

REPORT

Briefing Meeting EU-China Social Protection Reform Project

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Beijing, European Delegation to China and Mongolia



On 8th June 2017, the EU Delegation to China held an information meeting on the EU-China Social Protection Reform Project (SPRP) in Beijing. More than 30 participants attended the meeting, gathering the SPRP Resident Experts, the representatives of the Chinese beneficiaries of SPRP from the National Development Reform Commission, Ministry of Civil Affairs and Ministry of Finance, EU Member States, and International and Chinese agencies working in the field of social protection. The meeting, while providing a wide range of information on the scope of the project, past achievements, and future activities, was a very successful and promising opening for future cooperation, presenting an opportunity to exchange information among the participants on ongoing activities in the field of social protection and propose areas of interest for collaboration.

Mr. Gronvald, Head of the Cooperation Section of the EU Delegation chaired the meeting. The three project Resident Experts presented their respective Components past achievements and plan of activities, while briefing the participants on the fields of pension system, demographic trends, and social assistance development in China.

During the discussion session, Ms. Barbara Grosse, (Austrian Embassy), advanced the interest of Austria in being involved in the project, especially hosting a Study Visit for the Chinese Ministries on the field of social protection. Ms. Grosse, was also interested in the aspect of gender issues and in understanding how the project deals with the research on this field and cooperates with the Government in this direction.

Ms. Tang Ling (NDRC – National coordinator for Component 1) said that the Government is paying much attention on gender issues. The research that has been developed on this field by the component 1 is mainly related on social protection, income, and employment issues due to the limitation of project resources. She welcomed the invitation of Austria to increase cooperation in the field of social protection reform.

ILO representative, Ms Li Qingyi, stated that the ILO is currently working in the field of pension standards with the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, with a view of ratifying the social security (minimum standards) convention n.102. The ILO already had dialogue activities with experts from the project and will continue to cooperate in this direction. At present, they are interested in the pension reform proposals that have been produced by the project.

Plan International China- NGO, within the social assistance field, was interested in knowing more about the attention given through Component 3 activities to the vulnerable groups, especially to the children, and the future direction for social services development.

UK Embassy representative, Ms. Lina Tao, shared the information details on the upcoming Forum which will be held in September in the UK on elderly care and social equity also involving Chinese Ministries and pose a question related Component 3 activities in terms of challenges identified on cooperation at central and local level in social assistance.

MoCA representative Ms. Zhang Lin. first expressed her appreciation for supporting MoCA Delegation with Deputy Minister Gong Puguang involved when they visited UK and Italy last month. She then explained that children are considered within vulnerable groups (one of the research activity was dedicated to this issue) and in the context of the household, in special condition the government intervenes providing benefits in the form of education benefits, or health benefits, etc. As for the services, there is a trend for increasing focus to social services which will support the existing cash benefits scheme (Dibao). There is an imbalance between the demand and the supply, most benefits are provided in the form of cash, while more attention should be paid to developing social services, in doing this the Government should cooperate more with the NGO operating in the field to deliver the services. The main obstacle is the lack of professional staff working in the third sector. In terms of various levels cooperation, it was said that policy implementation from central to local level is a challenge especially when new policy is coming out and needs to be put in the practice.

Mr. Gronvald encouraged further cooperation and exchanges between the project and relevant agencies in the field of social protection and thanked all participants for their coming and contribution to the fruitful discussions at the end of meeting. Direct contacts

among the participants were shared to promote the mechanism of mutual cooperation after the meeting.

EU China SPRP
Beijing Office

PARTICIPANT LIST			
N	Name	Position	Organisation
1	Barbara Grosse	Consellor	Embassy of Austria
2	Florence Caillol	Second Secretary	Embassy of Belgium
3	Tao Lina	Political Officer	British Embassy
4	Federico Antonelli	Legal Attachè,	Embassy of Italy
5	Tomasz Jurczyk	Third Secretary	Embassy of Poland
6	Adriana Ștefănescu	Attaché	Embassy of Romania
7	Li Qingyi	Senior Programme Officer	ILO Country Office for China
8	Simon Stewart	Shanghai Director	R&D- Based Pharmaceutical Association Committee
9	Daphné Richet-Coop	Policy manager	R&D- Based Pharmaceutical Association Committee
10	Qian Xiaofeng	Child Rights Governance & Advocacy Manager	Save the Children
11	Wang Xin	Child Protection Manager	Save the Children
12	Zhang Hongman	Programm Support Manager	Plan International China
13	Zhao Zhe	Child Protection Officer	Plan International China
14	Guo Fei	Reference Person in China	Italian NGO AIFO
15	Ying Hua	Assistant Professor	CASS
16	Scolastica Bai	Director	Aid and Service
17	Thomas Kemmler	Project Manager	Aid and Service
18	Claire Wang	Programme Official	International Cooperation Center, NDRC
19	Chang Hao	Deputy Director General	International Cooperation Center, NDRC
20	Tang Ling	Division Director	Department of Employment and Income Distribution, NDRC
21	Zhang Lin	Division Director	Division of General Affairs, Department of Social Assistance, MoCA
22	Zhang Si Cong	Programme Official	Social Security Department, MoF
23	Wang Guan	Principal Staff	Center of verification and Identification for Low-Income families, MoCA
24	Lars Gronvald	Head of Cooperation	EU Cooperation Instruments, EU Delagtion to China and Mongolia
25	Yi Xiaolin	Project Officer	Development and Cooperation, EU Delagtion to China and Mongolia
26	Marzena Breza	C3 Resident Expert	EU-China SPRP
27	Michele Bruni	C2 Resident Expert-Team Leader	EU-China SPRP
28	Jean Victor Gruat	C1 Resident Expert	EU-China SPRP
29	Ma Lan	Administration	EU-China SPRP
30	Valentina Pignotti	C2 Assistant	EU-China SPRP
31	Li Lingxi	C1 Assistant	EU-China SPRP
32	Miao Yijun	C3 Assistant	EU-China SPRP