



EPSU Campaign 'Quality Public Services in Europe – Quality of Life'

National Campaign Coordinators Meeting

12 July, 09h00 – 17h00
ITUH, Brussels

DRAFT MINUTES

Chairs

PERRET Anne-Marie	EPSU President	France
FISCHBACH-PYTTEL Carola	EPSU General Secretary	

Present :

LIEBEN Gilbert	CGSP Admi	Belgium
VERVECKEN Jo	FGTB	Belgium
JOHANNESSEN Hanne	STK	Denmark
LIIVAMÄGI Kalle	ROTAL	Estonia
HÄMÄLÄINEN Mika	TEHY	Finland
FLISCKSCHU Mathias	Ver.di	Germany
PAVANELLI Rosa	FP-CGIL	Italy
KATINAUSKAS Jonas	LTUSE	Lithuania
TURPEL Justin	FNCTTFEL	Luxembourg
CORREIA Guida	STAL	Portugal
MARQUES José Manuel	STAL	Portugal
PALOMARES G. Francisco	FSAP-CCOO	Spain
BUDU Pat	PCS	United Kingdom
MEDHURST John	PCS	United Kingdom

Guests:

KRAJEWSKI Markus	University of Potsdam	Germany
KOWALSKY Wolfgang	ETUC	Brussels
FALKTOFT Anne- Marie	ETUCE	Brussels

EPSU Secretariat :

FISCHBACH-PYTTEL Carola
SYNNOTT Brian
BOECKX Catherine

Apologies :

KATTNIG Thomas	GdG	Austria
SUCHA Blanka	TUHSSC	Czech Republic
BOUVERET Lise	CGT	France
LAUNIS Merja	JHL	Finland
GÁL Rezso	VDSZSZ	Hungary
HORAN Blair	CPSU	Ireland
KERIS Valdis	LVSADA	Latvia
NIELSEN Dan	SKTF	Sweden

DE ROOS George
HENDRY Ross
CROOK Nick

Abvakabo
UNISON
UNISON

The Netherlands
United Kingdom
United Kingdom

1. Opening, announcements, apologies

EPSU General Secretary, Carola Fischbach-Pyttel, opened the meeting and stated that the working group would be jointly chaired by the EPSU General Secretary and the EPSU President, Anne-Marie Perret.

The apologies were noted.

The chair noted that there would be a change in the timetable for the European Parliament response to the Commission White Paper on Services of General Interest (the Rapkay report). Further details would be given under item 5.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted without change.

3. Adoption of the minutes of the National Campaign Coordinators (NCC's) meeting 20 April, Vienna

It was noted that the brief outline of the 20 April meeting, available at <http://www.epsu.org/a/1987> would stand as the record of the meeting.

4. Update of national actions from NCC's

As an introduction to the 'tour de table' of NCC's Brian Synnott (EPSU campaign coordinator) gave a brief outline of the dedicated space for the campaign on the EPSU website.

The campaign homepage is located at <http://www.epsu.org/r/271> Each NCC has been given a **dedicated national space** on the site (for example Italy at <http://www.epsu.org/r/292>)

The idea is to ensure that the campaign has a genuine national context. Reporting of national events, links to national, and regional, union websites, and images are designed to attract local members to the campaign and to explain the issues in a local context.

There were a number of suggestions for the dedicated national space for each NCC;

1. Preferably submissions for the national space would be in the language(s) of that country.
2. As long as it related to the campaign (or national public service campaigns) the NCC would have the choice as to what material would be posted on this section.
3. NCC's were urged to provide images (logos and photos) for use in the dedicated national space.

The 'tour de table' of NCC's took account of the following issues;

- Country Reports
- National contacts (MEPs, National Governments, NGOs)
- National events planned for July – September 2006

Portugal

There are still a number of issues to be addressed regarding coordination of the campaign. A preparatory meeting was scheduled for end July, with a view to holding a public debate on the issue on **8-9 November**. The country report for Portugal would be available in September.

Denmark

There will be a conference in September on the services directive (with a Services of General Interest dimension) organised by the Danish LO trade union confederation. Contacts were made with MEPs on the Rapkay report. The country report for Denmark had already been forwarded to the secretariat <http://www.epsu.org/r/280>

Spain

There are still a number of issues to be addressed regarding coordination of the campaign. Contacts have been made with MEPs. A reference was made to the recent urban transport accident as being, in part, due to privatization policies (linked to maintenance levels and standards). The country report for Spain was given to the secretariat <http://www.epsu.org/r/307>

Italy

It was noted that it would be premature to talk about the timetable because the national energy trade union wish to first examine the issue from a sectoral perspective. However there were two events to report; an event on the Water Sector held in Sardinia <http://www.epsu.org/a/2122> and a seminar held in Rome on 7 July, to which the EPSU General Secretary was invited, to discuss events in the European Parliament. The country report for Italy was given to the secretariat <http://www.epsu.org/a/2239>

United Kingdom

As had been previously indicated, the national coordinator for the UK, Nick Crook, was unable to attend the meeting as he was giving a talk on SGI to the UK Institute of employment rights. The UK was represented by two colleagues from PCS. They outlined a national campaign for public services launched on 6 July. A major element of this campaign will concentrate on public antipathy towards outsourcing. A request for clarification on the definition of the 'third sector' in EU terms was also sought.

