

## Interview with Stefano Tricoli, Patronato INCA CGIL, Brussels

### TESSE: Transnational Exchanges on Social Security in Europe

TESSE is a transnational cooperation project put in place by the [INCA CGIL](#) in Brussels. It aimed at collecting and exchanging best practices in the field of social security and free movement of people in the EU. Between February 2011 and November 2012, TESSE made efforts to improve the quality of counselling provided to citizens moving within the EU to make them aware of their rights as set in [EU Regulations](#).

#### 1) What were the main objectives of the project?

We involved trade unions and social security institutions from the EU Member States. Thanks to mutual learning activities and thematic workshops, project partners were able to discuss the obstacles that still deter citizens from settling in another EU country. In particular, we availed ourselves of learning tools such as the Action Learning. This process allowed participants to improve their understanding of the obstacles to the free movement of people through the exchange of information about success stories. To this aim, we relied on focus groups and informal debates to reach possible solutions to specific practical and theoretical issues.

#### 2) According to the results of the project, how can a better dissemination of information guarantee the free movement of workers in the European Union?

Partners proved particularly interested in our awareness-raising project. There is evidence that, due to lack of information, EU workers are not fully aware of their labour and social protection rights. This consideration also stems from the great number of queries we have been receiving from citizens. Although we are conscious that information cannot solve all the problems, we consider it can create a useful debate on free movement of workers within Europe. In this context we concluded that, being the first contact points for incoming migrant workers, it is up to the municipalities to provide adequate counselling.

#### 3) What are the most relevant achievements of the project?

TESSE produced useful analytical and policy-oriented outcomes. The overall learning process was developed through four workshops in [Brussels](#), [Berlin](#), [Rome](#) and [Paris](#). They focused on EU legislation, citizens' rights and the introduction of the [EESSI system](#) for the electronic exchange of social security information. In this new regulatory framework we realised that trade unions must reinvent their role in protecting workers moving within the EU. For this purpose we issued recommendations targeting national and European institutions, taking into account the best practices collected by European trade unions. Based on this experience, we produced the [Passport of Rights](#) which symbolises the efforts towards the consolidation of a social Europe. In conclusion, our project intended to provide its partners with the necessary tools to promote the coordination of social security schemes throughout Europe, so to foster the awareness of social rights when moving within Europe.