

## **European Commissioners deny 9.8 million workers EU legal minimum standards on information and consultation rights**



(7 March 2018) Yesterday the European Commission sent a formal reply to EPSU, CESI and the employers of the central administration. In this formal letter the EC rejects the social partner's request to the European Commission to present their agreement to the Council.

Below is the press release that has been sent today to the press in Brussels and across Europe.

(Brussels 7 March 2018, EPSU/CESI joint press release)

The European Commission informed on 5 March last the European central government social partners that it will not bring their agreement to the European Council for implementation as a directive.

The [social partners' landmark agreement, adopted in 2015](#), seeks to plug a gap in EU legislation on information and consultation rights that currently excludes central government administrations.

Four months after the proclamation of the European Pillar of Social Rights, which includes the rights for all workers to information and consultation, the Commission refuses to propose EU legislation on these rights for 9.8 million employees and civil servants, despite the social partners' request to do so.

After years of imposed cuts in jobs and wages in public administrations, the trade union priority has been to regain the fundamental rights of workers and their representatives to information and consultation and rebuild trust in social dialogue as a key tool to improve the quality of public administrations. The agreement responds to this objective by establishing EU-wide minimum standards on information and consultation rights on restructuring, amongst other issues.

Social partners acted in line with the procedure as provided for in the EU Treaties in response to a Commission's social partner consultation on a possible review of the information and consultation directives in April 2015. In an unprecedented, untransparent move, the Commission's refusal to forward the social partner agreement to the EU Council preempts the latter to publicly state its position.

Britta Lejon, President of the EPSU National and EU Administration (NEA) committee, chief negotiator of the Agreement and President of TUNED, states *"The Commission welcomed the Agreement two years ago and Commissioner Thyssen informed us that an impact assessment of the agreement would be carried out. Since then it has moved from no transparency on the decision-making process to a rejection. Just four months after the EU Social Pillar was agreed, this decision is extremely disappointing."*

Jan Willem Goudriaan, EPSU General Secretary, adds: *"It is an affront to social partners' rights as co-legislators and the Commission and Council's duty in relation to social dialogue as enshrined in the treaties since 1993. The decision has been taken without evidence and in an arbitrary manner. They have neglected its internal*

*rules including Better Regulation. It is the behaviour of public administration at its worst, it undermines the work of those civil servants working for Europe's future. This is shameful of Thyssen and Juncker”.*

Klaus Heeger, CESI General Secretary declares: *“This is a double attack. It is an attack on the EU principle of equal treatment of workers. Why should public administration workers not enjoy the same EU legal protection for information and consultation rights as other workers? And it is an attack on the right to a transparent decision-making process. The implications are very damaging for trade unions and the future of sectoral social dialogue at EU level”.*

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**EPSU** is the **European Federation of Public Service Unions**. It is the largest federation of the ETUC and comprises 8 million public service workers from over 260 trade unions; EPSU organises workers in the energy, water and waste sectors, health and social services and local, regional and central government, [www.epsu.org](http://www.epsu.org)

**CESI** is the **European Confederation of Independent Trade Unions**, composed of 38 trade union organizations and 4 European trade union organizations, with a total of more than 5 million workers. CESI's affiliates are employed in the field of central, regional and local administration, security and justice, education, training and research, healthcare, postal services and telecommunications, defense and transport.

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