Health Care in Slovenia “Public Health without a Minister”

Ljubljana (Slovenia), 22.01.2014

During a visit to Ljubljana, Slovenia, EUROFEDOP had a meeting with SDZNS, represented by its President, Ms Jelka Mlakar and its General Secretary, Ms Flory Banovac, in the office of the trade union, Metelkova 5, Ljubljana.

The situation of health care, in particular as far as hospitals are considered, was critically evaluated.

Whereas the trade union had reached an agreement with the government on minimum norms for the staffing of hospitals in 2012, after weeks of negotiation, the agreement was not put into effect as agreed on 01.03.2013 and the launching date was time and again postponed.

The last argument used to justify that postponement was that such norms are also non-existent in Austria and Italy.

The Minister who felt himself insufficiently supported by the Social-Democratic Prime Minister, laid down his office. Until now, no replacement has been found.

The nursing staff, of whom 600 registered nurses and 1 000 others, suffer from the recruitment stop and the non-replacement of absentees. All this following the implementation, under pressure of the European Commission, of a financial law on 01.06.2012.

Since that date, overtime hours have not been paid anymore. In a country where prices are comparable to those in Belgium, Luxemburg or France, nursing staff have to be satisfied and make ends meet with a gross salary between 1 400 and 1 800 euro.

In preparation for a hearing in the Slovenian Parliament on current health care issues, Bert Van Caelenberg gave extensive information on a meeting he had had with Commissioner Tonio Borg on the challenges faced by Europe in the field of health care on 09.12.2013.

Finally, the planning of a EUROFEDOP project in Ljubljana in September 2015 was discussed between the Eurofedop secretary general and the responsible officials from SDZNS, Eurofedop’s member organisation in Slovenia.