



Brussels, 20 March 2017

Message of solidarity for the action by Belgian health and social service unions

EPSU/The EPSU Health and Social Services Standing Committee sends its solidarity greeting to the Belgian unions mobilising for the national demonstration in Brussels on 21 March. The unions have called this action to put pressure on the government and employers to tackle major problems in the non profit/ social profit sector that includes health and social services. These services are badly understaffed with employees facing excessive workloads and stress at the same time as putting up with poor pay and working conditions. The challenge for the Belgian unions is the same as for many EPSU affiliates across Europe many of whom are still fighting to end and reverse austerity policies that have led to cuts in services and which often blocked collective bargaining.

EPSU expects that the action on 21 March will help give momentum to the negotiations to secure a new multi-year agreement that includes provisions for more jobs, better work-life balance and improved pay and conditions. Austerity has led to considerable pressure on public services and a new collective agreement is badly needed to improve the quality of employment and ensure the quality of services to the millions of patients and other clients reliant on the non-profit sector. The agreement should confirm the commitment of employers to make sure workers can retire in good health through the reduced working time measures.

EPSU is supporting the European Trade Union Confederation's campaign for a pay rise for workers across Europe and there is no doubt that the workers in this essential sector need a pay rise to recognise their hard work and dedication.

In solidarity,

Jan Willem Goudriaan
EPSU General Secretary

EPSU Secretariat 40 rue Joseph II, box 5 - 1000 Brussels, Belgium
Phone: +32 2 250 10 80 Fax: +32 2 520 10 99 Mail: epsu@epsu.org www.epsu.org

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