

European Parliament debates the social economy



(1st March 2022) On 28 February EPSU contributed to the European Parliament employment committee's hearing on the social economy. Trade unions and social economy organisations have a long history of collaboration and mutual support. Both are sensitive to the need to reorientate our societies away from the focus on private interest and gain towards the collective and public good. The social economy is active in many areas of public services. In the hearing EPSU stressed that social economy should complement public services, not substitute for them. The social economy also benefits from quality public services and infrastructures. The EU needs to promote and support Member States to deliver on quality public services.

EPSU pointed out that there is little in the Social Economy Action Plan (SEAP) on workers rights, collective bargaining and social dialogue. Especially in social care - identified as a key growth area for the social economy - staff shortages and poor working conditions need to be addressed by Member States and social partners. Europe needs an integrated strategy aimed at guaranteeing affordable and quality care to all in need. This is also essential to ensure gender equality. Public investment / spending remains key to delivering the right for all to care. Frameworks should protect the special mission of social economy organisations and private investment investment should be aligned with non-profit principles.

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