Amicus Curia Workshop on the **EPSU Case** (European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU), **Jan Goudriaan vs European Commission**)

On the promotion of the European Social Dialogue

16 September 2020 - Brussels



Organized by

Atelier de droit social-Crides, **UCLouvain**The School of European Studies, UCLouvain, Louvain-La-Neuve,
Institut d'études européennes **ULB**, Bruxelles
and Institute for European Studies, **USaintLouis** Brussels

On 24 October 2019, the General Court ruled upon a request of the trade union EPSU and the secretary-general Jan-Willem Goudriaan to annul a refusal of the European Commission to submit a proposal of a Directive to implement an agreement about information and consultation of civil servants and employees working for central governmental administrations, following a joint request by the signatory parties to do so (General Court, 24 October 2019, T-310/18, European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU), Jan Goudriaan vs Commission européenne).

The applicants claimed that such a request could only be rejected if the signatory parties to the agreement are insufficiently representative or within the context of a legality check, and not on policy considerations. Neither were they convinced that the refusal was duly motivated. The action was considered to be admissible, but ill founded. According to the General Court, the Commission is not required to give effect to the signatory parties' request and «it is for that institution to determine whether it is appropriate for it to submit a proposal to that effect to the Council» (§ 103). Consequently, «by refusing to submit to the Council a proposal for a decision implementing the Agreement, the Commission did not commit an error of law as to the scope of its powers» (§ 104).

The applicants decided to appeal at the Court of Justice.











The doctrinal and above all societal relevance of this case is huge. It affects the European Social Dialogue at large, both sectoral and intersectoral. It raises fundamental legal issues about the existence of a duty for the European Commission to contribute to the implementation of agreements signed by European social partners, about the legislative or non-legislative character of the procedure outlined in Articles 154 and 155 TFEU, about the nature of directives implementing collective agreements, about the role of the European Social partners and their

autonomy, about horizontal subsidiarity, about the questions whether the European Social dialogue contributes or not to the democratic life of the European Union, about the specific nature of European Social Policy, about the scope of the obligation of the European Union to promote the role of social partners at its level, and its obligation to promote the fundamental rights of the Charter.

Other issues relate to the linking between the TEU and the TFEU. Some might argue that the debate is in essence about the question whether parts of the Constitution empowering the machinery of EU institutions should prevail over other parts recognizing fundamental rights which empower social partners and citizens at large.

Since the case has been brought before the CJEU, it is up to the academic Community of specialist of European (labour) law to act as genuine albeit symbolic amicus curiae pendente lite.

The Atelier de droit social of the UCLouvain in a partnership with the School of European Studies, UClouvain, Louvain-La-Neuve, the Institut d'études européennes ULB, Bruxelles and the Institute for European Studies, USaintLouis, Brussels, will organize an academic workshop, at the Fondation universitaire of Brussels.

As suggested to us by Silvia Borelli of the University of Ferrara, we will mould this workshop on the pre-existing format of a long standing Italian tradition of facilitating a dialogue between academia and the Italian Constitutional Court (http://www.amicuscuriae.it/). It is worthwhile to expand this tradition to cases which come up before the CJEU.

The participants to the Conference can assist in an active or passive way. The participation is free, subject to previous notification prior to 12 September 2020. A speaker's corner will be given to academics willing to contribute.

Academic Committee:

- Filip Dorssemont (Atelier de droit social-Crides, UCLouvain)
- Silvia Borelli (University of Ferrara)
- Edoardo Traversa (Crides -School of European Studies, UCLouvain)
- Antoine Bailleux (Institute for European Studies, USaintLouis Brussels)
- Emmanuelle Bribosia (Institut d'études européennes, ULB)











Program

8.30	Coffee
9.00	Welcome and Introduction by the Chair Silvia Borelli, University of Ferrara Filip Dorssemont, University of Louvain
9.10	Contextualisation: The notion of central Government Administration and the scope of EU law Jacques Ziller, University of Pavia
9.20	The history of the EU Social Dialogue Jean-Paul Tricart, ETUI
9.30	The hermeneutics of the General Court Filip Dorssemont, University of Louvain
9.40	On the notion of general interest and a perspective of Substantive Constitutionalization Fotis Vergis, University of Manchester Klaus Loercher, former référendaire Civil Service Tribunal
10.00	Question time
10.30	Coffee break
10.40	On appropriateness and legality checks Silvia Rainone, KU Leuven and ETUI
10.50	Horizontal Subsidiarity Mélanie Schmitt, Strasbourg University, Antonio Garcia Munoz, University of Luxembourg Massimilano Delfino, University Frederico II, Naples
11.20	The relevance of the European Pillar on Social Rights Beryl Ter Haar, Leiden University and Warschau University
11.30	The nature of an Act implementing an Agreement: a (non) legislative measure? Pieter-Augustijn Van Mallegem, University of Louvain
11.50	Question time
12.00 – 12.30	Conclusion











Practical information

▶Free entrance but online registration required before 12 September 2020

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*Any participant unable to attend may be replaced by the person of his/her choice or may receive the documentation. The cancellation shall be communicated no later than three working days before the seminar.

▶ Venue | The participants to the Conference can assist in an active or passive way

-at distance (Teams) -practical information will be sent to participants

OR

-at the University Foundation (http://www.fondationuniversitaire.be/en)
Address: Egmontstraat 11 rue d'Egmont - 1000 Brussels

- ▶ **Documentation** | Available using this link
- ► Contact | catherine.vanderlinden@uclouvain.be









