

Launch of a cooperation between the EU and China in the area of social security

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Published on 04/02/2015

On 2 and 3 February 2015 the Federal Public Service (FPS) Social Security, working closely with the RVP/ONP (National Pension Office), received a high-level Chinese delegation on the occasion of a two-day workshop in Brussels. The workshop was part of the “EU-CHINA Social Protection Reform Project” whereby a consortium of European social security institutions supports China in further developing its social security. The reform of pension systems was on the agenda in Brussels. The two-day visit was opened by the Minister of Pensions, Daniel Bacquelaine.

The “EU-CHINA Social Protection Reform Project” is an agreement that has been reached in December 2014 between the People’s Republic of China and the European Commission. Various European social security institutions combine their efforts to support and advise some Chinese institutions. In addition to Belgium, several countries share their expertise in the area of social security with China : France, Italy, Poland, Romania, Spain and the Czech Republic.

About this cooperation, Maggie De Block, Minister for Social Affairs and Public Health, said : “Our Belgian social protection is very good in all respects. The fact of cooperating and sharing good practices is a positive way to achieve progress. That is why I wish this cooperation every success.”

The Sino-European cooperation covers 3 areas :

- Together with the Chinese National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), one of the purposes is to examine how the Chinese institutional landscape in the field of social security must be reformed in order to develop better strategies. Besides, the analysis also focuses on the possible substantive reforms that could be carried out to ensure better social protection in the Chinese society.
- Along with the institutional and substantive reforms, the project must also help the Chinese Ministry of Finance (MoF) enhance the management and supervision of the financial flows in the area of social security.
- Finally, the European social security institutions, together with the Chinese Ministry of Civil Affairs (MoCA), will examine how to improve the legal framework for social assistance and its enforcement.

The two-day workshop in Brussels is a starting point for a closer cooperation between China and the European Union. In the next four years, the two parties will work together on many subjects. The theme of this first meeting was the reform of pensions. Daniel Bacquelaine, Minister for Pensions : “The planned reform of our Belgian pension system must ensure that the performance of our social model is guaranteed for the coming generations. We hope that the gained Belgian expertise in pension matters will also help China strengthen its social model.”

The Italian “Istituto Nazionale della Previdenza Sociale (INPS) is taking the lead in the European consortium. The project is financed by the European Commission and the People’s Republic of China for a total amount of 6,7 billion EUR.

#EUChina

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