

May Day - Better pay and conditions for public service workers



Millions of workers will celebrate 1 May 2020 in confinement. We won't be meeting in the squares or on the streets, nor in marches and demonstrations. The pandemic makes that impossible. However, workers and our unions will not be silenced and we are still connected across our workplaces. Many online events are planned and LabourStart together with the trade union federations will be hosting a [#virtualmayday](#). Union videos will show workers and people fighting for a Future for All.

Public service workers will feature in many speeches. We celebrate the services they deliver, from health and care to social protection and water, energy and waste collection. Through good public administrations at all levels of government, they make sure people can enjoy their human rights. Above all, we demand a relaunch of our economies that makes a difference and puts people and our planet over profits.

Relaunch policies should:

- **Address the growing inequalities in our societies.** It is with renewed vigour that we campaign for tax justice. And for the institutions to deliver it. It is not acceptable that a small group of billionaires owns as much as billions of people on our planet;
- **Invest in and fund our public services.** We need more staff to deliver the quality care people want. Higher pay and improved working conditions are part and parcel of this. This is true for our health and care services as well as many other public services as the pandemic has shown. These workers deserve a pay increase. And we will fight against a return to coordinated austerity.
- **Strengthen workers' and trade union rights.** Those with precarious jobs have suffered under the lack of rights and social protection. This we want to change. Countries with strong collective bargaining and developed information and consultation rights are leading the way.
- **Deal with the gender pay gap.** The pandemic revealed that many services on which our societies rely are done by women. These women are often low-paid, overworked because of understaffing and face high levels of stress, along with the additional burden of taking care of children and others.
- **Implement the Green and Social new Deal.** Billions of Euros are now available to support businesses and for investment. It is an opportunity to implement Just Transitions, and steer our societies towards respecting our natural environment, realising social rights and putting working time reduction on the agenda just as workers across the world did 135 years ago on the first International Workers Day.

And EPSU will join with others to fight for our democracies. The pandemic has shown how brittle they are. Emergency laws have been introduced and abused in countries like Hungary and Poland. And these need to be reversed. On International Workers' Day we join our demands for a better future. It is also a day that reminds us that we will have to fight for it. Together we are stronger.

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