Notice was given that a seminar on the campaign would be held in London on 5 October.

The country report would be forwarded to the secretariat in September.

Germany

On the campaign Germany is directing this in two directions; firstly working with the CITIES and REGIONS and establishing links with the NGOs and consumer organizations. This first element of this campaign is a new tactic and is specifically designed to broaden the appeal of the campaign by explicitly looking at the issue from the perspective of the user.

Secondly, the focus is on the German Government. The new Government in Germany had indicated that they were open to discussion on the issue. Letters had also been forwarded on the need to consider a horizontal instrument first, before any sectoral initiative. The country report was forwarded to the secretariat in April <http://www.epsu.org/r/284>

Estonia

The report from Estonia indicated that there was good regional coordination between the three Baltic States. This would include a pan-Baltic demonstration on quality public services, in the autumn. A good example of bad public service practice was given when the national railway was privatized but then bought back by the Estonian Government at three times the prices. A second element underway was coordination with EPSU Finnish affiliate JHL, to examine the issue of Estonian public service workers moving to Finland but not taking up public service posts. The country report was forwarded to the secretariat <http://www.epsu.org/r/281>

Lithuania

The campaign coordinator explained that there were serious obstacles at national level, in terms of barriers to good industrial relations, specifically in social dialogue, that need to be overcome before the campaign elements could be executed. The country report was forwarded to the secretariat <http://www.epsu.org/r/295>.

Belgium

The situation in Belgium was hampered somewhat by the pending local elections in October. It would not be possible to schedule joint events until after the elections. However extensive briefings on the campaign have been conducted with Belgian MEPs. The country report is due in August.

Finland

The Finnish affiliates under the umbrella of FIPSU were looking at possible action points for the campaign in the autumn. The country report would be delivered then.

France

There was a coordinating meeting on 6 July between EPSU French affiliates. CGT has been designated the lead role on this. They planned to call for a meeting with Parliamentarians in September. They will make alliances with French constituent parts of the EU organisations working to propose SGI initiatives/ draft frameworks. At the start of 2007, there would be a conference to discuss the issue. The country report would be sent in the autumn.

The campaign coordinator closed the tour de table with a reference to and brief explanation of the Transnational Institute www.tni.org, which in conjunction with Public Service International Research Unit (PSIRU) had published a yearbook on public services. The book, which is available to download at <http://www.tni.org/pubserv/index.htm> is entitled; 'Beyond the market: the future of public services' edited by Daniel Chavez. Attention was also brought to the grouping of progressive publications entitled Eurotopia www.eurotopiamag.org, which could prove to be a valuable platform to raise awareness of the campaign.

5. Update on follow-up to SGI White Paper

Brian Synnott gave an update on the developments related to the following points:

- **European Parliament discussions (ECON, IMCO, plenary)**

The Economic and Monetary Affairs committee (ECON) had been charged with drafting the EP response to the Commission on the White Paper on services of general interest. The initial report (Rapkay report) was tabled in ECON on 30 May. ECON members then submitted 235 amendments. A further debate took place on 20 June analysing these amendments. They were described as being average in number, including a significant amount of technical proposed changes and therefore should not be considered as an attempt to radically alter the original text. The rapporteur emphasised the EP had on three occasions over the last 6 years called for a legal instrument on SGI (the Langen and Herzog reports, and the response to the Lisbon Strategy). The Rapkay report was then tabled for discussion on 11 July, with a view to voting on the amendments on 12 July. However it was decided to postpone the committee voting date to 12 September/. The reason for this was that it proved impossible within the very short timeframe, to formulate and agree compromise amendments (the draft compromise amendments, of which there are 36, are included as part of the follow up to the 12 July meeting). It is the independent EPSU analysis that the three main areas causing difficulty are the following:

1. differences on the direction to be given to the European Commission – i.e. whether the EP should recommend that the Commission should come forward with a concrete proposal, or whether further work and clarification papers is sufficient.
2. differences as to whether a horizontal instrument should be proposed in advance of any sectoral initiatives (particularly in the social services and health field^o and whether this horizontal instrument could subsequently be the foundation for any further initiatives.
3. differences on the level of independence to be given to public authorities to decide whether specific contracts are obliged to be under a tendering process.

It was acknowledged in the meeting that these three areas are at the core of the debate SGI, both in terms of tactics (what the Commission should propose) and in substance (to what extent internal market regulations apply and whether a horizontal instrument is the way forward).

