

Another step forward for EU-wide protection of whistleblowers



EPSU welcomes vote on whistleblowers' protection directive in EP's legal affairs committee

(Press Release, Brussels, 21 November 2018) As its sister trade union organisations, Eurocadres and EFJ, as well as the ETUC, the European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU), welcomes the vote of the EU Legal Affairs Committee (JURI), on 20 November, that improves the Commission's draft legislative proposal for EU-wide protection of whistleblowers put forward last April.

Importantly for trade unions, JURI MEPs have agreed to extend the scope of the draft directive to workers' rights, gender equality and working conditions.

MEPs have also agreed to strengthen provisions against retaliation, to reduce the constraints on public reporting and ensure that more protective national legislation prevails (non-regression clause). Specific protection for the workers who opt to report anonymously was added.

EPSU General Secretary Jan Willem Goudriaan says: *"This is an important vote for the many workers who feel the urge to speak out for the public good but are not free to do so. After years of austerity, EU-wide protection is particularly important in public services. We have recent examples where workers in the elderly care sector reported wrongdoing and malpractice over hygiene and food for residents to management caused by lack of funding. They were ignored at best or fired at worst. This is why safe external and public channels must be made available to them, with the support of the trade unions. We urge EU governments to support improvements. Ahead of the EU elections in May, more democracy and transparency at work and in our institutions is what we need."*

JURI MEPs made positive changes to the draft directive on the protection of reporting persons regarding breaches of EU law in the area of tax evasion, corruption, environmental protection and public health and safety, without fear of retaliation or intimidation.

The text was adopted by 22 votes to none against, with 1 abstention.

The MEPs also decided to enter into negotiations with the Council and the European Commission (Trialogue) as soon as plenary has endorsed the negotiating mandate.

Together with Eurocadres, leading on #WhistleEU, the European Federation of Journalists, ETUC, civil society organisations such as Transparency International, and the political groups that made this huge step forward possible, namely the Greens and the S&D, EPSU will follow the upcoming trialogue negotiations.

End

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