The European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR) ETUI/EPSU seminar 22-23 February 2018

EPSU Introduction

EPSU key documents: http://www.epsu.org/a/725
What Europe?

"...CREATING AN EVER CLOSER UNION AMONG THE PEOPLES OF EUROPE"

(Preamble of the Treaty of Rome + Article 1 Treaty on European Union)
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What makes quality public services?

- Financing, Organisation, Delivery of services
- Equality, Social cohesion, Local democracy
- Good wages, Skills, working conditions
- Transparency, Rights of service users, Role of social partners
Persons employed in SGIs (%)

“Mapping public services” CEEP

http://www.actionpublique.eu

Average EU 27: 30.1%
OLD EU 15: 31.4%
New 10 Central Eastern Europe: 25%
Southern countries (ES, IT, FR, GR, PT): 28.5%
Northern countries (FL, SE, DK): 38.7%
Persons employed by SGIs sectors
% of total SGIs

"Mapping public services" CEEP [http://www.actionpublique.eu](http://www.actionpublique.eu)

- Electricity, gas, water: 33%
- Transport: 24%
- Post and telecommunications: 8%
- Research and recruitment: 5%
- Public administration: 4%
- Education: 23%
- Health, social work: 2%
- Other: 1%
Two views about public services

**Market failure**

Service of general economic interest means...a service that cannot be provided satisfactorily and under conditions, such as price, objective quality characteristics, continuity, and access to the service, consistent with the public interest, by an undertaking operating under normal market conditions. ...

*Taken from the CETA agreement, chapter 17 competition policy*

**Democratic choice**

Public services are activities which are subject to special regulatory regimes or special obligations imposed on services or service suppliers by the competent national, regional or local authority in the general interest.

*Taken from Markus Krajewski ‘Model clauses for the exclusion of public services from trade and investment agreements’*
Current challenges for QPS

✓ New and growing needs (demographic change, poverty and social exclusion, refugees / migration, climate change and environmental challenges)

✓ Erosion of public services values and principles (universality, equal treatment)

✓ Economic policy and structural reforms ‘unfriendly’ to public services (privatisation, Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), low tax, ‘lean government’ models)

✓ Lack of public investment

✓ Single Market policy (standardisation, proportionality test)

✓ Trade agreements: TTIP, CETA, TISA
EPSU’s demands for QPS

✓ Actions to support Member States develop QPS
✓ Investment in public services/ social infrastructure (more than 300 billion euro in Commissioner Juncker’s plan) e.g., Greece 6% GDP on healthcare, Latvia 3%
✓ Solidarity and ‘values’ of public services, e.g. right to good health, right2water, right2energy, right2care etc
✓ Workers rights, collective bargaining in public services – and quality of work, quality of services/goods
✓ Financial regulation and progressive taxation - FTT, tax avoidance, EPSU tax campaign to close €1Trillion tax gap
✓ No further liberalisation of public services: trade agreements, Single Market, Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)
To recall - Lisbon Treaty provisions

✓ Protocol on public services (services of general interest) calls for a “high level of quality, safety and affordability, equal treatment and the promotion of universal access and of user rights.”

✓ Article 14 as future legal basis for a framework law

✓ Charter of Fundamental Rights

✓ Concept of “social market economy”

✓ Recognition of local level

✓ European Citizens’ Initiative (water campaign)

✓ More support for social dialogue (Council and European Parliament)
To recall - Charter of fundamental rights

Communication on Charter of fundamental rights COM(2010) 573

✓ Human rights at the heart of Union action
✓ Legislative and decision making…must be in full conformity with the Charter”
✓ Fundamental rights ‘checklist’
✓ Annual report on application of Charter
✓ Role of Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA)
European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR)

Chapter 1
Equal opportunities and access to the labour market

Chapter 2
Fair working conditions

Chapter 3
Adequate and sustainable social protection

Social dialogue, collective bargaining and involvement of workers
EPSR principles

