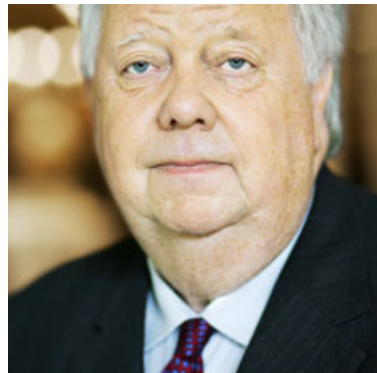


H.E. MATS ÅBERG

Ambassador of the Kingdom of Sweden in Romania

The Swedish Government has declared itself prepared to take on this challenge



Sweden is wrapping up the 18 month presidency programme, started by the French and continued by the Czechs. What are Sweden's goals for this upcoming presidency?

The general priorities of the Swedish Presidency can be summed up as follows:

- **The global economic and financial crisis.** Solutions that are both global and European must be found. The EU must emerge from this crisis in a stronger position.

- **Climate change.** The EU must continue to assume its responsibility for the climate threat. The Presidency and its partners have to work for the adoption of a new climate agreement at the international climate negotiations in Copenhagen in December.

- **The Stockholm Programme.** The European cooperation in justice and home affairs has to be developed and strengthened. The objective and the vision of the Presidency is to adopt a new multi-annual cooperation programme for creating a citizen's Europe, combating crime and elaborating common policies for asylum and migration issues for the future. The Stockholm Programme will contribute to a more secure and open Europe where the rights of individuals are safeguarded.

- **The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea.** The Presidency's ambition is to develop the EU's macro-regional cooperation in order to manage the urgent and serious environmental problems in the Baltic Sea and to transform the region into a stronger engine for growth and development. This strategy will hopefully serve as an inspiration for other EU regions, i. e. the Black Sea and the Danube regions.

- **The EU and its neighbourhood and the world.** The Presidency will continue to work on developing the European Neighbourhood Policy – including the Eastern Partnership and the Union for the Mediterranean. It is also of crucial importance that the EU stands by its commitments and the established principles in the area of enlargement. The EU as a global actor should be strengthened. Summits are planned with a number of important partners during the Swedish Presidency: Brazil, China, India, Russia, South Africa, Ukraine and the USA.



- **The Treaty of Lisbon and the EU institutions.** In view of the uncertainties concerning the Lisbon Treaty and the institutional changes that will take place if and when the new Treaty comes into force, the Presidency has made preparations to make sure that the practical application will be as smooth and effective as possible from the very beginning.

For the next 6 months your country will be the driving engine of the common EU agenda. What is the general feeling about starting a Presidency with a newly- elected Parliament, a Commission entering into office and possibly a new Treaty?

The task is of course extremely complicated. We have tried to prepare ourselves for various scenarios. The newly elected European Parliament has to form itself in order to play its proper role. After that we will know a little more about some aspects of the formation of the new Commission. The issue of the Treaty of Lisbon has to be treated with due respect for the Irish electorate.

Can you reveal us your opinion on how effective will the Stockholm programme be in achieving its goals, in the context of an upcoming referendum in Ireland and also the economic crisis?

As indicated above, the crucial question will be whether we will have the Lisbon Treaty entering into force or not. The ambition of the Swedish Presidency is, however, to adopt a new strategic work programme for the entire policy area of Justice and Home Affairs including asylum and migration policies, *i.e.* a Stockholm Programme for a more secure and open Europe where the rights of individuals are safeguarded.

How would you compare the different priorities and circumstances in which Sweden acted at the helm of the EU in 2001 and those present?

The Swedish Presidency in the first half of 2001 was carried out when the EU consisted of only 15 member states. To preside over 27 member states and under uncertain institutional conditions will of course be a more difficult task, which is rendered even more complex by the current global economic crisis and the need to halt climate change. The Swedish Government has declared itself prepared to take on this challenge. The Minister for EU Affairs, Cecilia Malmström, has summed it up in two sentences: **"Our ambition is to achieve results on a wide range of issues with the whole of Europe's best interest in mind. We will do this via an open and efficient Presidency that focuses on the citizens"**.

Interview by **Mădălina Barbu**

EIR Agenda: July – September 2009

EIR Conference: Challenges of the EU in 2009 and 2010

2 July

EIR Course: Implementation of EU environmental policy by the local administration

21 – 25 September

Proudly Yours

I am proud. I am proudly working in a team of specialists, my TCU colleagues at the European Institute of Romania in Bucharest. TCU stands for **Translations Coordination Unit** and here we are professionally translating and revising all sorts of legal documents, the *acquis communautaire*, including decisions of the Court of Justice of the European Communities or of the European Court of Human Rights.

