

The Commission's monetary union package shows lack of commitment to social rights

(EPSU Statement, 7 December 2017) Yesterday (6 December) the European Commission produced a series of proposals on how to strengthen economic governance of the Eurozone. While some elements can be evaluated as positive, the package lacks a social dimension. There is no commitment to integrate the European Pillar of Social Rights, declared on 17 November in Gothenburg, in the Eurozone governance. It is merely referred to as “compass”. Compared to the extremely detailed proposals presented by the Commission in several other areas this is disappointing. There is a lot of attention to ways to support structural reform, something that workers associate mostly with weakening employment protection, increasing flexibility, more precarious jobs, working longer for lower pensions and more.

EPSU's General Secretary Jan Willem Goudriaan stated: **The European Commission missed an opportunity to demonstrate its commitment to workers and people beyond fine words and to include the principles of the Pillar in its economic architecture for the future of the Eurozone. With its focus on debt reduction and structural reform of labour markets and public administrations it reads more like an announcement of years of continued austerity.**

Public service workers, our families and communities have been looking for signs that the Gothenburg spirit would translate into more public investment in quality public services and achieving better health and social care for example. The structural reform support service could have been given a role in achieving the Gothenburg principles but it is not there in the EMU package. The European Commission does not even see a role for the proposed Eurozone finance minister to meet European social partners in the macro-economic dialogue. The reality for public service workers is one in which austerity and tax competition continue leading to underfunding of public services. Workers are fighting for decent pay increases in many Eurozone countries like France and Italy. Spanish workers are preparing for mobilisations next week and Slovenian public service workers have

announced strike action for January 2018.

We will continue to evaluate the package. The proposal for the European Monetary Fund and the combining of various structural funds to create a stabilization function for the Eurozone economy could allow public investment to be maintained during times of crisis. Something urgently need in the face of the recent trend of [declining public investment](#) which undermines the potential for economic growth.

Background

For a reaction of [ETUC](#)

EPSU on Gothenburg – [Time for Action](#) and [Cold shower](#)

[Europe's public service workers deserve a pay increase](#)

[Declining Public Investment in the Eurozone and EU](#)

[For the package](#)

From the Commission release: The package is part of President Juncker's broader Roadmap for a more United, Stronger and more Democratic Union as well as the resulting Leaders' Agenda on the road to Sibiu, presented by the President of the European Council, Donald Tusk, where on *9 May 2019* important decisions on the future of Europe should be taken. The package is presented ahead of the inclusive Euro Summit on *15 December 2017* where EU leaders will meet for a first discussion on the next steps to be taken, and a dedicated meeting planned on *28-29 June 2018* with a view to reaching concrete decisions.

The following papers were presented:

- Deepening Europe's Economic and Monetary Union – Questions and Answers
- Factsheets on Deepening Europe's Economic and Monetary Union
- Flash Eurobarometer 458 on the euro area, December 2017
- Communication on further steps towards completing the Economic and Monetary Union
- Proposal for the establishment of a European Monetary Fund anchored in the Union legal framework
- Proposal to integrate the substance of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance into the Union legal framework, taking into account the appropriate flexibility built into the Stability and Growth Pact and identified by

the Commission since January 2015

- Communication on new budgetary instruments for a stable euro area within the Union framework
- Targeted changes in the Common Provisions Regulation to mobilise funds in support of national reforms
- An amendment to strengthen the Structural Reform Support Programme
- Communication on a European Minister of Economy and Finance
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