

## NEW STRUCTURE IN THE POLICE

For the moment the Police Union in Denmark are dealing with a new structure in the police, because the government has decided to “centralize” and reduce the number of police districts from 54 to 12 new districts. The headline is: “Better police for less money”, and therefore they have outsourced some of the different police tasks, administration in driving licenses, passports, number plates among others. This is going to be implemented in January 2007, and gives us great challenges in preparing the different issues in that connection.

Among others it is challenges in connection with making agreements on:

- The leaders, who will be reduced in numbers (580)
- New agreements on wages,
- Competence development

## INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS.

Concerning the industrial relations in Denmark it is based on three principles:

- The labour Court
- Collective agreements
- Individual contracts

The most important differences between civil servants and the contractual staff are that civil servants have a statutory pension scheme, are not allowed to take industrial action, and are entitled to 3 years´ salary in case of redundancy. Civil servants´ basic employment conditions and pension schemes are regulated by statutes. But their working conditions and wages are subject to negotiations between the employers and trade unions as is the case for contractual staff.

In Denmark statutory civil servants have the right to organise, and all civil servants – including in the police and armed forces – are fully covered by the Agreement on Cooperation and Cooperation Committees.

This means, that Civil servants in the police enjoy exactly the same benefits as everybody else – except from the right to strike.

The public sector in Denmark is characterized by a comprehensive cooperation and collective bargaining system recognized by both sides. There is no tradition for major industrial conflicts in connection with the renewal of collective agreements or in the periods in between. Employers and trade unions usually come to an understanding.

The Danish system of collective bargaining is based on voluntarism.

It is underpinned by basic agreements concluded by the social partners in the different sectors, which stipulate mutual recognition and enjoin the social partners to resolve cases of conflicting interests by concluding collective agreements. This means

- A. That the trade unions recognize the employers' management prerogative (i.e. the right to manage and allocate work), while respecting currently valid collective agreements and the spirit of co-operation, and
- B. That the employers respect the right of employees to organise and to establish collective representation.

At the work place level, cooperation committees and shop stewards play an increasingly important role. This is connected with the tendency to conclude framework agreements at the central level, leaving the conclusion of more specific complementary agreements to the local actors, with the introduction of new forms of remuneration (løn) and with the development of personnel policies, particularly in the field of competence development.

The National Commissioner must hear the Union before he concludes and come to a final decision in different matters. (Possibility to bring cases in the labour court)

But there are, in principle, no limits as to the scope of collective bargaining issues. Agreements cover issues such as wages, working time, holidays, works councils, shop stewards, competence development, maternity and paternity leave, child care days, voluntary retirement and schemes for senior workers, pension schemes and group life insurance, non-discrimination, and a so-called social chapter (which provides the basis for creating special jobs for employees with health or social problems with a view to prevent exclusion from the labour market).

In the police districts the elected safety representative is co-operating with the management about health and safety - in working for a better working-environment and own security for the members – also in the planning of the police efforts in connection with demonstrations, High Risk Football matches a.o.

Therefore, the local police association takes care of the professional, social and economic interests of the members. And it is "formally" founded in the law for civil servants, § 49, which in connection with "the working committee" says:

*The Ministry of Finance and the central organizations have made an agreement on co-operation and the foundation of Working Committees in the firms and institutions under the state. The agreement includes all "State institutions". The agreement is a central agreement, which has to be "filled up" on a local basis.*

There are separate collective bargaining systems for central government and local government respectively. However co-ordination takes place between the trade unions as well as between the public employers.

## RETIREMENT SCHEME

Our retirement scheme is based on age, and the age of pension for police officers is, when they are 63 years old. The general age of pension for civil servants is, when they are 65 years old.

The full pension constitutes a total of up to 57 % in relation to the last salary received. The reason for the “up to” is, that a civil servant earns a percentage part of the pension every year he is employed from the age of 25 (up to 37 “pension-years”, which gives full pension). As a special agreement civil servant gets a special allowance (U-65-tillæg – Danish kr. 36.600,76 pr. year - € 4.923) up to they will be a national pensioner at the age of 65. From the age of 65 the allowance will be the ordinary national pension (“Folkepension” – Danish kr. 55.776,- pr. year - € 7.502)

The Danish retirement system gives a few incentives to keep police officers in service beyond the formal retirement conditions. However the incentives are few, the retired police officers are not allowed to do ordinary police work, and the payment is very low.

The Danish system includes the possibility of early retirement, when the police officers are 60 years old. In some cases there is the possibility to retire early and still be entitled to a full pension – ex. if you have been working shifts for more than half of your employee-life. Otherwise it will be without entitlement to a full pension – as described in question no. 2. Furthermore there is a percentage reduction in the pension the earlier you retire.

Concerning the effective average age of retirement, in Denmark there is no significant difference between low, middle and high ranking officers.

The retirement scheme for police officers compared to the private sector is in my judgement satisfactory.

Currently we have the following discussions:

- a. The main discussion in relation to our retirement system is about the early retirement system. The ministry of finance, with whom there will be collective bargaining in 2008, would prefer to have our senior police officers staying at work until the ordinary retirement age at 63 – or 65 as the general age of retirement. We fear that the percentage reduction in early retirement will rise.
- b. Secondly the ministry of finance is generally questioning the whole civil servant-system, because they have the assumption, that it is too expensive for the state. We will fight to keep our present system.
- c. Thirdly our members of the Union would like a possibility to retire earlier than 60.
- d.

The main position is to keep our present retirement system. Furthermore we are still trying to improve the possibility to add pension on our allowances making sure, that we have pension-calculations on our entire salary.

## VIOLENCE AND THREATS AGAINST POLICE OFFICERS

A common report on the subject through the Nordic Police Union has been made out. A meeting with the Nordic national commissioners has been held in Bergen, Norway, on the subject. A mutual understanding of the escalating violence against police officers was concluded.