The timetable for the Rapkay report is to have the ECON vote on 12 September and the Plenary vote during the plenary session 23-26 October.

- **Party of European Socialists (PES) proposal for a legal framework + campaign**

The initiative of the PES was outlined. The PES had formally presented a draft legal framework proposal for SGI to the European Commission on 30 May. The official booklet containing the text; "A new impetus for public services in Europe", can be obtained by making a request to PSE.publicservices@europarl.europa.eu There were two main points of consideration; the use of the initiative as a campaigning tool; and the substance of the PES proposal. As a *campaigning tool* the meeting was informed that a number of meetings had already been held between EPSU, the PES, and also ETUC and CEEP, to coordinate strategies for autumn 2006. NCC's were informed that the PES intended to hold a conference on 19 September to publicise the initiative and to further provide opportunities for national events to be planned. Meeting participants were given a copy of the PES communication strategy for the campaign. The aim was very much to focus on member states and to attempt to foster alliances between trade unions, NGOs and PES sister parties at national level.

Regarding the substance of the proposal the meeting was informed that officially the view of EPSU, based on considerations at the June Executive, was that the text for a legal framework provided a good basis. In particular it was agreed that the text succeeded in its main aim, which was to illustrate to the Commission *that it is possible* to produce a draft legal framework. There were still some elements in relation to the evaluation, and the recommendations on tendering that needed to be further considered.

- **Celsig proposal**

The meeting was informed that the CELSIG network (of which EPSU was a part, along with CEEP, Eurocities, CEMR, the Social Platform, and others^o was also drafting a text on a legal framework for SGI. It was noted that this text, which was still under consideration, would provide a number of constructive pointers for the campaign in the autumn. It was hoped that the text could be integrated into the existing proposals on the table.

- **Communication on SSGI (EPSU position)**

The EPSU Executive Committee had adopted the position on SSGI at its meeting in June. The meeting was informed that the key point for consideration was that some European organizations, most notably the Social Platform, were advocating for a legal instrument on social services ONLY. Meeting participants were reminded that EPSU considered this to be a dangerous tactic and that a horizontal instrument was need to provide the foundation before any sectoral initiatives. This had been noted in the e-mail sent by the campaign coordinator to all NCC's on 6 July (e-mail *entitled EPSU response to Social NGOs position on RAPKAY SGI report*).

6. Legal Briefing

Discussion with **Markus Krajewski** (University of Potsdam) on key legal questions, including; Economic/non-economic SGI; Clarifying SGEI legal bases (A. 16 etc); Underpinning solidarity; Improving public services through evaluation.

Professor Krajewski gave a legal analysis of the primary and secondary legislation pertaining to public service issues. He gave an initial legal opinion on the possibilities for change and advocacy in legal terms, and in doing so focussed on the secondary legislation as a way of providing a more 'public service friendly' definition.

The powerpoint presentation is attached.

The main point of the presentation was that there is a significant point of tension between attempts to establish legal certainty for public services, and attempts to ensuring the diversity of those public services, and to respect the differing national traditions and histories of their evolution.

Also addressed was the issue as to whether a framework directive can change primary law, or whether the focus should be on secondary legislation e.g. in-house and procurement law to define the terrain specifically in these areas.

7. Update ETUC/ CEEP proposed joint text

Discussion with **Wolfgang Kowalsky** on the ETUC/CEEP initiative on SGI/ legal framework

Wolfgang Kowalsky gave an outline of the history of the attempts by ETUC and CEEP to agree a joint text for a legal instrument on SGI. ETUC and EPSU had in 1999 agreed on a common text for a CHARTER on public services. However at that point already the LANGEN report was being discussed in the EP and idea that there should be a framework directive (there was an attempt to attach such a Charter to the Nice Treaty) took precedence. The current attempt to formulate a text was based partly on a workshop between ETUC and CEEP (with EPSU participation), which was held in Cologne in June. Draft in new proposal linked to an executive committee endorsement from each organization.

The CEEP unfortunately had discussion and REDRAFT of the text. Sent for consultation and 150 amendments were tabled. The ETUC and EPSU are due to make representation to the CEEP board on 14 July, to attempt to establish common ground.

The timetable is that the ETUC steering committee will assess developments on 20 September and at that point will decide whether to continue the process or to propose a trade union text to the EP.

8. Discussion on EPSU campaign next steps

Next meeting of the NCC's will be **19 October** in Brussels; see <http://www.epsu.org/a/1578>
The meeting will form the first part of the EPSU seminar "**EQUALITY THROUGH QUALITY PUBLIC SERVICES**", which will take place on 19-20 October.
NCC's are kindly requested to attend the seminar.

Attention!! The meeting venue is the hotel Bedford on rue de Midi in Brussels.