

France: Unions demand urgent action on health and social service funding



(10 October 2019) On 8 October, in the first of two days of action, trade unions joined with campaigning groups to demand urgent action on funding for health and social services.

Seven trade union and professional organisations coordinated strikes and protests along with groups campaigning to defend local hospital provision, maternity and psychiatric services. Action took place across health and social service institutions and also linked up with protests by pensioner groups calling for higher pensions and better provision in care homes.

The main union demands focused on the need to tackle understaffing, lack of beds and poor pay and working conditions. Trade unions estimate that health and social services have seen cuts of over EUR 8.4 billion over the last 20 years. This has meant 100000 fewer beds, 95 fewer emergency units and 50% fewer maternity facilities.

The second day of action will take place on 15 October when health and social service trade unions will join with their colleagues representing firefighters to demand increased funding for all emergency services.

EPSU sent a message of solidarity. Health and social services union leaders attending a meeting stood together with the French unions in support of the demands in Brussels on 8 October. They are similar as workers' concerns across Europe.

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