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Emergency resolution: The draft EU Constitutional Treaty

*To the 25 EU heads of State and Government
Celebrate Social Europe in the Treaty!
Europe's citizens will thank you*

The new European Constitution is the centrepiece of the next European council on June 17/18.

For the two years of negotiations and consultation that have brought us to this point, the one constant on which all European leaders agree, is that **Europe must be brought closer to the citizen**. A stronger social Europe is the path to this shared goal. The draft Constitutional treaty recognises this. EU leaders must resist the temptation to dilute the social aspects of the treaty through cynical politicking.

EPSU and the ETUC have been closely involved in the European Convention. The draft text of the Convention was broadly welcomed as the outcome of a democratic process that saw governments, parliaments, social partners as well as large parts of civil society active in framing the text. EPSU engaged actively in contributing to the debates, together with local authorities and social action groups, *specifically* on the future role of public services in the European Union. While not all our aspirations were met, EPSU accepted the draft text of the Convention as the outcome of this process. EPSU and the ETUC accept this because we respect the democratic process, and therefore we accept democratic compromise.

We are very concerned about the closed-door negotiations currently taking place in the Intergovernmental Conference. This is neither transparent nor democratic. It appears that the social achievements of the convention are under extreme pressure. Why is it that when the doors of accountability shut, leaders forget citizens? An example is the attempt of the UK government to erode the legal status of the Charter on Fundamental Rights. The Charter is the route to European Citizens. When an individual asks how does Europe help me, the Charter provides the answer. We remind the Heads of State and Governments what is at stake. A Draft Treaty that does not reflect Europe's citizens and workers aspirations is not worth our support.

We further want consistency between Parts I and III in respect of social objectives, such as full employment, to realise a genuine social market economy. Leaked information indicates that some governments seek to insert "price stability" as one of the EU's objectives.

- EPSU rejects any attempts to dilute the high level of social protection.
- Social Partnership equals innovative social solutions.
- Services of General Interest equal citizens' interests.

EPSU reminds the Heads of State and Government that the Treaty will need to be accepted by 25 separate European electorates, through their Governments or increasingly through referenda. Europe's trade unions have been strong supporters of Europe, European unity, a European social model with high quality public services and a Europe that supports growth

and employment. Many public service workers, and the citizens who benefit from public services, are deeply concerned about the current direction of European Union policies.

EPSU fully supports the European Trade Union Confederation in saying:

“The European trade union movement - and we are convinced the peoples of Europe too - will only give back enthusiastic support to a constitution that strengthens the European Social Model, balances the dynamism of the economy with solidarity, and provides protection for workers, consumers and the environment from the destructive forces that unregulated capitalism can unleash.”

We need a people's Europe not a big-business Europe. We need to strengthen the European Social Model. The European Constitution needs to reflect this aspiration.

The delegates of the 7th EPSU Congress urge Heads of States and of Governments to take this opportunity to reconnect the EU to its citizens.

Congress instructs the EPSU General Secretary to forward this position reflecting the views of 8 million public service workers and the largest Federation of the ETUC to the Irish Presidency of the EU.

Adopted by the Congress