Chapter I Equal opportunities and access to the labour market
1. Education, training and life-long learning
2. Gender equality
3. Equal opportunities
4. Active support to employment

Chapter II Fair working conditions
5. Secure and adaptable employment
6. Wages
7. Information about employment conditions and protection in case of dismissal
8. Social dialogue and involvement of workers
9. Work-life balance
10. Healthy, safe and well-adapted work environment and data protection

Chapter III Social protection and inclusion
11. Childcare and support to children
12. Social protection
13. Unemployment benefits
14. Minimum income
15. Old-age income and pensions
16. Healthcare
17. Inclusions of people with disabilities
18. Long-term care
19. Housing and assistance for the homeless
20. Access to essential services
Open questions on the EPSR

✓ Positive that principles expressed as rights, also some ‘new’ rights (fair wages, minimum income, long-term care), but what instruments? WLB most concrete proposal.

✓ What scope - Eurozone or EU / EEA? ‘citizens’? Public services principles applicable to all, irrespective of status

✓ Link to economic semester (social scoreboard, investment) but how links to other EU policies (single market)?

✓ Interpretation of ‘financial equilibrium’ of national social security systems? Long-term sustainability also demands collective funding through solidarity-based mechanisms. This also ensures that public money is used for public good.
Work-Life Balance Proposal

**Legislative Proposal**

- **Paternity Leave (new)** – 10 working days, compensated at sick pay level;
- **Parental Leave (strengthened)**
  financial compensation during the 4 months leave for each parent at sick pay level + non-transferability, entitlement to flexibility;
- **Carers’ Leave (new)** 5 working days per year compensated at sick pay level
- **Flexible working arrangements** (strengthened) right to request such arrangements

**Non-legislative**

- **Improve Quality, Affordability and Access to Care**
- **Remove economic disincentives for second earners**
- **Restricted calls for proposal:**
  - Support economic independence for women and men
  - address gender gaps over the life cycle
- **Information and networking seminar**
Right2GenderEquality

✓ Close the gender gaps – in particular the gender pay gap of 16.7% in the EU and the associated gender pension gap (40 per cent). Implement the EU Action Plan on Equal Pay, and specifically amend the equal pay legislation making pay transparency mandatory.

✓ Adopt the proposal on work-life balance prioritizing paid leaves (paternity and parental) as well as non-transferability of rights. Invest, also via the ESF, in quality public care services

✓ Agree an ILO Convention against violence against women, in particular at the work-place.

✓ Mainstream gender equality into all policy areas, e.g. taxation, budgets etc.

✓ Ensure women’s equal representation, if necessary through quotas
Right2Water

- Implement the ECI “water is a human right” supported by EPSU, the European Water Movement and the ETUC
- The EU institutions and Member States be obliged to ensure that all inhabitants enjoy the right to water and sanitation.
- Water supply and management of water resources not be subject to ‘internal market rules’ and that water services are excluded from liberalisation.
- The EU increases its efforts to achieve universal access to water and sanitation.
Right2Energy

✓ Implement the Right to Energy for all by introducing concrete EU legislation banning disconnections for vulnerable consumers at critical times. This can be done in the current legislation that is part of the Winter Package.

✓ Stop the phasing out of regulated prices in the energy sector for domestic households and support social tariffs for vulnerable customers.

✓ Assign an ambitious share of public investment in energy efficiency towards measures targeting low income households ensuring no additional costs in housing or bills for these households.
Collective financing and risk sharing is the best way to ensure universal access to high quality healthcare and social services.

Implementation of the recommendation of the joint report from the European Commission and Council on long-term care to integrate care into social protection systems for ‘efficiency and equity’ reasons.

The universal and fundamental principles regarding right2care should cover everyone, irrespective of status.
quality public services

WATER is a Human Right
NO TO austerity

UNHAPPY MEAL
£1 Billion in Tax Avoidance on the Menu at McDonald’s

TTIP: THE TROJAN TREATY
STOP TTIP: THE TROJAN TREATY

“We want it back: Europe’s missing €1Trillion”