to complete research on the topics of parametric reform and redistributive effects in pension reform was held in Paris on 14 September 2017. Some 20 participants took part in the discussions, among which Chinese and European high-level officials as well as Academics and Experts. The EU Social Protection Committee and the OECD were also represented.

The Workshop was opened by Mrs Nathalie Nikitenko, Delegate for the European and International Affairs, Ministry of Solidarities and Health, Ministry of Labour (France) and Mr. Li Kang, Director General, Department of Employment and Income distribution, NDRC. Mr. Andraz Rangus, Chair of EU Social Protection Committee Working Group on the Pension adequacy report also made a presentation on Pension adequacy in European Union countries.



Mr. Koen Vleminckx, Director General Strategy, Research and International, Federal Public Service Social Security, Belgium chaired the 1st session on Parametric Reforms in Public Pension System. Ms. Zhou Hong, Researcher, Member of Academic Board of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), made her presentation on Chinese pension reform, and the relevance of the European experience. Following, experts from EU member-states gave reviews on pension systems in their respective countries namely Mr. Jan Skorpik and Mr. Marek Suchomel, from Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of Czech Republic; Ms Anne Lavigne, General secretary, Pensions Orientation Council from France; Mr. Carlo Mazzaferro, from University of Bologna, Italy; Mr. Andrzej Szybkie, from the Social Insurance Institution ZUS, Poland; and Mr. Karl Birkholz, from the Swedish Pensions Agency, Sweden.

Ms. Zhou Hong, CASS, chaired the 2nd session on The Influence of Parametric Reform on Redistribution through Public Pension Schemes. Mr. Li Shi, Dean of China Institute for Income Distribution, Beijing Normal University, made his presentation on Current and prospective redistribution through the Chinese pension scheme for urban employees. Mr. Pieter Vanhuysse, Danish Center for Welfare Studies made his presentation on Political Economy of Pensions and Redistribution effects in Europe and Ms. Céline Thévenot, Social Policy Division, Directorate for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs, OECD, made her presentation on Trends, causes and remedies to income inequality in OECD.

Following the 2nd session was the general discussion, and then Mr. Li Kang, Director General, DEID, NDRC and Mr. Bertrand Barbé, Director General Delegate, Expertise France gave closing comments on the international workshop, marking the success of the conference.

On 15 September, still in Paris, was held the **Second EU-China Policy Dialogue** under the framework of the project component I (the first Policy dialogue had been held in Beijing in April 2016).

The policy dialogue allowed for high level exchange between the Chinese delegation and European representatives, including Ms. Barbara Kaufmann, Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG, European Commission; Mr. Stefano Scarpetta, Director for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs, OECD; Mr. Antero Kiviniemi, Social Protection Expert, Finland Representation to the EU; Mr. Koen Vleminckx, Federal Public Service Social Security, Belgium. Mr. Michel Villac, Vice-President of the French High Council of Family, Children and Aged Persons (HCFEA) and Mr. Li Kang, Director general of NDRC Employment and Income distribution Department were the co-chairs of the Dialogue which addressed over two sessions issues of Employment and Social Integration, and of Social security and income redistribution.

STUDY VISIT TO FINLAND AND SWEDEN

Between 18 and 21 September 2017, a high level delegation from the Chinese National Development and Reform Commission NDRC led by Mr. Li Kang, Director General of the Department of Employment and Income Distribution, conducted a Policy Dialogue and Study visit in Sweden and Finland, around the topic of income redistribution through social security mechanisms in these two Nordic countries.

In Sweden, the delegation first met with the Swedish Pension Agency Fund and Finance Department which explained the pivotal role of the pension system. A meeting with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health followed, to gain a better global vision of the Swedish social protection comprehensive mechanism.

In Finland the delegation first met with the United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research, UNU-WIDER, located in Helsinki. The Institute provides economic analysis and policy advice with the aim of promoting sustainable and equitable development for all, particularly developing countries.

The delegation then visited the Finnish Unemployment Insurance Fund, TVR, which is a public body managing unemployment insurance system for Finnish citizens, also in charge of observing evolution in the labour market.

To follow, the Delegation met with KELA, which is the Social Insurance Institution of Finland, managing the national pension for the Finnish citizens. KELA is conducting the experiment on universal minimum income on behalf of the current Finnish government, which is interesting to social protection policy makers and researchers around the world.

At the Finnish Centre for Pensions – ETK – which mainly manages earnings-related pension scheme, the Delegation received information on the legislation, supervision and execution of the earnings-related pension system in Finland. A presentation was also made on the 2015 - 2017 Finnish pension reforms, the aim of which were mainly to adapt the pension system to changing life expectancy.

In conclusion of the meetings and the visit, the NDRC delegation expressed its thanks to his hosts and to Expertise France for arranging the mission. The information gathered in Nordic countries will indeed be crucial for conducting further NDRC's own reflections and proposals concerning income redistribution through social protection, which started being conducted under project Component 1 auspices in the year 2016.



Finland – Meeting at United Nations University WIDER



The Delegation meets with Sweden Pensions Agency



The Delegation in Paris