

5th EUROPEAN HEALTH FORUM GASTEIN –

On the Future of Health in Europe
25 to 28 September 2002

European Social Dialogues on the Hospital Sector

Workshop 1
Practicable and Representative
25 September 2002



International Forum Gastein

Tauernplatz 1

A-5630 Bad Hofgastein

Tel: +43-6432-26169;

Fax: +43-6432-20014

press@ehfg.org

www.ehfg.org

Media Spokesperson Dr. Carmen Kiefer

carmen.kiefer@utonet.at

Tel +43-676- 344 9971

For some years already, the European Union has a common health market, but the cooperation in the hospital sector is still poor. This adds importance to the “European Social Dialogue”. At the 5th European Health Forum in Bad Hofgastein, Brian Scott of the European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU), promoted the idea of establishing a Sectoral Dialogue Committee for hospital issues.

Goal of the “European Social Dialogues” is, to improve the communication between employees and employers in order to make contracts or agreements on a European level. The dialogues take place on various levels, like on company level (European Work Councils), on an interprofessional level and on a sectoral level. At the moment, 26 different Sectoral Dialogue Committees are active – from textile industry to the culture. The EPSU, a free and democratic association of independent worker’s unions for civil servants in Europe, wants to establish an new Committee on the field of hospitals. The EPSU is the largest association of worker’s unions within the EGB and speaks in the name of some 180 worker’s unions of the public sector. 3,5 out of 10 million of the EPSU represented employees work in the health sector.

Cooperation in this sector is particularly difficult on a European level. “In the EU the hospital sector is organized very differently”, reasons Lene B. Hansen, President of the Social and Health Sector of the Danish Trade Union of Public Employees. The challenge for all participants is the establishing of a system, which is practicable and, at the same time, representative. Talks have taken place already, a task force currently works out a program for future social dialogues on the hospital sector. The project is not official yet, Brian Synnott explained. “This session on the 5th European Health Forum in Gastein was our first step.”