



European Federation of Public Service Unions
(EPSU)

Rue Royale, 45
B – 1000 Brussels
Belgium

Tel. : 32 2 250 10 80

Fax 32 2 250 10 99

E-amil : epsu@epsu.org

Website : www.epsu.org

Public Services – Europe's Strength EPSU priorities 2004 – 2009

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Introduction

The present outline is to identify **priority areas** for implementation of Congress resolutions and the **objectives** for EPSU to be attained in the coming five years. It is not intended to represent a detailed work programme for the next Congress period.

The EPSU priorities have to be seen in continuity to the previous Congress term. We are not about to invent something terribly new, but we want to consolidate EPSU as the voice of workers in public services and services of general interest in Europe. We want EPSU to further develop as a campaigning, mobilising and negotiating organisation. We want to enhance EPSU's sectoral visibility and suggest a number of specific sectoral activities, which are to enhance EPSU's weight in those areas.

The *main two vertical strands* of our activities are built around the EPSU priority to obtain recognition for *public services* in the further construction of the enlarged European Union and to transform EPSU into an effective *social dialogue* / negotiating organisation. The formalisation of the social dialogue in the EPSU sectors remains of prime importance. These two priorities determine EPSU's *raison d'être*, they are 'natural' priorities given the political agenda of the EU in these two areas. These priorities will also provide the red thread for the work programmes to be established by EPSU's Standing and Gender Equality Committees. Issues of the enlarged European Union will be an integral consideration in EPSU policies and structures. Special resources will be dedicated to cater for the needs of member organisations in the new Member States and accession countries.

The *horizontal leitmotif* would be to further build *EPSU as a European trade union*. The aim would be to firmly establish EPSU in its areas of competence and to sharpen our public profile as a European trade union for public services and services of general interest. This would relate to enhancing our capacity to communicate and lobby, campaign and mobilise, to organise and recruit. Horizontal activities would cover the mainstreaming of gender equality and anti-discrimination with a view of consolidating EPSU as the equality and anti-discrimination union. It remains an on-going task to improve EPSU's internal cohesion through better links between national, trans-border and European trade union action, contributing also to affiliates' recruitment drives. Last but not least, an important reflection will be on future relations with ETUC and PSI. This could be an element of particular relevance if the creation of a new global trade union confederation became a reality.

I. The public services agenda

Issue	Activity	Time line	Outcome
1. EU Legislation ¹ a) Services Directive b) Working Time Directive	Lobby EP, Council Working Group on Competitiveness, co-operation with ETUC, other Industry Federations, NGO, scrutinise timetable for visible protest action targeting either EP or Commission. Lobby EP and relevant Council Working Group, in cooperation with ETUC.	Continuous at least until end 2005 Continuous at least until end 2005	Improved lobbying action, influence and shape EU legislation. Oppose directive in its current form, prevent damage to public services, eventually elaboration of amendments, highlight link with legal framework on SGI. Oppose Commission’s proposal to revise the directive, in particular in view of the definition of on-call duty, individual opt-outs and lengthened reference periods.
2 EU Constitution	information about contents, in co-operation with ETUC; exploit trade union friendly elements.	At least until 2006	Prevent watering down of the draft text, highlight the positive elements from a trade union perspective.
3. Public-private partnerships	Input into Commission’s Green Paper, dedicate public service conference to this theme.	Spring 2005	Promote public-public partnerships, define criteria for quality public – private partnerships.
4. SGI ‘Legal framework’	SGI working group to elaborate a set of quality standards or benchmarks for public services at EU level, revitalise and further develop the ETUC Public Services Charter.	Dec. 2004 – end 2005	Promote public services as counterweight to the predominant internal market rational, define the Treaty concept of ‘neutrality’; prevent EU liberalisation of water, health and social care services.
5. Public service restructuring and decentralisation	TRACE Project’ in cooperation with ETUCO focussing on decentralisation and restructuring in LRG and NEA areas	2005 - 06	Develop policy and promote information network, involving unions in CEE

¹ The two pieces of legislation listed are obviously top priority at the moment, other issues may arise later in the Congress period.

