

Multi-regional Operational Programme to combat discrimination

Mr. Kari Paaso

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health

Mr. Tapio Kuure

The Centre of Expertise on Social Welfare, University of Tampere

Mr. Fresno's report, based on the experiences of the private operators of the multi-regional operational programme to combat discrimination, focuses on the role of civil society and non-governmental organisations and the relationship between public administration (state and regional authorities) and private agencies of civil society. He raises interesting questions concerning NGOs role in the management of ESF-funded projects and programmes in Spain.

The history of the relations between the state and the civil society is quite different in European countries. During the 18th, 19th and 20th century, the development of a nation state differed from each other e.g. in the UK, Germany, Scandinavian countries, Southern European and Eastern European countries. The models of a nation state differ as well. We have monarchies and republics, the functioning and models of parliaments differ. We have different kinds of territorial solutions (federalist solutions, more or less autonomous regions and so on). After the Second World War many European states were re-organised and different kinds of relations between the state and the civil society took place. The democratic development in European countries during 1970s, 80s, 90s changed these relations once again.

The present change in the relations between public administration and private agencies of civil society is based on the strategies of a so-called new public administration. The main features of this strategy are documented and developed in one of the core strategy documents of the EU, The White Book on Governance. The question is, what is the contribution of the civil society and NGOs in the implementation of the Lisbon strategy and how the civil society will be consulted in the process of planning and implementation of strategies and programmes, based on the EU strategies.

The development and aims of the governance in the European Union emphasize the process management and quality management. The practices of governing the implementation of different policies are based on programmes funded by the structural funds. Civil society, NGOs, different kinds of other stakeholders and experts are involved in the process from planning to implementation, evaluation and impact assessment of the process and the outcomes. Time management is based on programme periods.

New public administration –type of governance is changing the organisational structures of the civil society and NGOs. In order to survive as an organisation in the EU-context these organisations must act in the same way and follow the same procedures. The history of the NGOs is in many cases international, e.g. Red Cross, but there was also room for national modifications. Now, in the EU-context the environment is more European than international. The current situation gives less room for the civil society for national modifications than any time before in the history of Europe. There is a certain pressure from diversity to convergency.

Mr. Fresno describes very comprehensively the current situation in Spain. He has two important points of view: that of a public administration (state and autonomous regions) and that of the

citizens (end beneficiaries of the programme). The NGOs are working with both of these and are part of these and must have credibility to both directions.

1. Assessment of the relevance of the programme to policies in Finland

The multi-regional operational programme to combat discrimination is relevant to Finland for several reasons:

- we have experiences of the NGOs role in managing EU-projects from year 1995 when we joined the EU. Our history of that role is different but at present this is getting closer to that of a Spanish NGO.
- in Finland, the relations between ministries and NGOs have developed during the whole period and we have good experiences on how to coordinate work vertically (ministries, provincial authorities, municipalities and NGOs) and horizontally (different sectors and professions)
- fundamental structural changes in the local government (municipalities) and in the social service production are taking place in Finland; the challenge is how to organise comprehensive social services also in the future
- the multi-professional and cross-sectoral approach is the mainstream approach in the Finnish social work and we are developing the practices to manage this

2. Questions and debates in Finland – potentials of transferability

- the most relevant present discussion in Finland in the context of the NGOs role concerns the production of social services; the so called customer – producer –model is being applied in municipalities. The local government and authority is a customer who buys these services from different kinds of producers. In many cases, NGOs are selling their services to municipalities. The choice of a best producer is based on tenders.
- one special debate concerns the impact assessment of social programmes and projects. This is the topic that Brian Harvey also raises in his discussion paper; the core concept in this debate is the so-called *societal accounting*. In the societal accounting the social impacts are first identified and set into the project budget and then measured in the process of the project implementation and again after the project has ended. The societal accounting is based both on qualitative and quantitative data. It takes into consideration different stakeholders' point of view and will apply e.g. balanced score card as an assessment model (see more about the discussion http://www.redcross.fi/punainenristi/response/ajankohtaista/en_GB/SeminarJune2006/)

- Compared to Spain, Roma people population is quite small in Finland, the history and present differing quite a lot too
- Immigration policy is much more present in Spain today compared to Finland, where it will be a bigger problem in the near future
- the size and composition of the prison population (not only juveniles) apparently differs between Spain and Finland; more detailed information would be most interesting
- the model in page 32 in Mr. Fresno's report is very informative and clear (The inclusion itineraries as common work method). The conclusions made by Mr Fresno are easy to agree with. The combination between horizontal level and multi-professional approach, as well as targeting and mainstreaming dimension of the work, and vertical level of national and local approach are well presented in Mr Fresno's report.
- the concepts used in the Finnish discussion differ a little when comparing with those described in the English translation of the Spanish report but the approaches are the same. It is really interesting to see the organisational solutions in a big country (Spain) comparing with a small country (Finland). In Finland, the scale is smaller and less complicated, because we don't have an autonomous regional level. In practice, there are only two levels of actors, the state and the municipalities. State's provincial councils are in practice more coordinating actors; of course they have a status of a state authority but because most of the public services are organised by municipalities the state has more of a coordinating role. The role of the state as a public actor is constantly decreasing in the regional level.
- the problems of the NGO's work in governing projects are not in their role. Their role as a social actor is legitimate and they have credibility. Instead, they have problems in financing, in particular in terms of liquidity. Small organisations don't have liquidity enough to run EU-projects, where the financing is based on reports afterwards
- the structure of the budget of the Spanish programme is quite different in comparing to structures in Finland. As we can see in the Mr Fresno's report, the funding of the project is following, Table 7. Financial volume of the programme, page 29:

Total 362,7 million €		
EU-funding	230.8	63.6%
State of Spain	4.2	1.2%
Other national f.	25.8	7.1%
NGO's own f.	90.1	24.8%
Other private f.	11.8	3.3%
Total		100

- comparing to practices in Finland, there are some crucial differences: the average part of EU-funding in Finland in ESF-programmes is 50%. State, municipalities and NGOs in which the part of the state is biggest mainly fund the other half. Even in this kind of budget structure the management of the projects is delegated to NGOs. The role of the public administration is more in monitoring and controlling the process.

- when looking at the funding structure of the Spanish programme in which state funding is 11,2 % and other national funding is 7,1 % it is easy to understand that the question about NGO's role in managing the EU-programmes has been raised in Spain. If the contribution of the state and other public authorities is less than 10 % of the total budget the state's legitimacy as an actor does not seem very credible.

3. Key issues and main questions proposed for debate

- relationship between target approach and mainstreaming approach
- relationship between employment and social inclusion, question of third job-market
- NGOs as actors in the management of the project, question of liquidity concerning especially small organisations and associations

4. Measuring of the success of policies in Finland

There are some points of views how to assess the impact:

- quantitative indicators will be identified in the project plan (expected outcomes)
- different kinds of BSC –approaches (balanced core card) where the beneficiaries' and stakeholders' opinions are heard
- measuring of qualitative results is possible by using both qualitative measures and quantitative measures – the construction of measures and indicators must be done with beneficiaries and stakeholders