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Good afternoon ladies and gentleman, my name is Jiří Horecký. I would like to present the current situation about personal and household services in Czech Republic, because we are now at the crossroads, we are now seeking or trying to implement a quite new concept known from country such as Belgium, Finland, Sweden or France. I will be talking today from the point of view of two organisations I represent and stand for. The first one is the association of social care providers of the Czech Republic which gathers more than 930 organisations and 2300 social services organisations such as care homes, home care, daily care centers but also the services for social prevention. The other organisation I represent here today is the unions of employers association in Czech Republic. This is the second biggest organisation in Czech Republic that gathers more than 7 300 organisations with more than 700 000 employees covering actually the public sector, so covering completing health services in Czech Republic, social services but also culture, education and other public services. I also work as adviser to the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs in the Czech Republic.

We in the Czech Republic are now very seriously thinking about of a new concept of personal and household services to realize the added value, to change this all system and I would like to present you why are we in the middle of this process, what are our intentions and why are the reasons that we would like to follow the examples of countries that I mentioned, most of all from the Belgian model. The current situation in Czech Republic is as follows. We have three sectors that provide personal and household services. The first one is home care divided into social and health home care. This is very similar in many countries of the European Union. We have a straight divided system, we have very strong distribution between social and health system. And the third sector is the private entrepreneurs and companies. With the private companies, you can start doing personal and household services very easily. Everything you need is a sort of free trading licence, but there is a law amendment which will change this condition and from 2014 only household services will be eligible with free trading licence. Private business companies will have to stop providing the personal services, and the personal services should be provided since 2014 only by registered home care companies

Speaking about the first segment – social home care – and just for your imagination Czech Republic has 10.5 million inhabitants. So in Czech Republic we have 747 organizations that offer and provide social home care services with a total number of employees of 3 200 and approximately 115 000 clients. The content of “social” home care is very much similar to other European countries. Basically it is meals on wheels, it is household services such as cleaning, shopping, offices - I mean enabling the contact with the offices taking care of personal issues and personal problems - and then we have personal care which could be defined very briefly such as assistance of daily living activities. This is pretty much comparable to other European countries.

Then we have the “health” home care as I mentioned. It is strictly divided because of the money and not only because of the money and the financing system but also because we have two ministries, the Health Ministry and the Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs and they do not communicate that well between each other that we would like to in the Czech Republic. Although they stand fifty meters next to each other and they are connected with a secret tunnel under the ground it does not work. The total number of the providers of the health home care is 472 organisations, the number of employees

¹ PowerPoint presentation available at : http://www.efsi-europe.eu/fileadmin/MEDIA/Event/5th_European_Conference/J._Horecky.pdf

is pretty much the same as in the social sector with 3 000, the number of the clients is also similar with 150 000 and the total number of visits is more or less 6 million a year. The content of the health home care is the nursing care, so this care is provided by a nurse like giving the client an injection or measuring the blood pressure or basic care activities as for example care of the stomach, rehabilitation care, etc.

We are now thinking that this is first of all not good enough and that we should move forward. At the beginning of this conference, there was a White Book mentioned with ten countries and as you list among these countries, you noticed that there is no country from Central and Eastern Europe, the so-called post communist countries. And we do seriously realise that what works very well in Belgium, Finland, Sweden, France and other countries may not work that well in the Czech Republic that there are some other conditions, some other history, some other different attitudes to family life, some other values and that we have very deeply do some pilot projects that we have think about what could work and what could work not. We have started with the last months and even in the last months there were a number of prejudices, and obstacles and misunderstandings we had to deal with.

In Czech Republic we first started with a pilot project in 2003. It was a project with a name "occasional occupation" it was similar to the so-called LEA system in Belgium. It was in three departments, so only a local project for the total number of inhabitants in those three departments was around 250 000. This project was very successful in 2004 and 2005 but at this time we had no crisis, we had low rates of unemployment all over Europe so there was no need to go on in this project, because every year, every month unemployment was lower and lower.

Last year, we attended the EFSI conference, we heard some very good examples, not only practical examples but also some macro-economic numbers and the outputs of some macro-economic studies which is very important not only for Czech politics but for all politics all around the world if they want to change something. We started as the Union of Employers Association to work on this concept, to change the personal and household services in Czech Republic and we manage one thing. We manage to become personal and household services as the one of the main priorities of social democratic party. Now we had our elections three weeks ago in the Czech Republic and this party won the elections so now we are waiting what the government is going to be, what the coalition is going to be and whether this priority will stay in the governmental declaration. It was a success for us because it is the social-democratic party - the left-oriented party - and it is the strongest party nowadays in the Czech Republic.

In October 2013 this year, one month ago, we organise a roundtable on this topic. A roundtable about implementing the new concept of personal and household services into the Czech Republic, mainly on the basis of the Belgian example. The roundtable was attended by members of the Parliament, by the general director of the Labour Office in Czech Republic and this roundtable rises high interest in the media. The first press releases were more or less neutral and there was some positive messages but there was also some negative messages like "jobless and homeless people are going to your home" which costs a little fear to a small percentage of Czech inhabitants. But the second output, the second way of press releases were very positive and there was a really high interest of the media because it was something quite new.

This month we started a feasibility study on the implementation of the concept of personal and household services in the Czech Republic together with the Research Institute for Labour and Social Affairs in the Czech Republic. In December a pilot project, that will be started by the Labour Office should also begin. The aim of this pilot project is to show what models of personal and household services are implementable in the Czech Republic and what are the numbers, what are the benefits and what are the costs. In February next year we organise an international conference in the Senate where some of the speakers and people in this room should also present their experience. This should be with the Finance Ministry, with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, with the Senate and members of the Parliament. We want to present the results of this feasibility study, the results of this pilot project and we want to present good practices examples from the countries I mentioned. Our intention and goals are to start both programs known as TITRE and LEA in Czech Republic in 2015 or 2016. We have now four years with the new government to do that and to make those things happen. Whereas TITRE has a highest priority.

The last slide about why are we handling that way, why are we doing this, why are we thinking that we should change the concept and the attitude about personal and household services in Czech Republic. First of all, we think that it should lead to a lower unemployment rate especially the TITRE concept. We also think and anticipate that it should lead to the reduction of the black market share that we now have in the Czech Republic, anticipating the similar experiences from other countries. We also think about this new concept as a new benefit for employees not by the State but by employers. There are not only the State resources and some taxation benefit, but we know that we have a number of employers that would be willing to pay a certain number of benefit, a certain number of hours in personal and household services. And in this way we have some other resources – that is corporate and private resources - that could be used for this new system.

The other benefit is not only higher specialisation by home carer, because nowadays the carer does all the activities such as personal services, such as activities of daily living , but also the services like cleaning or keeping up the household. We think that not only it could be separated but that it should be separated because you do not need highly qualified staff to do all of that. And in all the specialization leads to a more efficient result. It is also the flexibility that we see for the future, not only recipient of personal and household services but also flexibility of the future employees working in the new concept.

This is what we now stand for, where we are, what are our intentions and I truly will be happy to share our experience in the 6th EFSI 's conference on what happened and whether our intentions were at least partly successful. Thank you for your attention.