Issue	Activity	Time line	Outcome
6. Funding of public services; employment in public services	Research project with ETUI on the ‘alternative economy’, revitalise work on taxation in co-operation with ETUC.	Research to be launched out in 2004, follow-up throughout Congress period.	Promote reform of growth and stability pact; promote fairer taxation systems and alternative funding sources for public services; promote quality jobs in public services.
7. Social services	Establish working group on social services under HSS remit in liaison with Gender Equality Committee; Input into the anticipated EC Communication on ‘social services of general interest’; revisit and expand on EPSU’s policy paper on social services, organise projects around issues such as, elderly, home and childcare.	Working group to meet early 2005, to develop policy, seminars in 2005, 06, 07.	Establish and reaffirm EPSU’s competence in the social services area.
8. Prison services	Project in NEA remit; issues: privatisation; understaffing, overcrowding, working conditions, with special emphasis on stress and harassment.	Seminar in 2 nd part 2005 or early 2006.	Establish EPSU’s competence in the prison services area; elaborate policy.
9. Migrant workers in public services	Commission background document on state of play. Focus for public service conference in 2006.	Launch in 2005.	Develop knowledge on the status of migrant workers in public services; EPSU = the anti-discrimination union.
10. EU and external relations	EU Projects on public service trade union rights and social dialogue in EU – Mediterranean, South East Europe, EU Russia, WTO GATS in co-operation PSI and affiliates.	Launch in 2005.	Counter an exclusive free trade – extension of internal market approach in EU external policies.
11. Pensions	Up-date summary table of CSED pensions survey for EPSU Congress in 2005, Monitor policy developments, e.g. ‘portability of occupational pension rights’, and provide input into ETUC discussions, when relevant provide for written and / or oral briefings to the Executive Committee	Ongoing	Up-date of EPSU policy

II. The social dialogue and collective bargaining agenda

Issue	Activity	Time line	Outcome
1. Further develop social dialogue in EPSU sectors	Targeted projects to cover the EPSU sectors, major part of St. Cttees. work.	Ongoing	Institutionalise social dialogue in EPSU areas, progress in achieving binding social dialogue outcomes.
2. Social dialogue in new MS and accession countries	Joint EPSU/CEMR project; to be extended to other sectors.	End 04 – October 05, to be continued throughout Congress period.	Identify issues of common interest, promote social dialogue in new Member States and accession countries.
3. Collective bargaining	Continue to build epsucob@ collective bargaining network and improve flow of information; exchange of experiences and definition of common policies on issues, such as, low pay, outsourcing, equal pay between men and women, older and migrant workers.	Ongoing with focus on low pay and outsourcing (2004-05), young and migrant workers (2005-06).	Well functioning collective bargaining network, improving link between national and European collective bargaining levels, highlight key collective bargaining demands as initial step in co-ordination.
4. EWC Network	Extend and consolidate co-ordinators' network.	Throughout Congress period.	To affirm EPSU's presence in EWCs!

III. Building EPSU as organisation

Issue	Activity	Time line	Outcome
1. Communication	<u>External</u> : further build press contacts. <u>Internal</u> : electronic newsletter; improve input into national trade union journals.	Newsletter to be launched in Feb. 05; Press contacts ongoing.	Enhance EPSU’s public profile with EU institutions; strengthen information links with affiliates!
2. Lobbying	Lobbying session in new EC; canvas representatives from new Member States in EU institutions, link EC members with these representatives.	Starting in Nov 04, ongoing throughout Congress period.	Improve lobbying impact through joint activity at national and European levels.
3. Alliance building	Liaise with key NGO’s, e.g. the European Social Platform on key public sector issues, involvement in European Social Forum based on EPSU policies.	Ongoing throughout Congress period.	Increase political pressure; promote EPSU’s profile in civil society.
4. Gender Equality	Improving women’s representation in trade unions and EPSU structures, continue gender mainstreaming of EPSU policies.	Ongoing	EPSU target towards equal representation of women and men in EPSU bodies; EPSU = the equality union.
5. EPSU Toolkit	Design an implementation plan; develop education / information activities on trade union capacity building, organising and social dialogue, in cooperation with affiliates and ETUCO	October 2004 throughout Congress period.	Better recognition of trade unions as a major actor to facilitate implication of EU social acquis, more effective social dialogue, special emphasis on unions in new Member States and accession countries
6. EPSU finances and assets	Finance group to meet	2 nd half 2005	Recommandation on EPSU finances 2007 – 2009.
7. EPSU Constitution	Constitution working group to meet	2 nd half 2005	Recommendation on relation Steering – Executive and other matters.

Issue	Activity	Time line	Outcome
8. Membership	Approach potential member organisations, explore possibility of strategic partnerships with organisations, such as EUROCOPS, EUROMIL or other professional bodies; facilitate exchange on recruitment strategies; support membership drives in CEE.	Ongoing	Enhanced organisational strength, focus on CEE.
9. Networking	Promote networking at subregional and Constituency levels, pilot project ‘Baltic Public Service Union Network’ as a tool to process information to and from EPSU, amongst affiliates concerned and to generate influence at national / transnational levels	2004 –05	A functioning network of public service unions in the Baltic area, to be applied also to other subregional and Constituency areas.