Since 2000, we have been processing over 250.000 pages of European material that Romania is also supposed to have enforced or to enforce, sooner or later. It is our contribution to our continuous integration into the European Union. It is true that beginning with 2007, we are part of this community, which was denied to us when the communists came to power, yet there are quite a lot of things to do, to catch up with and be fully integrated (e.g. we are not in the Euro zone), not only in a formal way.

What I am doing together with a handful of fellow specialists is to linguistically revise various texts – of the kind mentioned above. We make up what is called the **Terminology and Linguistic Revision Unit**, within the TCU.

The linguistic revision is the ultimate stage in the process of translating, as a general concept. It is a work where nobody is an island; we fully cooperate with the translators and the terminologists, as well as the legal revisers in order to offer the best solution, the best form, the most accurate translation of all materials reaching us. It is a great responsibility and that is why the linguistic revision must be performed by highly qualified personnel with a lot of experience. It is a profession in itself (with distinctive characteristics), though for the moment we do not have our own slot in Romania's occupational classification, even if (speaking of integration) such a profession enjoys a statutory position in the EU member states and other countries.

The linguistic revision is the essential link before a text (be it fictional or not) goes public. We are very much aware that if it is about legal matters, it is about the lives of people or about their assets (obliquely, still their lives); if it is about books, it is about the reputation of the author, of the publishing house, and, why not, it is about money, in the end.

From the technical point of view a **linguistic reviser** is a cross between a translator, a terminologist, plus a walking encyclopedia, because of the many domains which, at one time or another, they come in contact with. The linguistic revision is the place where the final decisions (regarding the form of a text) are made. We mutually help each other, and we are helped by our translators' good job, by our terminologists' appropriate terminology and our legal advisers' accurate consultancy. At DCT we act according to the international standard EN 15038*:

"quality is guaranteed not by the translation which is just one phase in the process, but by the fact of the translation being reviewed by a person other than the translator."

Universities, colleges should keep in mind that students in applied linguistics need training not only in translating, but in revising as well. A professional reviser needs solid knowledge of linguistics (not to mention solid knowledge of foreign languages, basically English and French, in our case), a good command of their mother tongue, general information from different fields of interest, including literature (where one can find major examples of refined usage of language), and, most importantly, students should be encouraged to develop or enhance their alternative thinking, their critical mind.

As a reviser, one often has to find solutions to new situations and this is not an easy task to perform without a critical mind. Sometimes we are the Sherlock Holmeses of linguistics, which, to tell you the truth, is great fun – something one needs when one works hard.

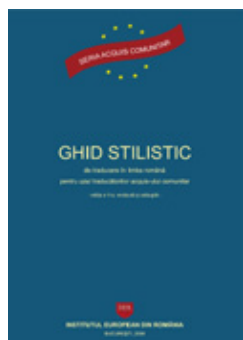
Linguistic revising is a special job of a special importance, even if so many times we are invisible. But, for a reviser, it is not important that they be visible, it is the text that has to stand out and up for us.

Now, probably, you can understand why I am so proud, and, I have to admit, I am going to be even prouder (if that is somehow possible) when our position is going to be established *de jure* (as our fellow legal revisers aptly put it).

Gigi Mihăiță

Terminology and Linguistic Revision Unit, TCU

* <http://qualitystandard.bs.en-15038.com/>



You can purchase now, with only 25 RON, the following TCU publications:

ROMANIAN STYLE GUIDE for the Use of Translators of the Acquis Communautaire, fifth edition, revised and expanded,

HISTORICAL CASE-LAW OF COMMUNITY COURTS - abstracts of Cases, vol. 1,

directly from EIR premises or by post via bank transfer payment (publication price plus postal charges).

For further information please check www.ier.ro or email at sales@ier.ro.

The reconciliation of professional and family life - a condition for gender equality

The roles of women and men in family and professional life have been changing ever since the '50s. It is a slow change which became more and more visible as a result of the continuous efforts of the European Union in partnership with Member States, civil society and other social partners. There are still inequalities, and the obstacles in the way of change are far from being overcome.

In 2006, the European Commission (EC) adopted, as a continuation of the 2001-2005 Framework Strategy, the **Roadmap for Equality between women and men for the period 2006-2010**.

