

# **Action Day against the commercialisation and privatisation of health services: "Our health is not for sale!"**

Brussels, 7 February/10 March 2014

On 7 February 2014, at a [European Action Day](#) held at Brussels, organisations supporting the “European Network against the Commercialisation and Privatisation of Health, Social Work and Social Security” (Réseau Européen pour le Droit à la Santé) have presented a Manifesto and launched a European Campaign in the run towards the European elections end of May. Many of the organisations that had contributed to the manifesto form the Belgian Action Platform Health and Solidarity ( [“Plate-forme d’action Santé & Solidarité”](#)). Colleagues from Belgian EPSU affiliates (mainly from CNE Non Marchand, but also from CGSP and SETCa) and trade unionists from France, Poland, Spain and other countries participated in the action.

© *Łukasz Ługowski*

The key demands are to stop (and reverse) the commercialisation and privatisation of health services that have a negative effect on the provision of quality health services accessible to all. The major objective is to have a commitment by the candidates for the European Parliament to policies that help guarantee health as a public good – and to policies at EU-level that underpin this aim – and to make the newly elected MEPs defend the universal access to solidarity-based health care for all and across the whole territory of the EU Member States.

In the morning, the Manifesto was handed over to ambassadors of 11 EU Member States who were asked to pass it on their respective governments. The delegations then all met in front of UNESCO’s headquarters where the demand was made to recognise universal access to health care and social security as part of the common heritage of humanity. A delegation met with members of the Cabinet of the Commissioners for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, of Health and Consumer Protection and of Internal Market to present their

analyses and the demands addressed to the European Commission. The Manifesto i.a. exposes the planned Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) between the EU and the US as the Trojan horse through which existing or new regulations to defend healthcare and social services can be classified as "non tariff barriers to trade", with the aim to lower levels of protection by public health regulation or to destabilise missions of general interest. This in turn would increase the risks of negative impacts on the pay and working conditions of the health workforce and on patients' health and safety.

EPSU's policy staff for health and social services Mathias Maucher participated in the action. The concerns are shared by many EPSU affiliates and EPSU has demanded on several occasions that public services, including health and social services are excluded from any possible TTIP agreement. Read more on [EPSU's work on trade](#) and in particular about a [trade union seminar "The politics of Globalization and public services: putting EU's trade and investment agenda in its place" organised on 14 November 2013](#).

In the afternoon a conference was held that looked into the effects of the economic crisis and of austerity measures on health care that add to measures of commercialisation and privatisation in many European countries prior to 2008 or pushed stronger upon governments since the crisis started, partially due to Economic Adjustment Programmes. The event ended with a call to action and a positive outlook by making reference to protests organised in 2013 in Spain in the context of the 'White Tide Health' movement (*Marea Blanca Salud*) that helped to defeat plans to privatise six hospitals in Madrid. This example of a successful campaign had used the slogan "*La sanidad no se vende se defiende*" (Health isn't for sale! Health needs to be defended).

EPSU intervened focusing on the issues on the EU agenda and policy dossiers of common interest around which trade union work to defend universal, solidarity-based health services could be organised. Mathias Maucher's contribution also dealt with possibilities of joint trade union and civil society activities with the aim to influence political choices and decisions concerning the organisation, financing and delivery of health services as well as the health workforce to be taken at EU level. He finally elaborated on arguments that could be put forward by those working in health care and social services to encourage participation in the forthcoming European elections. For more information on the EPSU contribution see ["Financial & Economic Crisis and Austerity Measures - Impacts on Health Care Systems, the Health Workforce and Patients"](#)

You can read the press release in EN, FR, ES, IT, NL and PL.

- [Press Release European Action Day "Réseau pour le Droit à la Santé" - EN](#)
- [Press Release European Action Day "Réseau pour le Droit à la Santé" - FR](#)
- [Press Release European Action Day "Réseau pour le Droit à la Santé" - ES](#)
- [Press Release European Action Day "Réseau pour le Droit à la Santé" - IT](#)
- [Press Release European Action Day "Réseau pour le Droit à la Santé" - NL](#)
- [Press Release European Action Day "Réseau pour le Droit à la Santé" - PL](#)

You can read the manifesto in FR, NL, EN, DE, ES, IT and PL.

- [Manifesto "Réseau pour le Droit à la Santé" - FR](#)
- [Manifesto "Réseau pour le Droit à la Santé" - NL](#)
- [Manifesto "Réseau pour le Droit à la Santé" - EN](#)
- [Manifesto "Réseau pour le Droit à la Santé" - DE](#)
- [Manifesto "Réseau pour le Droit à la Santé" - ES](#)
- [Manifesto "Réseau pour le Droit à la Santé" - IT](#)
- [Manifesto "Réseau pour le Droit à la Santé" - PL](#)

Below you'll find a 4 page summary version on the Action Day, the Manifesto, etc. in FR, NL, ES and IT.

- [Journée d'Action "Réseau pour le Droit à la Santé" - Résumé - FR](#)

- [Journée d'Action "Réseau pour le Droit à la Santé" - Résumé - NL](#)
- [Journée d'Action "Réseau pour le Droit à la Santé" - Résumé - ES](#)
- [Journée d'Action "Réseau pour le Droit à la Santé" - Résumé - IT](#)

You can have a look at [photos](#) taken during the action day.

© *Łukasz Ługowski*





- [Log in](#) to post comments

- [Printer-friendly version](#)

Policies

[Health and Safety](#)

[Health](#)

[Social Services](#)

Sectors

[Health and Social Services](#)