

Highlights from EPSU's Standing Committee

"Health and Social Services" (24 September 2015)

Brussels, 14 October 2015

EPSU's last **Standing Committee "Health and Social Services"** held on 24 September 2015 in Brussels brought together 56 colleagues from 35 affiliates from 22 countries, from Ireland to Bulgaria and from Finland to Spain.

Colleagues discussed and approved the progress made on three topics in the context of activities and negotiations of the **Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee in the Hospital Sector**:

1) EPSU is running a [joint project with HOSPEEM](#) on the role of social partners to prevent and reduce the risks of **musculoskeletal disorders and psycho-social risks and stress at work in the hospital/health care sector**. The report from a [conference](#) on 25 March 2015 in Paris was noted and the concept for the second joint [conference](#) on 10 November 2015 in Helsinki – for which up to 100 participants are expected, including from DG EMPL and the European Agency on Health and Safety at Work (EU-OSHA) – was approved. This event is EPSU's and HOSPEEM's contribution to [EU OSHA's Healthy Workplace Campaign 2014-2015 "Healthy Workplaces Managing Stress"](#).

2) The second topic under this block was effective **recruitment and retention** measures and initiative in view of the workforce in health care. A joint EPSU-HOSPEEM Report to follow up to the "Framework of Actions "Recruitment and Retention" (2010) was discussed. It should inspire the further work of employers and trade unions and help influencing future initiatives of the European Commission, in particular of DG SANTE.

3) The participants also confirmed the mandate and the priority issues for EPSU in view of a negotiation with HOSPEEM on a joint statement on access to **continuous professional development and life-long learning for all health professionals/workers**

that will start in November 2015. One aim again is to showcase practice examples on social partner-based initiatives and instruments used in the different countries to support continuous professional development for all health workers. Another is to underline the urgent need to invest in professional training and development across the career, also to improve the conditions of successful workforce retention.

The **“political agenda”** as set by EU institutions or agreed in EPSU’s Work Programme was also shaped around three topics:

1) The Standing Committee decided on how EPSU should aim to seek an active involvement in the ongoing [**Feasibility Study Common Training Framework Health Care Assistants**](#), commissioned by DG SANTE.

2) The topic of **save, adequate and effective staffing (levels)** will be one of the priorities of EPSU’s work in health and social services in 2016. The plan is to organise a thematic seminar and to prepare a concept paper identifying the aspects EPSU affiliates would like to focus on. EPSU’s work would build on an [international seminar](#) of our international sister organisation PSI, held on 11 and 12 May 2015 in London and co-hosted by UNISON.

3) In the context of the European Semester the EC since 2012 has issued **country-specific recommendations in the fields of health care, elderly care and child care** for an increasing number of EU MS. An update on the relevance of the overarching process of the European Economic Governance for national policy making and the possible roles of national trade unions to influence the National Reform Programmes was given, not least by referring to a [thematic background paper](#) EPSU had issued in April 2014.

On 5 May 2015 EPSU – together with the European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) and WEMOS – had organised the **seminar “Mobility of Health Professionals in the EU: Ethical Recruitment and Policy Coherence”** in the EP. The report of the event and information on the results of the project “Health Workers for All”, involving four EPSU affiliates, can be found on this [page](#).

End of June 2015 the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) published edition 11 of

its **HesaMag**, a biannual magazine on occupational health and safety issues from a trade union perspective. It is entitled "**The nursing world at tipping point**" and contains several articles involving EPSU affiliates and the ESPU Secretariat. HesaMag 11 (available in EN and FR) is accessible via [page](#).

For more information on the main topics and outcomes of **EPSU's Working Group "Social Services"** please click [here](#).

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