

EPSU's Standing committee on Utilities puts just transition at the centre of its activities



(15 October 2018) On 11 October 2018, EPSU's Utilities Standing Committee came together to discuss several urgent issues. Members took a strong stance against the privatisation of utilities and the liberalisation of the energy market in the EU and Member States, and continued to advocate for Just Transition and decent work, public ownership and democratic control of utilities.

The first topic addressed was the activities in the European Electricity Social Dialogue Committee. Members discussed activities promoting a just transition, updates on the joint project on skill needs for young workers and the European Social Partners' roadmap on skills needs. Furthermore, members adopted the work programme of the Committee for 2019-2020.

Secondly, members focused on the energy sector. They addressed recent policy developments in the “Clean Energy for All Europeans” package and the activities of the Right to Energy Coalition in fighting against energy poverty and for ensuring the right to energy for all. Moreover, EPSU’s response to the Commission’s public consultation on a long-term strategy for greenhouse gas emissions was presented.

Thirdly, the participants turned to updates on ETUC activities. Members had a very good discussion with ETUC Advisor Benjamin Denis on the preparations of COP 24 and the need to speed up decarbonisation while ensuring a just transition.

Afterwards, members talked about the ongoing preparations for EPSU’s Congress in June 2019.

The fourth topic addressed was the revision of the Drinking Water Directive. Members reiterated their commitment to turn the Right2Water into concrete legislation and called on the European Parliament to ensure that the next Directive guarantees the right to water for all Europeans.

The next topic focused on the circular economy, specifically on recent policy developments in the EU’s “Closing the loop” package, which includes four new directives on waste. In addition, members held a strategic discussion on future activities for the waste and water sectors.

Lastly, members addressed transnational company policy, focusing on updates on developments in European Works Councils (EWC). Discussions touched upon the ETUC project’s conclusions on Transnational Company Agreements, the joint ETUFs’ position on Brexit, latest developments on the EWC directive and EPSU’s project of building EWCs in health and social services companies (ORPEA and KORIAN).

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