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REF.: CFP/PC/ea  
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Subject: Follow-up to the Green paper on PPPs

Dear Commissioner,

**Follow-up to the Green Paper on PPPs and Community law on public contracts and concessions**

EPSU submitted its response to the Green Paper consultation in July 2004. Broadly speaking, we were critical of the Green Paper's narrow focus on competition policy and the development of PPPs. One of our key messages was to say that the EU needs to develop a coherent approach to PPPs, based on a real assessment of their costs and benefits. Various parts of the European Commission deal with PPPs and this in itself merits a horizontal approach.

The Commission's analysis of the responses to the consultation exercise, published in May 2005, ignores completely our (and others') call for a broader assessment of PPPs but at the same time concludes that "*the majority of contributions argue in favour of establishing a European PPP agency*". We think that this is rather disingenuous. Certainly EPSU could not support a PPP agency whose primary task was to facilitate or promote PPPs. Even if confined to an exchange of PPP best practice (or worse practice for that matter), such an agency would fail to address the real question that public authorities and citizens need to ask, i.e. what is the best way to provide quality public services?

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EPSU has in the past proposed that a EU agency/observatory on public services should be set up, involving all stakeholders and under the control of the European Parliament. We still consider that this should be the first option. PPPs could very well be one part of this, as indeed could PuPs (Public-Public partnerships) and other forms of public service delivery. Such an observatory would ensure the objective of quality public services came first, that PPPs were not promoted for their own sake, and that the interests of citizens were top of the EU's agenda.

We would appreciate your views regarding such an observatory on public services, as well any further clarification regarding the setting up of a possible PPP agency.

Yours sincerely,

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EPSU General Secretary