It represents the EU commitment for supporting the equality between women and men, materialised in initiatives, policies and specific measures for improving the legal framework in this area, integrating the gender dimension in all Community policies and programmes (gender mainstreaming), strengthening the social dialogue, exchanging good practices and achieving specific results as regards the participation of women in the labour market, in decision-making, the fight against stereotypes, the elimination of educational and professional segregation.

Gender equality is a key factor for achieving the objectives of growth, employment and social cohesion. It significantly contributes to ensuring the financial independence as well as to the development of human capital with a view to using the full potential of both women and men, which is even more important in the context of economic slowdown and negative demographic trends.

The equality between women and men as regards the integration and maintenance on the labour market as well as career advancement essentially depends on the possibility to achieve a balance between the professional and family life.

According to the annual **EC Report on the equality between women and men**¹, despite the increase of the overall employment rate of women (from 51.1% in 1997 to 58.3% in 2007, with a variation between Member States from 36.9% to 73.2%), the statistics show significant differences when it comes to women and men with children under 12 (the employment rate decreases with 12.4% for women, and increases with 7.3% for men). Furthermore, the percentage of women working part-time is four times higher than the percentage of men.

Although the way a person, whether a woman or a man, regards the combination of work and family life is mainly determined by personal choices, these choices are influenced, on one hand, by the social and cultural stereotypes which define the roles of women and men in society and, on the other hand, by the availability of reconciliation structures and policies designed to facilitate the integration and maintenance on the labour market. The persistence of an unequal share of domestic and family responsibilities leads more women than men either to take shorter or longer career breaks or to opt for flexible working arrangements, such as working part-time, which may have a negative impact on their career advancement. Persistent stereotypes and the imbalance in the time and energy spent for carrying out the domestic responsibilities may lead women to choose certain types of employment which allow them to take care of the family, but which may be less valued and consequently less paid, may hinder women's access to positions of responsibility and leadership.

All these issues affect women's financial well-being on short, medium and long term, and make them more vulnerable especially during times of economic slowdown as those we are experiencing at the moment.

Although the parental leave may be taken by either parent, it is usually taken by women, a fact which is maintained by gender stereotypes and cultural expectations, and which perpetuates these stereotypes both within the family, and at the workplace. Gradually, the attitudes are changing, but, currently, men in most of the Member States (excepting the northern countries: Sweden, Denmark) show in general little willingness to take parental leave for various reasons such as inadequate financial compensation, organisational culture which is less flexible in the case of men, fears regarding the security of the job and the negative impact on their careers.

In this framework, the measures and programmes aimed at fighting against the gender stereotypes, encouraging the equal share of family tasks, and developing affordable and high-quality childcare services which help both women and men to combine work and family life, are highly important.

Between target, common effort and success

In 2009, the European Commission aims to intensify its actions to bring the fulfilment of the Barcelona objectives at a satisfactory level as the objectives² are at this moment far from being fulfilled in most of the Member States, especially as regards the care structures for children under 3 years of age.

In the legislative area, it is necessary to finalise the important initiatives which 2008 brought in this field, and which concerned the proposal of amending the Directive 92/85/EEC on increasing the minimum maternity leave from 14 to 18 weeks, and on improving the employment protection for mothers, as well as the proposal of applying the provisions of Directive 86/613/EEC for self-employed workers and "assisting spouses". Furthermore, the actions will continue as regards the negotiations of the social partners for amending the European provisions regarding the parental leave, seeking the best methods to encourage fathers to take this type of leave and to create the framework for them to be able to participate to a greater extent in the care of their children.

The envisaged actions for fighting against the gender stereotypes are designed to target children from an early age, focussing on changing the educational (school, family) and cultural (media) models which determine the development of certain type of roles, and which maintain certain attitudes and expectations at individual and general level.

In this area, the change is and has been difficult, as it involves deeply rooted attitudes and models related to organisational and cultural traditions. An integrating approach of various lines of action is necessary in order to combine the change of attitudes with the development of structures which will meet and satisfy the needs both of women and men regarding the professional activity and family life.

Diana Popa

Translation Coordination Unit

¹ COM (2009) 77 final.

² In March 2002 the European Council, meeting in Barcelona, invited Member States to 'remove disincentives to female labour force participation and strive, taking into account the demand for childcare facilities and in line with national patterns of provision, to provide childcare by 2010 to at least 90% of children between 3 years old and the mandatory school age and at least 33% of children under 3 years of age'. [COM/2009/0077 final]

Flexicurity and Social Dialogue in Romania

The conference "**Flexicurity and social dialogue in Romania**" organised by the European Institute of Romania on 29 June is part of the series of debates "**Policies of Romania**", and the event marks the debut of the EIR study on the same topic.

This event was attended by important representatives of social partners, government, employers' and workers' organisations, experts and specialists, representatives of civil society, journalists which proved to be very interested in this topic, one of current significance due to its social and economic implications.

The debate focused on the concepts of **flexicurity** and **social dialogue**, the first of which appeared in the recent years due to the significant transformations of the labour market. These issues have generated a lot of debates at community level, and consequently, several different models of **flexicurity** have appeared and are in constant evolution in the European Union. In this context, the conference approached and promoted political strategies designed to simultaneously strengthen the labour market flexibility, labour organisation and work relations as well as the social security and employment security in a dual format. Other important topics approached during the discussions regarded the strengthening of the cooperation and dialogue between the social partners for the development of the flexicurity concept as well as Romania's adherence to the best European practices in the area, by analysing the models of practices in place, in the attempt to answer the question: "What model would be the most suitable for Romania?"



The opening part of the conference consisted of the speeches delivered by the representatives of the social partners: Mr Valentin Mocanu, Secretary of State in the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection, Mr Critian Pârvan, Secretary General of the Businessmen's Association of Romania, Mr Costel Olteanu, President of the National Union of Employers with Private Capital in Romania and Mr Bogdan Hossu, President of the National Trade Union Confederation "Cartel ALFA". The introductory part was moderated by Ms Gabriela Drăgan, Director General of EIR.

The panel of debates benefited from the significant contributions of several experts such as Ms Vasilia Ciucă, Director General of the National Scientific Research Institute for Labour and Social Protection (NSRILSP), Mr Iulian Oneaşcă, Head of the European Studies and Analysis Unit, EIR,

University Professor Raluca Dimitriu, PhD, Academy of Economic Studies, Ms Maria Poenaru, scientific researcher at the Institute of National Economy and Ms Doina Patrubani-Voicu, Director of the Consulting Department, Deloitte-Romania. The session was moderated by Mr Cătălin Ghinăaru, scientific secretary of NSRILSP, the coordinator of the team of researches selected to conduct the EIR study "**Flexicurity and social dialogue in Romania perspectives on the implementation of flexicurity principles in Romanian undertakings**".

The flexicurity concept – context and perspectives

Mr Valentin Mocanu pointed out the different and complex meanings of the flexicurity concept, stressing the fact that the process of defining the term is in continuous evolution, taking into account the existence of an important number of groups of interests contributing to outlining its shape. The representative of the Ministry of Labour emphasised on this occasion the government's wish to learn about the needs of the social partners and to act as a mediator between the supporters of flexibility and those of security.

Lifelong vocational training – premise for a flexible labour market

The lifelong vocational training and the fact that the social dialogue is the most appropriate way of solving the social problems were the issues highlighted by all speakers. The representatives of the social partners, the researchers and the experts invited to express their opinions as part of the debates' panel pointed out the deficiencies identified in the Romanian system which does not focus enough on the lifelong vocational training. This fact has serious consequences on the structure of the labour force and on the capacity of individuals to adapt to the requirements of a continuously changing labour market.

Among the subjects approached, there were also several proposals designed to increase the flexibility of the labour market, elements regarding the internal flexibility (the structure of the working hours, changing the tasks) and the social security issues. The researchers pointed out the elements which are specific to various countries and models of **flexicurity**, proposing the implementation in the area of social policies of integrated strategies which should combine the features indicated by the flexicurity supporters and by those of social security. The presentations were followed by a session of questions and answers during which the participants had the opportunity to address questions to the panel experts.

The summary of the conference is available on – www.ier.ro, Events archive section.

Agnes Nicolescu

European Studies and Analysis Unit

Editor-in-Chief: Mădălina Paula Barbu

Editors: Alina Arhire, Mariana Bara, Iulia Serafimescu

Graphics: Monica Dumitrescu

English version: Mihaela Papa, Diana Popa

* The texts published in this Newsletter express the authors' opinion and do not represent the official position of the European Institute of Romania.

ISSN 2065 - 457X

In order to receive future issues of the European Institute of Romania Newsletter, you can subscribe accessing the following link: www.ier.ro.



European Institute of Romania

7-9, Regina Elisabeta Bvd., RO - 030016, Bucharest, Romania

Phone: (+4021) 314 26 96/ 133 Fax: (+4021) 314 26 66

Contact: newsletter@ier.ro

Web: www.ier.ro